

Carer's Allowance



Carer's Allowance is the main benefit for carers. If you are looking after someone for 35 hours a week or more, you may be eligible.

This factsheet applies to people living in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

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What is Carer's Allowance?

Carer's Allowance is the main benefit for carers. It is paid at £62.10 a week. The amount paid is reviewed each year in April, but isn't necessarily increased.

Carer's Allowance is not based on your National Insurance record. It is also not a means tested benefit based on your and any partner's income and capital. However, there is a cap on how much you can earn and still be entitled to claim Carer's Allowance (see page 6 for further details).

Carer's Allowance is taxable. However, carers will only have to pay tax if they have other sources of taxable income such as an occupational pension or earnings. Carer's Allowance on its own is below the threshold for paying tax.

Who can claim Carer's Allowance?

Not every carer can get Carer's Allowance. You may be eligible if you meet all the following conditions:

- ▶ you look after someone who gets a qualifying disability benefit
- ▶ you look after that person for at least 35 hours a week
- ▶ you are aged 16 or over
- ▶ you are not in full-time education
- ▶ you earn £110 a week (after deductions) or less
- ▶ you satisfy UK residence and presence conditions

Pages 4-8 provide more information about each of these conditions.

▶▶ **Note:** If you meet the above conditions but already receive certain benefits (including a State Retirement Pension), then the amount of Carer's Allowance you may be entitled to could be affected. See pages 9-11 for further details.

You look after someone who gets a qualifying disability benefit

This includes:

- the middle or the higher rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) (at either rate)
- Attendance Allowance (at either rate) or Constant Attendance Allowance of the normal maximum rate paid with the Industrial Injuries or War Pensions schemes
- Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP)

You look after that person for at least 35 hours a week

The 35 hours can include:

- time spent physically helping the person
- time you spend 'keeping an eye' on the person you look after, eg preventing them coming to harm by walking out of the house
- time spent doing practical tasks for them, eg cooking
- time taken doing practical tasks, even if you don't do them in the presence of the person you are looking after, may also count (for instance, if you look after someone who visits you regularly for the care they need, time spent preparing for the visit or cleaning up afterwards should count)

You must provide 35 hours of care for every week you claim Carer's Allowance (the 35 hours can be at any time of the day or night). For Carer's Allowance, a week runs from Sunday to Saturday. You cannot average out your hours over a number of weeks. However you are allowed certain breaks in care - see page 18 for further details.

You cannot add together the time you spend caring for different people to make up the 35 hours. If you care for more than one person, you must choose which person you claim for, as you can only get one payment of Carer's Allowance.

Similarly, if you share the caring role with another person, and you both provide at least 35 hours of care every week, only one of you can claim Carer's Allowance. You need to decide between you who should make the claim. The other person should seek advice about the benefits they can claim, and may be able to claim Carer's Credit for the time they are caring - see page 14 for further details.

If the person you are looking after is also caring for someone else, you can both claim Carer's Allowance for looking after different people as long as you both meet the criteria. This also applies if you are caring for each other.

You are aged 16 or over

You can make a claim up to three months before your 16th birthday, although the benefit will only be paid from the day you become 16.

You are not in full-time education

The meaning of 'full-time education' is complicated and may depend on a number of factors including the type of course you are doing.

Your course is likely to be considered 'full-time' if:

- your university, school or college describe the course as full-time (however there is some case law which suggests that some courses classed as 'full-time' may in fact not be classed as 'full-time' by the Carer's Allowance Unit if the actual course is for less than 21 hours a week - this is complicated so contact the Carers UK Adviceline for further advice - see final page for contact details); or
- you are required to do 21 hours a week or more of study (even if your university, school or college does not describe your course as full-time)

If you are in full-time education you also won't be able to get Carer's Allowance during temporary absences from your course including holiday periods.

If you are studying or thinking about studying then contact the Carers UK Adviceline for further advice – see final page for contact details.

▶▶ **Note:** When calculating the 21 hours, you include only hours spent in 'supervised study'. You don't include any time spent on meal breaks or on unsupervised study on or off the premises of the university, school or college.

