

Attendance allowance and leukaemia



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TOOLKIT



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Introduction

If you have leukaemia, or provide care for someone who does, there are number of welfare benefits you may be entitled to if you are over State Pension Age and you have an illness or disability. The benefits can help towards extra costs that often make life more expensive if you have a disability. Unfortunately, it is all too common for older people to struggle with their finances especially with the rising of utility bills and lower pensions.

Attendance Allowance (AA) is one of the benefits you may be able to apply for if you are affected by blood cancer. It is paid by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) if you have reached State Pension age and need help with personal care because of a disability or a health problem, such as blood cancer. Knowing whether you are eligible and navigating, the process can be complicated.

Finances can be a worry, whatever stage of your leukaemia journey you are at. From our survey, "Living with leukaemia", we found that:

- 43% of all patients report a negative impact on finances AND:

- 64% of those said that this was due to an increase in their costs
- 70% of those said this was due to a reduction in income

One of the reasons for a reduction in income is that the majority of older adults do not work and have fewer options for continued income. Following a diagnosis, some people experience long-term side effects from their treatment; the most common we hear about are fatigue and pain in the bones and joints. If these kinds of symptoms are affecting your day-to-day life, and you are finding it more difficult to complete personal tasks and you need more help, you may be

Introduction (cont.)

eligible for extra help in the form of Attendance Allowance.

This toolkit will also give you a step-by-step guide for claiming Attendance Allowance, including information to help you check if you are entitled to it, how much you could get, tips for completing the claim form and what other help you can get when on Attendance Allowance. This will give you a better understanding of the process.

Please be advised that if you are already receiving Personal Independence Allowance (PIP) you will continue to receive this benefit beyond reaching your State Pension Age.

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Summary of key points

Should I apply for Attendance Allowance?

It is possible to be eligible to claim attendance allowance but it depends on how your leukaemia affects you, as everyone is different and not affected in the same way. Being eligible for attendance allowance may also lead to "passporting", where you become eligible for other benefits such as free prescriptions.

What is Attendance Allowance?

Attendance allowance is a non-means tested benefit (i.e. is not awarded based on your income), aiming to provide extra money if you have reached State Pension Age, and you need help with personal care as a result of a disability or long-term illness. There are two rates of pay depending on your situation. The enhanced rate pays £89.60 and the standard rate pays £60.00.

If you have a regular carer, who cares for you for at least 35

hours, they may also be entitled to Carer's allowance.

How do I apply for Attendance Allowance?

There are three stages to apply for attendance allowance. It can take around 6 weeks to make a claim, unless you have a terminal diagnosis.

- **Step 1** – To start your claim contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) attendance allowance helpline on **0800 731 0122**, or use textphone **0800 731 0317** and ask them to send you a form, if you live in England, Scotland or Wales.

In Northern Ireland, you can call the Disability and Carers Service helpline on **0800 587 0912**, or use textphone **028 9031 1092** and ask them to send a form. You can download an application at [indirect.gov.uk/articles/attendance-allowance](https://www.indirect.gov.uk/articles/attendance-allowance). You can also visit your local Social Security or Jobs and Benefits office.

Summary of key points (cont.)

- **Step 2** - Complete the form sent to you. The form asks for your personal details, information about your disabilities and long-term illnesses, medications you are taking, and details of any health professionals involved in your care. The form then goes on to ask what difficulties you have and the help you need with personal care.
- **Step 3** - Send your completed form to DWP, making sure you keep a copy of the form. The decision maker at DWP will look at your claim form and you may be invited to attend an assessment. You can request a home visit for the assessment. You will then receive a decision.

Challenging a decision

DWP will inform you of the decision of your claim. If your claim has been turned down, you can challenge the decision. Talk to our welfare officer by emailing advocacy@leukaemiacare.org.

[uk](#) or calling **07903 219525** or read our advice on challenging a benefit decision toolkit.

Reporting changes

If your health condition (due to your leukaemia or other illnesses) or situation (such as who lives with you) changes, you should report changes to DWP as this may affect your entitlement to the benefit.

Applying for Attendance Allowance – a case study

We asked Margaret (not her real name), a patient with a diagnosis of the chronic condition Essential Thrombocythaemia (ET), to tell us about their experience of applying for Attendance Allowance.

Why did you want to apply for Attendance Allowance?

I wanted to apply for attendance allowance because my conditions were getting worse and will not get better. My difficulties included angina attacks, day and night, extreme fatigue and an inability to walk very far. This is due to the effects of my chemotherapy for blood cancer and all other drugs I need to take. I do try very hard to keep going but it is very difficult some days. I also needed help with dressing and undressing frequently because of arthritis. My poor husband has a lot to cope with.

How did you feel before you started applying for Attendance Allowance?

I was very anxious before contacting you because I felt I did not deserve it. I did not fully understand the process before contacting you. I had a good idea but felt somewhat inadequate and uncertain of doing it myself. I decided to reach out for help because of the impact my conditions were having on both my husband and, of course, myself.

