

Carer's Allowance

If you care for someone who has Parkinson's, you may have concerns about how you will manage financially. But there is financial support available, so it's important to find out what benefits you're entitled to.

This information explains what Carer's Allowance is and how to claim.

What is Carer's Allowance?

Carer's Allowance is a benefit for people who regularly spend at least 35 hours a week caring for someone with substantial caring needs. You don't have to be related to that person or be living with them.

The person you're caring for must be getting a qualifying benefit (Attendance Allowance, the Disability Living Allowance care component at the middle or highest rate, either rate of the Personal Independence Payment daily living component, or Armed Forces Independence Payment).

Find out more: see our information on [Attendance Allowance](#), [Disability Living Allowance](#) and [Personal Independence Payment](#).

You can still qualify for Carer's Allowance even if you have never been employed or paid National Insurance contributions. Carer's Allowance is not means tested, which means it isn't affected by your income or savings (although there is an earnings limit). It is taxable.

You can get Carer's Allowance even if you, the carer, are disabled and getting Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.

If you claim Carer's Allowance, it can sometimes reduce the amount of means-tested benefits that the person you look after can claim.

To find out more, contact Citizens Advice or another agency that gives benefits advice, such as your local welfare rights group. You can find these organisations listed in your local telephone directory, or you can contact our helpline on **0808 800 0303**.

Do I qualify?

You must be spending 35 hours or more a week caring for someone who receives a 'qualifying benefit'. The qualifying benefits are:

- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance care component at the middle or highest rate
- Personal Independence Payment daily living component (either rate)
- Armed Forces Independence Payment

You must also:

- be aged 16 or over at the time of your claim
- have been living in England, Scotland or Wales for two of the last three years (and your immigration status doesn't prevent you claiming)
- be 'habitually resident' in the UK
- not be in full-time education (ie not be on an educational course of 21 hours or more supervised study a week)
- not earn more than £120 a week, if you are in paid employment

The rules are different in Northern Ireland. Visit www.nidirect.gov.uk/information-and-services/money-matters/carers-allowance to find out more.

How much is Carer's Allowance?

The weekly rate is £64.60.

Do other benefits affect Carer's Allowance?

Yes. You can't be paid Carer's Allowance if you are getting the same amount or more from any of the following benefits:

- contributory Employment and Support Allowance
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- Incapacity Benefit
- Maternity Allowance
- State Pension
- Widow's Benefits or Widowed Parent's Allowance
- contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance

These benefits 'overlap', so you can only get the higher of the two benefits. If you can't be paid Carer's Allowance due to the overlapping benefits rule, you should still make a claim if you are eligible, because this will help with other benefits (see 'Why should I claim Carer's Allowance?' below).

Why should I claim Carer's Allowance?

Claiming Carer's Allowance may allow you to get extra on other benefits you receive.

For example, if you qualify for Carer's Allowance, you can get a £36-a-week 'carer premium' included in any income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income Support, Pension Credit or Housing Benefit you receive.

Find out more: see our information on [Employment and Support Allowance](#), [Income Support](#), [Pension Credit](#) and [Housing Benefit](#).

You may also qualify for a carer premium if you are entitled to Carer's Allowance, but cannot be paid it because of another 'overlapping' benefit (see 'Do other benefits affect Carer's Allowance?' above).

If you are eligible to claim Universal Credit (instead of one of the above benefits) and you're entitled to Carer's Allowance, you can get a monthly £156.45 'carer amount' included in your Universal Credit.

Find out more: see our information on [Universal Credit](#).

For each week that you are entitled to Carer's Allowance, you get a Class 1 National Insurance credit. This will help towards your entitlement to a State Pension.

In Scotland, if you are entitled to Carer's Allowance, you get a 'Carer's Allowance Supplement' of £221 every six months from the Scottish government.

Can a carer get Carer's Allowance after the person they care for has died?

If the person you are caring for dies, you will get Carer's Allowance payments for up to eight weeks afterwards. This is to give carers who have recently been bereaved time to adjust and make plans for their own future. The carer premium will also be paid during this eight weeks. So if, as a carer, you are on an income-related benefit, you will still be able to get this.

How is Carer's Allowance paid?

Carer's Allowance is either paid in advance on a weekly basis or in arrears every four weeks. It can be backdated for up to 3 months from the date that the person you care for started to get their qualifying benefit.

Your money will be paid into your bank or building society account.

Find out more: if you don't have a bank account, have a look at our [General information about benefits](#). This explains how to get one.

How do I claim Carer's Allowance?

You will need to fill in claim form DS700. If you claim a State Pension, you will need to fill in form DS700(SP). You can get the claim form by contacting the Carer's Allowance Unit on **0800 731 0297** (textphone **0800 731 0317**) or you can download it at www.gov.uk/government/publications/carers-allowance-claim-form

You can also apply online at www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim

If you live in Northern Ireland, call **0800 587 0912** or claim online at www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/carers-allowance-how-claim

More information and support

Parkinson's nurses

Parkinson's nurses provide expert advice and support to people with Parkinson's and those who care for them. They can also make contact with other health and social care professionals to make sure your needs are met.

The role of the Parkinson's nurse varies. Each will offer different services, aiming to meet local needs. Some nurses are based in the community, whereas others are based in hospital settings.