Supervised study does not depend on whether your supervisor (ie teacher, tutor, lecturer) is present with you. If your study is undertaken to meet the reasonable requirements of your course, it normally counts as supervised study, regardless of whether that study is undertaken on or off the premises of the university, school

or college.

Unsupervised study means work beyond the reasonable requirements of your course.

In assessing your hours of attendance, evidence from your university, school or college about the amount of time you are expected to study to complete your course can be important.

You earn £110 a week (after deductions) or less

If you are in paid work (including self-employment) you cannot get Carer's Allowance if you earn more than £110 a week (after deductions).

If you are in employment and are paid monthly, your monthly earnings are normally multiplied by 12 months to get a yearly figure and then divided by 52 weeks to get a weekly figure.

If you are in employment and have fluctuating earnings it is possible for your earnings to be averaged out over a recognisable cycle of work or over five weeks.

If you are in self-employment your average weekly earnings are normally calculated by looking at a specific trading period, which is normally a year. However if you have only recently started your self-employment, or if there has been a change in your circumstances, then a different period more representative of your average weekly earnings can sometimes be used.

The following amounts are deducted from your gross weekly earnings (if you are in employment) or your net profit (if you are in self-employment) before your earnings are taken into account for Carer's Allowance:

- Income Tax
- National Insurance
- half of your contributions towards an occupational/personal pension

You can also deduct expenses that are incurred '*wholly and exclusively for the purposes of the business*', in the same way that you can for income tax purposes.

If, because of your work, you have to pay for someone to look after the person you care for, or a child under 16 who you or your partner get Child Benefit for, you can deduct those payments from your earnings up to the value of half your earnings (after the above deductions if they apply). However, this will not apply if the person you are paying is a close relative of either yourself or the person you are looking after (a close relative is a spouse, partner or civil partner, parent, son, daughter, brother or sister).

▶▶ **Example:** If you earn £120 a week (after tax and national insurance) you will not be entitled to Carer's Allowance. However, if you put £20 a week into a pension, half of the £20 can be deducted from your earnings. Your earnings for Carer's Allowance would therefore be $£120 - £10 = £110$ a week. As this is not over the earnings limit, you could claim Carer's Allowance.

Occupational or personal pensions do not count as earnings and you can be paid Carer's Allowance in addition to these. However, if you get extra Carer's Allowance for your partner their occupational/personal pension could affect this extra amount – see note below.

▶▶ **Note:** Some carers previously received extra benefit for their partner as part of their Carer's Allowance. This was called the adult dependant addition but is not available for new claims.

If you do receive taxable income such as occupational or personal pensions or part-time earnings you should inform the tax office about your Carer's Allowance, because it is a taxable benefit.

One exception to the earnings rule is that if you are working during an allowed break in care, and are still receiving Carer's Allowance, your earnings are ignored - see page 18 for details on breaks in care.

You satisfy UK residence and presence conditions

To satisfy the residence and presence tests you must meet both of the following conditions:

- you must have been present in Great Britain (which for this purpose also includes Northern Ireland) for 104 weeks out of the 156 weeks before claiming (two out of the last three years)
- you must be habitually resident

'Present' means physically present in Great Britain. Some people may be treated as being in Great Britain while abroad, eg members of the armed forces. Special rules apply to countries in the European Economic Area (EEA) and several others who Britain has agreements with. If you think this applies to you, you should seek advice. The AIRE Centre can provide advice on individual rights in Europe and can be contacted on **020 7831 4276** or by email at info@airecentre.org. You can also contact the Carers UK Adviceline - see final page for contact details.

The habitual residence test is a test to see if you normally live in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Republic of Ireland or the Isle of Man. The test will be applied if you have been living abroad. There is no precise legal definition of 'habitual residence'. Relevant factors are where you normally live, where you expect to live in future, your reasons for coming to this country, the length of time spent abroad before you came here, and any ties you still have with the country where you have come from.