How did Leukaemia Care's advice help with the process?

Thank you so much for helping me with applying for attendance allowance. I could not have done this without your support. Leukaemia Care were the support I needed just at the right time. The help given convinced me I was justified in applying for attendance allowance and the welfare officer was a tremendous help

Applying for Attendance Allowance – a case study (cont.)

with filling in all of the forms. I appreciate all the effort the welfare officer made in sorting me out and cannot thank her enough. The process was rather stressful but with your help, it was successful.

How has the receiving the attendance allowance helped you?

I am now able to pay for any further help I need and am not afraid to use more fuel and electricity when necessary. I can turn up the central heating without worrying too much about increased costs or use the car more frequently without worrying about the extra cost of fuel. I can buy myself a new pair of glasses, get my hair done and eat a proper balanced diet.

Should I apply for Attendance Allowance?

Most patients, whether they have an acute or chronic leukaemia diagnosis, will some point feel unwell and may need some help with their care needs. This is completely normal and to be expected, even if you feel physically fit before diagnosis or do not immediately need treatment.

You may have mixed feelings about applying for attendance allowance or not sure of what the entitlement conditions are. Many ill or disabled people over the age of 65 are missing out on attendance allowance due to not fully understanding their entitlements. It is important to remember that you did not choose to be ill and having less to worry about in terms of finances will leave you less stressed and better able to focus on getting better.

Some people feel that claiming benefits lessens their sense

of independence but claiming Attendance Allowance may actually have the opposite effect; for example, attendance allowance can be spent on help in the home, for cleaners and gardeners, to buy care services and it may help you to stay independent in your own home for as long as possible. If you have limited mobility, you can put it towards the cost of a car or a mobility scooter and paying petrol money to people who give them lifts or taxis which would get you out and about more. There are no limitations how you spend Attendance Allowance, you can spend it however you want that makes life a bit easier. Benefits are there to help those most in need, so try not to be harsh on yourself for needing to accept some help.

Being eligible for some benefits can also lead to a process known as "passporting"; this is where entitlement to one form

Should I apply for Attendance Allowance? (cont.)

of help can lead to automatic entitlement for other forms of help. You can read more about this further down in the section, impact on other benefits. For more information, please read out other benefits toolkits:

<https://media.leukaemiacare.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/BENEFITS-V2-for web.pdf>.

What is Attendance Allowance?

Attendance Allowance (AA) is available if you have reached State Pension Age. You also need to have a disability or illness, such as leukaemia, and have difficulties looking after yourself. Attendance Allowance is a non-means tested benefit, which means AA can be paid regardless of your income, savings and National Insurance contribution record.

Instead of focusing on how your leukaemia and other illnesses

affect you, it focuses on whether you need attention or supervision from others in order to live safely or to help you with personal care, such as getting in and out of bed, having a bath/shower, getting dressed or going to the toilet. Entitlement is based on the help you require, not the help you actually receive at the time of applying.

Help could also include support you need outside the home, such as when attending appointments at the hospital or shopping. It does not matter if no one gives you any help at the moment, as long as you can show that you need it. Attendance allowance should then allow you to purchase the help in the future.

How much money could I get?

There are two different rates of AA, a lower and enhanced rate.

It is also assessed whether you need help at night, in the day or both.

The amount you could receive per week in 2021/22 is:

- **Lower £60.00 per week.**
You get this if you need supervision or attention either the day OR during the night.
- **Enhanced £89.60 per week.**
You get this if you need supervision or attention throughout the day and night, or if you are terminally ill.

In addition to the rates above, you will also qualify for a Christmas bonus every year, which is usually £10. The bonus is paid automatically and will not affect any other benefit you might receive.

What would be the impact of receiving attendance allowance on my other benefits?

When calculating other means-tested benefits such as Pension Credit, Universal Credit and Housing Benefit, income from AA is not taken into consideration. If you are entitled to AA, the amount of money you receive from other benefits may even increase. An award of Attendance Allowance can also mean that you become eligible for a means-tested benefit or tax credits for the first time. It would be a good idea to get a benefit check if you have been awarded Attendance Allowance. You can contact our Welfare Officer by emailing advocacy@leukaemiacare.org.uk or calling **07903 219525**, to find out what benefits you are entitled to.

If you awarded Attendance

Should I apply for Attendance Allowance? (cont.)

Allowance, and you have someone looking after you, they may be entitled to claim Carer's Allowance, Carer's Credits or the carer element of Universal Credit. You need to be over the age of 16 and caring for someone for at least 35 hours a week. You can read more about carer's rights in our other toolkits: [LINK HERE TO CARERS TOOLKITS](#).

You will also be exempt from the 'Benefit Cap' if there is anyone of working age living with you. In other words, you or other people in your household will not get less money from other benefits if you get Attendance Allowance.

How will I be paid Attendance Allowance?