Many Parkinson's nurses are independent prescribers. This means they can prescribe and make adjustments to medication, so someone with Parkinson's doesn't always need to see their specialist for changes to or queries about their Parkinson's drugs.

Parkinson's nurses may not be available in every area, but your GP or specialist can give you more details on local services.

You can find out more at parkinsons.org.uk/nurses

Information and support from Parkinson's UK

You can call our free confidential helpline for general support and information. Call **0808 800 0303** (calls are free from UK landlines and most mobile networks) or email hello@parkinsons.org.uk.

We run a peer support service if you'd like to talk on the phone with someone affected by Parkinson's who has faced similar issues to you. The service is free and confidential – ring the helpline to talk to someone about being matched with a volunteer.

Our helpline can also put you in touch with one of our Parkinson's local advisers, who give one-to-one information and support to anyone affected by Parkinson's. They can also provide links to local groups and services.

We also have a self-management programme for people with Parkinson's, partners and carers. It is an opportunity to reflect on life with the condition, learn about self-management and think about the future. To find out if there is a group near you, visit parkinsons.org.uk/selfmanagement

Our website parkinsons.org.uk has a lot of information about Parkinson's and everyday life with the condition. You can also find details of your local support team and your nearest local group meeting at parkinsons.org.uk/localtoyou

Visit parkinsons.org.uk/forum to chat to other people with similar experiences on our online discussion forum.

Thank you

Thank you to Disability Rights UK for updating this information sheet. Disability Rights UK also have a wide range of online factsheets relating to disability-related issues including Access to Work, education, the Blue Badge scheme, independent living and disabled facilities grants.

Visit their website: www.disabilityrightsuk.org

Can you help?

At Parkinson's UK, we are totally dependent on donations from individuals and organisations to fund the work that we do. There are many ways that you can help us to support people with Parkinson's.

If you would like to get involved, please contact our Supporter Services team on **0800 138 6593** or visit our website at parkinsons.org.uk/donate. Thank you.

Our information

All of our most up-to-date information is available at parkinsons.org.uk/information-support. If you'd prefer to read one of our printed leaflets or booklets, find out how to place an order at parkinsons.org.uk/ordering-resources or by calling **0300 123 3689**.

We make every effort to ensure that our services provide current, unbiased and accurate information. We hope that this will add to any professional advice you receive and help you to make any decisions you may face. Please do continue to talk to your health and social care team if you are worried about any aspect of living with Parkinson's.

If you'd like to find out more about how we put our information together, including references and the sources of evidence we use, please contact us at publications@parkinsons.org.uk

Carer's Allowance (WB08/2018)

Do you have any feedback about this information? Your comments will help us ensure our resources are as useful and easy to understand as possible. Please return to [Information Content team, Parkinson's UK, 215 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 1EJ](#), or email publications@parkinsons.org.uk. Thank you!

1. Please choose the option that best fits you.

- I have Parkinson's and was diagnosed in I care for someone with Parkinson's
 I have a friend or family member with Parkinson's I'm a professional working with people with Parkinson's
 Other (please specify)
-

2. Where did you get this information from?

- GP Specialist Parkinson's nurse Parkinson's UK local group Parkinson's UK local adviser
 Ordered directly from us Call to the helpline
 Other (please specify)
-

3. Has it answered all your questions?

- Yes, completely Yes, mostly Not sure Partly Not at all

4. How easy was it to understand?

- Very easy Easy Not sure Quite difficult Very difficult

5. Has it helped you manage your condition better, or make choices that have improved your life in some way?

- It helped a lot It helped a little No change It didn't help It made things worse

6. What is your ethnic background?*

- Asian or Asian British Black or Black British Chinese Mixed White British White other
 Other (please specify)
-

*We ask about your ethnicity to ensure our information is reaching a broad range of people. However, this question is optional.

Want to hear more from us?

- I would like a response to my feedback I would like to be a member of Parkinson's UK
 I'm interested in joining the Information review group, to offer feedback on Parkinson's UK information

If you've answered yes to any of these options, please complete your details below.

Name

Address

Email

Telephone

How would you prefer us to contact you? Email Post Phone

We will not pass on your details to any other organisation or third party. To find out more, read our privacy policy at parkinsons.org.uk/termsandconditions

Every hour, two people in the UK are told they have Parkinson's – a brain condition that turns lives upside down, leaving a future full of uncertainty.

Parkinson's UK is here to make sure people have whatever they need to take back control – from information to inspiration.

We want everyone to get the best health and social care. So we bring professionals together to drive improvements that enable people to live life to the full.

Ultimately, we want to end Parkinson's. That's why we inspire and support the international research community to develop life-changing treatments, faster. And we won't stop until we find a cure.

Together we can bring forward the day when no one fears Parkinson's.

Parkinson's UK

Free confidential helpline **0808 800 0303**

Monday to Friday 9am–7pm, Saturday 10am–2pm. Interpreting available.

NGT Relay **18001 0808 800 0303** (for use with smart phones, tablets, PCs and other devices).

For more information see www.ngts.org.uk

hello@parkinsons.org.uk

parkinsons.org.uk

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Please check our website for the most up-to-date versions of all our information.

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