You cannot usually get Carer's Allowance if you have immigration restrictions on your stay in the UK (eg you are not allowed to claim public funds which include most welfare benefits and housing and homelessness services). If this is the case, seek advice before claiming because a claim for Carer's Allowance could affect your future right to remain in the UK. You may be able to get free immigration advice from your local Law Centre. Find out more at www.lawcentres.org.uk Alternatively, you can search for local legal aid immigration advice at find-legal-advice.justice.gov.uk

Carer's Allowance and other benefits/income

Overlapping benefits

You cannot usually be paid Carer's Allowance if you receive one or more of the following benefits:

- State Retirement Pension
- contributory Employment and Support Allowance
- Incapacity Benefit
- Maternity Allowance
- Bereavement or widow's benefits
- Severe Disablement Allowance
- contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance

This is because of the 'overlapping benefits' rules.

This means that if you are getting more than the amount of Carer's Allowance from one of the above benefits, you cannot be paid Carer's Allowance, however you can still claim an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance.

To claim an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance you have to meet all of the conditions for Carer's Allowance and you must still make a claim for Carer's Allowance.

Having an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance can increase any means-tested benefits you are already getting or might mean you become entitled to means-tested benefits for the first time. This is because it means the carer premium, carer addition or carer element can be included in the calculation for means-tested benefits - see page 11 for further details.

However, if any of the benefits listed above are paid at less than the amount of Carer's Allowance, you could be paid a small amount of Carer's Allowance on top of the other benefit you get.

State Retirement Pension

While there is no upper age limit for claiming Carer's Allowance, payment of Carer's Allowance usually stops when you reach retirement age because your State Retirement Pension will be paid instead (unless your State Retirement Pension is less than the amount of Carer's Allowance, in which case you could continue to be paid a small amount of Carer's Allowance). This is because of the 'overlapping benefits' rules - see page 9 for further details.

However, you may still be able to get some extra money in recognition of your caring role, because you can still have an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance - see page 9 for further details.

It is therefore worth getting a benefit check if you are about to get your State Retirement Pension and want to know whether this 'underlying entitlement' will financially benefit you, or if you are already getting your State Retirement Pension and want to know whether it is worth claiming this 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance. Contact the Carers UK Adviceline for a benefit check - see final page for contact details.

Although you could ask to carry on being paid Carer's Allowance instead of getting your State Retirement Pension straight away (ie you could defer your pension) you will not build up any extra pension during that time. It is always important to seek further advice before making any decisions. Contact the Carers UK Adviceline - see final page for contact details.

If your partner is being paid a State Retirement Pension, and receives an extra amount for you, you can still claim Carer's Allowance (before you reach retirement age), but the amount your partner gets for you will be affected. If the amount of Carer's Allowance paid is higher than or equal to the amount your partner gets for you, then the addition will not be paid. If the Carer's Allowance amount is lower, you can be paid the difference through the 'adult dependent addition' of your partner's pension.

▶▶ **Example:** Rahila, 65, looks after her husband, Saajid, 66, who gets the lower rate of Attendance Allowance (£55.10 a week). They both get a State Retirement Pension (one of £119.30 a week and one of £100 a week) and as they have no other income or savings, they also get Guarantee Pension Credit of £18.25 a week. Their total weekly income is £292.65 a week.

Rahila then makes a claim for Carer’s Allowance. She is told that she cannot be paid Carer’s Allowance as she is getting her State Retirement Pension, but that she does meet all the criteria so has an ‘underlying entitlement’. Rahila informs the Pension Credit department of this and asks for a carer addition (which is £34.60 a week) to be included in their Pension Credit award.

Rahila and Saajid’s income increases by £34.60 a week to £327.25:

State Retirement Pension x 2	£219.30
Attendance Allowance	£55.10
Pension Credit (including carer addition)	£52.85

Pension Credit referred to here is the Guarantee Pension Credit. Rahila and Saajid are also entitled to some Savings Pension Credit, which is not included here.

