

Did you know...

Children diagnosed with cancer may qualify for Disability Living Allowance?

What is Disability Living Allowance?

It is a non-means tested benefit paid for a child under 16. The allowance helps towards the extra costs that a serious illness – like cancer – or a disability may bring.

How does a child qualify?

Each child is assessed individually, and to qualify for the benefit they must:

- have a physical or mental disability, or both AND
- have a disability that is severe enough for them to need help with personal care or have walking difficulties or both.

There is a time factor too. The child must have needed help with either their personal care, mobility or both for at least three months. They must be likely to need help for at least another six months too.

Disability Living Allowance reform

The Government is currently looking at changing the DLA system and how applications for claims are assessed. CLIC Sargent will be feeding into this process and will continue to provide information on how this will affect children and young people with cancer, and their families.

Disability Living Allowance is made up of two parts

Part 1: Care

There are three different levels – higher, middle and lower – depending on the level of personal care a child needs.

As well as meeting the general qualifying conditions the child must also show that either

- their needs are substantially in excess of the normal requirements of children their age OR
- they have substantial care, supervision or watching over needs which younger children in normal physical or mental health may also have, but which children of her/his age and in normal physical and mental health would not have.

Personal care can be help with washing, dressing, eating, getting to and using the toilet, communicating with other people, keeping an eye on their medical condition or diet, settling in bed, or something like this.

Although there is no minimum age for applying for the care component of Disability Living Allowance, it will not be paid until the child reaches three months old, unless they are terminally ill (see 'Claiming under the special rules').

If a child is awarded either the middle or higher rate of Disability Living Allowance, a parent, guardian or carer maybe entitled to claim Carer's Allowance. You will need to be caring for them for 35 hours per week or more, over 16, not in full time education, or if you work, not earn more than £100 per week.*

Did you know...

Children diagnosed with cancer may qualify for Disability Living Allowance?

Claiming under the special rules

If a child has been diagnosed as terminally ill they can claim under what is known as the special rules. Just ask the child's doctor or consultant for a DS1500 form, and submit it with the completed application form.

A child who is terminally ill is entitled to the highest rate care component. However you will need to complete the questions in the application form concerning a child's mobility. This will determine what level of the mobility component can be awarded.

A child will be considered to be terminally ill if they have an illness which is progressive and they are expected to have six months or less to live. However the child's award will not stop if he/she lives for longer than the six month period.

Part 2: Mobility

This is paid at two different rates – higher and lower – depending on the level of help a child needs with their mobility.

The minimum age for claiming the mobility component is three, but for the lower rate the minimum age is five. As well as meeting the general qualifying conditions, the child must also show that either:

- they require substantially more guidance or supervision than other children of her/his age who are in normal physical and mental health OR
- children of her/his age who are in normal physical and mental health would not require guidance or supervision.

Help with mobility can be that the child cannot walk at all, can only walk short distances without feeling severe discomfort, the effort of walking could threaten their life or affect their health, or something like this.

You may be able to show that a child's needs are in excess of those normally required by comparing her/his situation with that of siblings, friends or other children of their age. It may also be helpful to keep a diary of the child's daily routine and the extra help provided.

Hospital inpatients

If a child is an inpatient when they first apply for Disability Living Allowance, their entitlement will not begin until they are discharged.

If a child is already receiving Disability Living Allowance and becomes an inpatient, their entitlement will continue for 12 weeks.

If a patient, guardian or carer is receiving Carer's Allowance, this will also continue for up to 12 weeks.



Did you know... Children diagnosed with cancer may qualify for Disability Living Allowance?

How to make a claim

As it is not possible to backdate a claim, it is important that Disability Living Allowance is claimed as soon as a child becomes entitled.

To make a claim for Disability Living Allowance and/or Carer's Allowance you can contact the Benefit Enquiry Line on **0800 882 200** and request an application form.

It is important to report any change of circumstances to the Benefits Centre when they occur, as the child may no longer meet the qualifying conditions to receive Disability Living Allowance, or may qualify for a higher award.

Need help?

CLIC Sargent Social Workers often help families to complete the form, or contact us on **0300 330 0803**** or **info@clicsargent.org.uk** and ask to speak to a benefits advisor.

You could also contact the Disability Benefits Centre on **0800 441 144** or visit your local Citizens Advice Bureau which you can find at **www.citizensadvice.org.uk**.

* 2010/11 amount

** Calls to 03 numbers are charged in the same way as calls to a geographic (01 or 02) number. Check your phone contract to see how much you pay for this type of call – it may be included in 'inclusive minutes'.

Ref: SER049

Version: 3

Reviewed and updated: March 2011

Next review and update: 2012

For information about references please contact us on 0300 330 0803 and ask to speak to the information manager.

www.clicsargent.org.uk

Registered charity number 1107328 and registered in Scotland (SC039857)

