



# CARERS ALLOWANCE AND OLDER CARERS



This leaflet applies to carers aged **60** and over.

Carers Allowance (formerly called Invalid Care Allowance) is paid to people who care for someone who receives either Attendance Allowance or Disability Living Allowance Care Component (only at the middle or highest rate – the lower Care rate or the Mobility Component do not count).

As many people have discovered, you cannot get Carers Allowance and State Retirement Pension at the same time.

However, the rules changed in October 2002, enabling people 65 and over to claim Carers Allowance for the first time. There are two sorts of older carers who may be better off by this change.

## WHO SHOULD CLAIM?

- 1.** If you are over 60 (for a woman) and 65 (for a man) you probably get a State Retirement Pension.

Carers Allowance ‘overlaps’ with State Retirement Pension. If your State Retirement Pension is below the current rate for Carers Allowance, you will get extra money each week.

So – claim Carers Allowance

*Example:* **Jean** (63) gets a State Pension based on the number of years she worked, totalling £30.00 per week.

She cares for her disabled sister, and claims a Carers Allowance top-up to a new total of £44.85 per week – an extra £14.85 per week.

## HOW TO CLAIM

Call the DWP Benefit Enquiry Line on 0800 882200 and ask for the claim form DS700 (SP).

**2.** HOWEVER, even if your existing pension is more than the Carers Allowance, you should still consider claiming if you:

- ✓ get Pension Credit, **or**
- ✓ get Council Tax Benefit/Housing Benefit, **or**
- ✓ do not get the above **but** have low capital.  
There is no upper capital limit for Pension Credit. For Housing or Council Tax Benefit the capital limit is £16,000.

- ◆ The reason for this is that you will have an ‘underlying entitlement’ to Carers Allowance (this is where the only reason that you cannot actually receive Carers Allowance is because you already get another benefit – e.g. Retirement Pension)

But this will still be enough to entitle you to an extra amount on your Pension Credit/Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit, called a Carer Premium or Carer Addition. Which means more money!

- ◆ So the Carer Premium/Addition might mean getting more of these benefits **or** becoming entitled for the first time.

*Examples:*

**Jamilla** (70) cares for her disabled son. Her weekly state pension is more than Carers Allowance but she is also entitled to Pension Credit. She claims Carers Allowance and is sent a letter saying she has “underlying entitlement” to it. She tells her local Pension Service. This means an increase of over £27.00 to her weekly Pension Credit.

**Graham** (69) tried to get Pension Credit last year, but was refused as his other pensions were slightly too much. He looks after his disabled wife, and so he now makes a claim for Carers Allowance. His pensions are more than the Carers Allowance but he still has “underlying entitlement” to it. This means he is now entitled to Pension Credit, which includes a “Carer Addition”. He gets extra weekly income and full Housing/Council Tax Benefit.

## **HOW TO CLAIM**

### **Step ONE**

Make a claim for Carers Allowance

- Ring the 0800 882200, or the Pension Service Office which pays your State Pension.
- Ask for the form DS700 (SP).
- Fill in the form and send it back in the freepost envelope they provide.

### **Step TWO**

They will send you a decision. If you have “underlying entitlement” the letter will say so.

### **Step THREE: either**

**1a.** If you are not already getting Pension Credit, make a claim by getting the claim form from your local Pension Service office. When you make the claim remember to show them your Carers Allowance decision letter,

**or**

**1b.** If you do get Pension Credit already, just tell the Pension Service about your Carers Allowance decision.

**or**

**2.** For those only getting Housing or Council Tax Benefit tell your local Council Benefit Sections about the Carers Allowance decision.

## **POINTS TO REMEMBER**

- ◆ If the person you are caring for gets a special element of Income Support / income-related Employment & Support Allowance (called the Severe Disability Premium) or Pension Credit (called the Severe Disability Addition), your claim may reduce their benefit, so **Check First**.
- ◆ If you have any doubts or queries, **seek advice** – see over.

## **OTHER BENEFITS?**

- ◆ Carers should check out the way to reduce your Council Tax called Carers Discounts. It is not mean-tested, so your income or capital won't affect it – contact your local Council Tax office for details.

For information, advice or help filling in the forms contact the following:

**Citizens Advice Bureaux**

1<sup>st</sup> Floor, Chestnut House  
North Street  
**Rugby**, CV21 2AQ  
Tel: 01788 541000

The Parish Rooms  
Welcome Street  
**Atherstone**, CV9 1DU  
Tel: 0844 499 4192

Old Market Tavern  
25 Congreve Walk  
**Bedworth**, CV12 8LX  
Tel: 024 7631 1119

10 Hamilton Terrace  
**Leamington Spa**, CV32 4LY  
Tel: 01926 457900

To book appt in **Nuneaton**  
call 024 7635 1049

25 Meer Street  
**Stratford-upon-Avon**, CV37 6QB  
Tel: 01789 293299 for advice or  
01789 261966 to book appt

**For Carers Advice, Information and Support .....**

**Guideposts Carers Support Service**

*(For Nuneaton, Bedworth, North  
Warwickshire and Rugby)*  
44-45 Church Street  
Nuneaton  
CV11 4AD  
Tel: 024 7638 5888  
e-mail: [carerssupport@guidepoststrust.org.uk](mailto:carerssupport@guidepoststrust.org.uk)

**S Works Carers Support Service**

*(For Leamington Spa, Warwick,  
Stratford and South Warwickshire)*  
8b Holly Court  
Holly Farm Business Park  
Honiley, Kenilworth, CV8 1NP  
Tel: 01926 485486  
e-mail: [info@swcss.f9.co.uk](mailto:info@swcss.f9.co.uk)

**For Disabled people.....**

**D.I.A.L.**

*(Nuneaton & Bedworth only)*  
New Ramsden Centre  
School Walk, Attleborough  
Nuneaton, CV11 4PJ  
Tel: 024 7634 9954

**The Rowan Organisation**

Eliot Park Innovation Centre  
Barling Way  
Nuneaton, CV10 7RH  
Tel: 0800 783 1755  
e-mail: [info@therowan.org](mailto:info@therowan.org)

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