Means-tested benefits

If you are paid Carer’s Allowance, it will count as income when your means-tested benefits are calculated. However your means-tested benefit calculations will include a carer premium, carer addition or carer element.

The **carer premium** is an extra amount of money included in the calculation of Income Support, income-based Jobseeker’s Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, and Council Tax Reduction (Rate Relief in Northern Ireland).

The **carer addition** is an equivalent amount paid with Pension Credit.

The **carer element** is an equivalent amount paid with Universal Credit.

The carer premium and carer addition are both worth £34.60 a week. The carer element is worth £150.39 a month (approx. £34.70 a week).

When you are awarded Carer’s Allowance or the ‘underlying entitlement’ to Carer’s Allowance let the relevant means-tested benefit department know so that the carer premium, carer addition or carer element can be included in your benefit calculation. The carer premium, carer addition or carer element can be backdated to the

date your Carer's Allowance was backdated to. The contact details for the relevant benefit departments should be on any letters they have sent to you.

What this means in practice is that if you are paid Carer's Allowance and are already getting a means-tested benefit, your means-tested benefit will decrease slightly, but overall you are likely to be better off by the amount of the carer premium, carer addition or carer element. If you are not already getting a means-tested benefit and are awarded Carer's Allowance it would be worth getting a benefit check to see if it might entitle you to any means-tested benefits. Contact the Carers UK Adviceline for a benefit check - see final page for contact details.

▶▶ **Note:** If you can't get Carer's Allowance because you are being paid another benefit that overlaps with it, you can still get the carer premium or addition if you have an 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance (see page 9). If you meet the criteria for Carer's Allowance (or would do so but for the fact that your earnings are too high) you can still get the carer element in Universal Credit even if you don't make a claim for Carer's Allowance.

▶▶ **Note:** Universal Credit is a means-tested benefit for working age people that is being gradually introduced. It is replacing Income Support, income-based Jobseekers Allowance, income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit, Child Tax Credit and Working Tax Credit. As Universal Credit is being rolled out gradually most carers will not be affected until 2017, although some carers living in certain areas will be affected.

For more information on Universal Credit visit www.carersuk.org/universal-credit or contact the Carers UK Adviceline - see final page for contact details.

▶▶ **Example:** Brenda, 30, looks after her friend Geoff, 40, who gets the standard rate of the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Brenda gets Income Support of £73.10 a week.

Brenda makes a claim for Carer's Allowance for looking after Geoff, and is paid Carer's Allowance of £62.10 a week. Her Income Support decreases to £45.60 a week but overall she is better off by £34.60 a week.

Income Support calculation (with Carer's Allowance in payment)

Applicable amount = personal allowance (£73.10) + carer premium (£34.60) = £107.70

Income = Carer's Allowance (£62.10)

Applicable amount (£107.70) minus income (£62.10) = £45.60 a week Income Support

Total income from Income Support (£45.60) plus Carer's Allowance (£62.10) = £107.70 a week (£34.60 more than when just Income Support of £73.10 a week was in payment).

The income of the person you care for

If you claim Carer's Allowance the disability benefit of the person you are looking after will not be affected.

However, if the person you are looking after is receiving means-tested benefits, your claim for Carer's Allowance could affect how much they get.

If they are receiving the severe disability premium (or severe disability addition in Pension Credit) as part of their means-tested benefits, they will lose this if you are paid Carer's Allowance.

The severe disability premium (or severe disability addition in Pension Credit) is £61.85 a week and might be included in the means-tested benefits of the person you are looking after if they meet all of the following conditions:

- ▶ They receive a qualifying disability benefit (the middle or the higher rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA); the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP); Attendance Allowance (at either rate) or Constant Attendance Allowance paid with the Industrial Injuries or War Pensions schemes; or Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP)).

