



Attendance Allowance after brain injury

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Introduction

This factsheet has been written to offer information and guidance on the welfare benefit Attendance Allowance (AA).

Welfare benefits can be complicated and eligibility usually depends on personal circumstances, so this factsheet only offers general information on what the benefit is, the application process, tips for managing this with a brain injury, and what to do if you disagree with a decision.

If you need further detailed guidance or support with AA, there is a list of useful contacts at the end of this factsheet. Alternatively, visit www.gov.uk/browse/benefits.

What is AA?

AA is for people who have care needs or require supervision as a result of a disability and are over the State Pension age when those needs first arise. If you are below the State Pension age and need help with the cost of living because of your brain injury, you may be eligible for Personal Independence Payment instead. More information on this is available in the factsheet *Personal Independence Payment after brain injury*.

AA is not means-tested, so any savings and income that you have will not be taken into consideration for your eligibility.

An award for AA can sometimes lead to other benefits entitlements. It can be useful to seek advice from a benefits advisor about other benefits you may be entitled to. However, it is also important to seek advice if you are already in receipt of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment, as any entitlement to AA will replace these benefits and may leave you worse off, for instance if you have the mobility component since AA does not offer this.

Applying for AA

You can request a copy of the AA application form by contacting the AA helpline (details available at the end of this factsheet). This is often a good idea as it can help with backdated payments, since the date of the claim is set for when you order the form.

Alternatively, you can download the form yourself from the government website at www.gov.uk/government/publications/attendance-allowance-claim-form.



The AA claims form will ask you about any help you need with looking after yourself such as with your personal hygiene, getting dressed, moving around, eating and drinking and socialising. You will also be asked about any additional care needs you have during the night. You do not need to be living with a carer or anyone else to be eligible.

If you need assistance with completing the form, you can call the AA helpline.

In some very rare instances you may be asked to attend an assessment after returning your application form if further information about the impact of your brain injury is required.

After you apply

It usually takes around 6 weeks to receive an application decision letter.

If you are considered eligible for AA, you will either receive a lower rate or a higher rate. The rate received depends on how much care you need. Current rates are available on the government website at www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance.

AA will stop being paid if you need to go to hospital and are there for more than 28 days. This includes if you are collectively in for 28 days across separate visits. However, it will start to be paid again once you leave hospital. You must therefore inform the DWP about any hospital stays.

AA can be spent however you choose, it does not need to be spent on employing a carer. If you already have someone caring for you and you start to receive AA, your carer may become eligible for Carer's Allowance - seek advice from a benefits advisor for guidance on this. More information is available in the factsheet *Carer's Allowance after brain injury*.

If it is decided that you are not eligible for AA and you disagree with this, or you do not agree with the rate of AA you are on, you can ask for a mandatory reconsideration. Further guidance on this is available in the factsheet *Appealing a welfare benefits decision*.

Useful contact numbers

- **Attendance Allowance helpline**
Telephone: 0800 731 0122
Textphone: 0800 731 0317
Relay UK (if you cannot hear or speak on the phone): 18001 then 0800 731 0122
www.gov.uk/attendance-allowance



- **Citizens Advice**
Adviceline (England): 0800 144 8848
Advicelink (Wales): 0800 702 2020
Relay UK - if you can't hear or speak on the phone, you can type what you want to say: 18001 then 0800 144 8884
www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- **Turn2Us helpline:** 0808 802 2000
www.turn2us.org.uk

Acknowledgements: Many thanks to Peter R., solicitor and welfare benefits advisor at Potter-Rees-Dolan Solicitors for his contribution to reviewing this factsheet.

This factsheet was published in June 2021.