- ▶ They live alone (there are some exceptions to this - such as if they live with other people who also receive a qualifying disability benefit they will all count as living alone).
- ▶ No one is paid Carer's Allowance for looking after them. If you aren't getting Universal Credit and just receive the 'underlying entitlement' to Carer's Allowance then the person you are looking after will not lose their severe disability premium (or addition). However if you are getting Universal Credit and aren't being paid Carer's Allowance but get the carer element in your Universal Credit award then the person you are looking after will lose their severe disability premium (or addition) - if you are getting Universal Credit contact the Carers UK Adviceline for further information - see final page for contact details.

You should therefore think carefully about how a claim for Carer's Allowance may affect the benefits of the person you are looking after.

▶▶ **Example:** Sarah and Joe have been friends for many years. Sarah lives alone and receives the standard rate of the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP). She also receives income-related Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). Because she receives a qualifying disability benefit (the standard rate of the daily living component of PIP), lives alone, and no one is currently being paid Carer's Allowance for looking after her, Sarah gets the severe disability premium included in her income-related ESA award. This is worth an extra £61.85 a week.

Joe looks after Sarah. If Joe claimed Carer's Allowance and was paid this for looking after Sarah, he could be £62.10 a week better off (although he might not be better off by this much if he is also receiving a means-tested benefit - see page 11 for further details.

However, Sarah would lose the severe disability premium in her income-related ESA award, and so she would be worse off by £61.85 a week.

Protecting your National Insurance record

Your National Insurance record is a summary of the National Insurance contributions paid through work, or credits awarded when you are unable to work. It is used to work out your entitlement to some state benefits, eg State Retirement Pension.

For each week that you receive Carer's Allowance you get a Class 1 National Insurance credit to help protect your record.

Carer's Credit

Carer's Credit is a way of protecting pension rights for people who are caring for someone but are not paying National Insurance contributions through paid work and are unable to claim Carer's Allowance. You do not get paid any money if you claim Carer's Credit but you get a National Insurance contribution credit to help protect your record. If you already get Carer's Allowance then you do not need to claim Carer's Credit as your pension is already protected.

To claim Carer's Credit you need to be looking after someone for a total of 20 hours or more a week. The person you are looking after must normally be getting one of the following:

- ▶ the middle or the higher rate of the care component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- ▶ the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) (at either rate)
- ▶ Attendance Allowance (at either rate) or Constant Attendance Allowance
- ▶ Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP)

If the person you're caring for doesn't get one of these benefits, you may still be able to get Carer's Credit. When you apply, fill in the *Care Certificate* part of the application form and get a health or social care professional to sign it.

Carer's Credit can also help with breaks in your caring role. You can claim Carer's Credit for any week within 12 weeks before the date you become entitled to Carer's Allowance or following the week you stop being entitled to Carer's Allowance. This is without meeting the 20 hour condition. This means you could have a break in caring for up to 12 weeks without losing your National Insurance contribution credit.

To claim Carer's Credit you need to apply to the Carer's Allowance Unit (England, Wales and Scotland) or the Disability and Carers Service (Northern Ireland) – see page 22 for contact details.

▶▶ **Example:** Sue cares for her brother Alfred. Alfred receives Attendance Allowance and Sue claims Carer's Allowance for looking after him. Alfred goes into hospital and his Attendance Allowance stops after 28 days. This means that Sue's Carer's Allowance will also stop after 28 days. Sue can claim Carer's Credit for up to 12 weeks after her Carer's Allowance stops.

How to claim Carer's Allowance

England, Wales and Scotland

- Visit www.gov.uk/carers-allowance/how-to-claim to apply online or download a claim form. On the online claim form the person you are caring for no longer has to sign their consent – see note below for more information.
- Request a claim pack *DS700* (or *DS700(SP)* if you are getting a State Retirement Pension) by calling the Carer's Allowance Unit on **0345 608 4321** (text phone 0345 604 5312, calls from typetalk are also welcome).

▶▶ **Note:** On the online claim form the person you are caring for no longer has to sign their consent. There is a disclaimer section where you declare that you have made/will make the person you are caring for aware of the potential consequences to their benefits (see the section 'the income of the person you care for'). A notification will be sent to the person you are caring for informing them that a Carer's Allowance claim has been made and the impact this may have on their benefits. Contact the Carers UK Adviceline if you need further advice – see final page for contact details.

Northern Ireland

- Request a claim pack *DS700* (or *DS700(SP)* if you are getting a State Retirement Pension) by calling the Disability and Carers Service on **028 9090 6186** (text phone 028 9031 1092, calls from typetalk are also welcome).
- Visit nidirect.gov.uk/carers-allowance-how-to-claim to apply online or to download a claim form.

You could ask for help to complete the claim form from a local advice agency. To find out about advice agencies in your area, please contact the Carers UK Adviceline – see final page for contact details.

When to claim

Carer's Allowance can generally be backdated for up to three months, so long as you meet the conditions for this period.

However, there is an exception where Carer's Allowance can get backdated further than three months. If you claim Carer's Allowance within three months of the person you care for getting a decision

about their qualifying disability benefit, then Carer's Allowance can get paid back up to the date the qualifying disability benefit was awarded from (as long as you meet the Carer's Allowance conditions for this whole period).

You need to ask for backdating on the claim form.

Carer's Allowance can also be claimed up to three months in advance, so long as you can show you will meet the conditions.

The decision

You will receive a written decision on your claim that tells you whether you have been awarded Carer's Allowance and from what date. If you are awarded the 'underlying entitlement' only, you will still receive a written decision letter. It is useful to keep your decision letters as they can be useful to evidence your caring role if you need to.

Challenging the decision

If you are refused Carer's Allowance, you can ask the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) (England, Wales & Scotland) or the Department for Communities (DfC) (Northern Ireland) to look at the decision again. You must do this before you appeal. This is called a mandatory reconsideration.

If you still disagree once they have done this you must lodge an appeal with the Tribunal Service (England, Wales & Scotland) or the Appeals Service (TAS) (Northern Ireland) and attach a copy of the mandatory reconsideration notice with the appeal.

It is important to challenge a decision or get advice as quickly as possible because there are time limits that generally mean you must take action within one month. If you fall outside of this time limit then it may still be possible to challenge the decision. Contact the Carers UK Adviceline for further information – see final page for contact details.

For more information about appealing a benefit decision visit www.carersuk.org/appealsguide

▶▶ **Note:** If you live in Northern Ireland and are challenging a benefit decision made before 23rd May 2016 then the process is different. Contact Carers NI for further information – see final page for contact details.

What to do if your circumstances change

If there is a change in your circumstances, it is important to report this as soon as possible to avoid any overpayment of benefit. You can report changes in circumstances by writing to or telephoning the Carer's Allowance Unit (England, Wales and Scotland) or the Disability and Carers Service (in Northern Ireland) – see page 22 for contact details.

Taking a break

You can take a break from caring for up to four weeks in every 26 weeks and still be paid Carer's Allowance. You must have been providing 35 hours or more of care a week for at least 22 of the past 26 weeks (up to eight weeks of a stay in hospital for either you or the person you are looking after can be included in the 22 weeks). The person you have been caring for must have been in receipt of a qualifying benefit for that period.

Carer's Allowance will continue to be paid for up to 12 weeks if you go into hospital. You must have been providing 35 hours or more of care a week for at least 14 of the past 26 weeks. The person you care for must have been in receipt of a qualifying benefit for that period.

Note that Carer's Allowance will stop if your total breaks add up to more than 12 weeks in the past 26 weeks.

Travelling abroad

You can continue to be paid Carer's Allowance for up to 26 weeks whilst you are abroad if you meet all of the following conditions:

- you go abroad with the person you look after
- he/she continues to receive a qualifying disability benefit
- the purpose of your trip is to look after them

In any other circumstances you can continue to be paid Carer's Allowance for up to four weeks as long as you have not had more than four weeks break from caring in the last 26 weeks. You may have had up to a further eight weeks break from caring in the last 26 weeks if the reason for the break was because you or the person you care for were in hospital.

If the person you look after goes into hospital

If the person you look after goes into hospital and you are no longer providing care for at least 35 hours a week, you can continue to get Carer's Allowance for up to 12 weeks or until their disability benefit stops.

The disability benefit will stop after:

- four weeks in hospital if the person you look after is aged 18+
- from 29th June 2016 (England, Wales & Scotland) and from 6th July 2016 (Northern Ireland) if you look after a child who is under 18 when they go into hospital, their disability benefit can continue to be paid for the whole time they are there

Note that Carer's Allowance will stop if your total breaks add up to more than 12 weeks in the past 26 weeks.

If the person you look after goes into hospital and you continue to provide care for at least 35 hours a week, you can continue to get Carer's Allowance until their disability benefit stops. This means that from 29th June 2016 (England, Wales & Scotland) and from 6th July 2016 (Northern Ireland) if the person you look after is a child who is under 18 when they go into hospital, and you continue to provide care for at least 35 hours a week, you can continue to get Carer's Allowance for the whole time they are there.

If your Carer's Allowance stops due to the person you look after being in hospital, you can continue to get the carer premium or addition paid within your means-tested benefits for eight weeks after your Carer's Allowance stops. If you were receiving Income Support as a carer, this can continue for up to eight weeks after your Carer's Allowance stops (and should increase to the amount you were receiving from both Carer's Allowance and Income Support).

If your Carer's Allowance stops due to the person you look after being in hospital and you are claiming Universal Credit, the carer element within your Universal Credit will also stop.

If the person you look after goes into residential care

If the person you are looking after goes into residential care, you will only be able to continue to claim Carer's Allowance if they continue to receive a qualifying disability benefit and you are still caring for them for at least 35 hours a week. Your Carer's Allowance will stop if you are no longer caring for them for at least 35 hours a week or their qualifying disability benefit stops.

The following benefits will usually stop after four weeks when someone moves into residential care:

- ▶ the care component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
- ▶ the daily living component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- ▶ Attendance Allowance

However, there are certain circumstances when these benefits can continue, such as where the person is paying their own fees. To find out more contact the Carers UK Adviceline – see final page for contact details.

If your Carer's Allowance stops due to the person you care for moving into residential care, you can continue to get the carer premium or addition paid with your means-tested benefits for eight weeks after your Carer's Allowance stops. If you are receiving Income Support as a carer, this can continue for eight weeks after your Carer's Allowance stops (and should increase to the amount you were receiving from both Carer's Allowance and Income Support).

If your Carer's Allowance stops due to the person you look after being in residential care and you are claiming Universal Credit, the carer element within your Universal Credit will also stop.

If the person you look after dies

You can usually continue to get Carer's Allowance for up to eight weeks after the person you look after dies, as long as you continue to meet the earnings, study, age and residence criteria (see pages 4-8).

If you are receiving means-tested benefits you can usually continue to get the carer premium or addition within your means-tested benefits for up to eight weeks after the person you look after dies. If you are receiving Income Support as a carer, this can also continue for up to eight weeks after the person you look after dies.

If you are receiving Universal Credit then the carer element usually continues for the rest of the assessment period in which the death occurred, and for the next two assessment periods.

▶▶ **Note:** If your Carer's Allowance stops due to a break in care there might be ways you can protect your National Insurance contribution record during the break - see page 14 for further details.

Further help

For information and advice contact the Carers UK Adviceline on **0808 808 7777** (open Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm) or email advice@carersuk.org

Information is also available on our website – visit www.carersuk.org

If you live in Northern Ireland you can contact Carers Northern Ireland for advice on **028 9043 9843**.

Other organisations

The Appeals Service Northern Ireland

The service that handles the appeals process for benefit decisions in Northern Ireland.

w: www.nidirect.gov.uk/the-appeals-service-northern-ireland-tas

Citizens Advice

Provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice.

England, Wales, Scotland & Northern Ireland

w: www.citizensadvice.org.uk

HM Courts and Tribunals Service

To search for a court or tribunal in England and Wales, or a tribunal in Scotland.

w: <https://courtribunalfinder.service.gov.uk/search/>

Independent Case Examiner

A free complaints review service for people who have made complaints about their claim for benefits.

England, Wales, Scotland & Northern Ireland

w: www.ind-case-exam.org.uk | **t:** 0345 606 0777 (textphone: 18001 0345 606 0777)

NI Ombudsman

The government official responsible for dealing with complaints about state services.

Northern Ireland

w: <http://www.ni-ombudsman.org.uk/> | **t:** 02890 233821 (textphone: 028 90897789)

Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman

The government official responsible for dealing with complaints about state services.

England, Wales & Scotland

w: www.ombudsman.org.uk | **t:** 0345 015 4033 (textphone: 0300 061 4298)

Benefit helplines

Attendance Allowance

England, Wales & Scotland

t: 0345 605 6055 (textphone: 0345 604 5312)

Northern Ireland

t: 028 9090 6178 (textphone: 028 9031 1092)

Benefit Enquiry Line

Northern Ireland

t: 0800 220 674 (textphone: 028 9031 1092)

Carer's Allowance Unit

England, Wales & Scotland

t: 0345 608 4321 (textphone: 0345 604 5312)

Northern Ireland

t: 028 9090 6186 (textphone: 028 9031 1092)

Disability Living Allowance

England, Wales & Scotland:

- *If you were born on or before 8 April 1948:*

t: 0345 605 6055 (textphone: 0345 604 5312)

- *If you were born after 8 April 1948:*

t: 0345 712 3456 (textphone: 0345 722 4433)

Northern Ireland

t: 028 9090 6182 (textphone: 028 9031 1092)

For Jobseekers Allowance, Income Support and Employment and Support Allowance:

Jobcentre Plus

England, Wales & Scotland:

New claims **t:** 0800 055 6688 (textphone: 0800 023 4888)

Existing claims **t:** 0345 608 8545 (textphone: 0345 608 8551)

Social Security or Jobs & Benefits Office

Northern Ireland: The address can be found in the phone book under Government – Social Security Agency.

Pension Credit

England, Wales & Scotland

t: 0800 99 1234 (textphone: 0800 169 0133)

Northern Ireland

New claims **t:** 0808 100 6165 (textphone: 0808 100 1165)

Help line **t:** 0300 123 3014 (textphone: 0808 100 1165)

Pension Service

England, Wales & Scotland

w: www.thepensionservice.gov.uk | **t:** 0345 60 60 265 (textphone: 0345 60 60 285)

Northern Ireland

w: www.dsdni.gov.uk | **t:** 0808 100 2658 (textphone: 0808 100 2198)

Personal Independence Payment

England, Wales & Scotland:

New claims **t:** 0800 917 2222 (textphone: 0800 917 7777)

Enquiry line **t:** 0345 850 3322 (textphone: 0345 601 6677)

Tax Credits

England, Wales, Scotland & Northern Ireland:

t: 0345 300 3900 (textphone: 0345 300 3909)

This factsheet is designed to provide helpful information and advice. It is not an authoritative statement of the law. We work to ensure that our factsheets are accurate and up to date, but information about benefits and community care is subject to change over time. We would recommend contacting the Carers UK Adviceline or visiting our website for the latest information.

This factsheet was updated in March 2016.

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Carers UK Adviceline

For expert information and advice about caring.



0808 808 7777

(open Monday to Friday,
10am-4pm)



advice@carersuk.org

Carers UK

20 Great Dover Street
London SE1 4LX

020 7378 4999
info@carersuk.org

Carers Wales

029 2081 1370
info@carerswales.org

Carers Scotland

0141 445 3070
info@carerscotland.org

Carers Northern Ireland

028 9043 9843
info@carersni.org

Carers UK makes life better for carers.

Caring will affect us all at some point in our lives.

With your help, we can be there for the 6,000 people who start looking after someone each day.

We're the UK's only national membership charity for carers. We're both a support network and a movement for change.

Visit us at our website to join us, help us or access more resources:

carersuk.org