Attendance Allowance is normally paid every four weeks in arrears and will be paid directly into your bank, building society or Post Office account. If you do not have any of these

accounts or something similar, you can ask to use the Payment Exception Service, which allows you to withdraw your benefits from Pay Point outlets.

It can also be paid to an appointee, someone acting on your behalf or someone with power of attorney if you are not able to act for yourself.

Attendance Allowance can be paid for a minimum of six months or longer if you carry on having care needs.

What are the criteria for receiving Attendance Allowance?

To be eligible for Attendance Allowance you must have reached pension age, and satisfy the following conditions:

- Be living in the UK when you make a claim, and where you normally live. You must usually have lived in the UK

for six months in the last year and not be subject to immigration control.

- Care needs for six months prior to making a claim
- You will need to fulfil one of the disability tests (if you are terminally ill, there are special rules, see section if you have a terminal illness - fast tracking)

Do I meet the criteria for the disability tests?

In order to fulfil the disability conditions for Attendance Allowance, you must need help with personal care because of a physical or mental disability, or someone to watch over you. The terms used are:

- **‘Attention’** - if you need help with personal care.
- **‘Supervision’** - if you need someone to watch over you.

Note: It is important to

remember whether you live alone, with other people or have a carer it does not matter if you are not receiving attention or supervision now. What matters is that you need it.

Day time test:

To qualify for Attendance Allowance you have to show that:

1. You need "frequent attention throughout the day", in connection with bodily functions, including physical functions such as seeing, hearing, speaking and eating.
2. Another way to qualify is to show that you need "continued supervision" throughout the day, for example, if you need someone to check on you regularly you to prevent the risk of causing substantial danger to yourself or others due to your

Should I apply for Attendance Allowance? (cont.)

disability. An example of this may be, you need someone to check on you if you are at risk of having an accident because you:

- Suffer from dizzy spells, fits, seizures, memory loss or confusion
- Are prone to falls indoors as well as outdoors

Night time test:

To qualify for attendance allowance, you must show:

1. That because of your disability or health condition, you need "prolonged or repeated attention" from another person in connection with bodily functions.
2. You need another person to be awake for prolonged periods or at frequent intervals to watch over you in order to avoid substantial danger to you or others. For example, you might need someone

to help you get up and use the toilet or take medication during the night. You will need to show that you need help with personal care at least twice during the night, or that the help you need in one period is for at least 20 minutes.

Example of someone who may be entitled

Harold is 70 and was diagnosed with Essential Thrombocythaemia (ET) eight months ago. He also has arthritis, which makes movement difficult for him. He suffers with dizzy spells, intense fatigue and needs help with getting up in the mornings, washing, dressing, getting in and out of chairs and moving about. His condition is not likely to improve. He is able to apply for Attendance Allowance because he needs help with personal care. The rate he is

awarded depends on whether he requires support during the day and during the night.

When can I apply?

In addition to the disability criteria, you must also have had the needs (i.e. qualified for Attendance Allowance for 6 months before you apply for the benefit. (If you are terminally ill, you can make a claim straight away).

You cannot apply for attendance allowance if you are living in a council care home or in hospital.

If you are under State Pension age, you cannot claim attendance allowance but can claim Personal Independence Payment (PIP). If you receive PIP or Disability Living Allowance when reaching State Pension Age, then you can continue to receive these.

How do I apply for Attendance Allowance?

The standard Attendance Allowance process has three steps and can take around 6 weeks to deal with your claim, including waiting for a response to the application, unless the claim is made under the special rules, which is dealt with much quicker.

Step 1 – call to begin your claim

It is important to start the application as soon as possible. In order to apply for Attendance Allowance (AA), you will first need to contact the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) AA helpline. Someone can call on your behalf, but you need to be there with them at the time. It is best to phone for a form because your claim will be backdated to the date you phoned DWP to log the claim as long as you return the form back within six weeks. The date you need to return it will be stamped on the form.

You can also download and print an application form from gov.uk/attendance-allowance. If you download an application form, you will only be paid from the date that the DWP receive the form.

When you call, it is Important to have the following information to hand:

- Your contact details, e.g.,

telephone number and address

- Your date of birth
- Your National Insurance number (found on letter about tax, pensions, or benefits)

You can call the Department for Work and Pensions Attendance Allowance claim line on **0800 731 0122** or use textphone **0800 731 0317** and ask them to send you a form, if you live in England, Scotland or Wales.

In Northern Ireland, you can call the Disability and Carers Service helpline on **0800 587 0912** or use textphone **028 9031 1092** and ask them to send a form. You can download an application at indirect.gov.uk/articles/attendance-allowance.

You can also visit your local Social Security or Jobs and Benefits office.

You will not have to answer any

detailed questions about your health when you first make the call. You will be sent the form instead.

If you have a terminal illness – fast tracking

Receiving the news that your leukaemia is terminal can be very shocking. Any extra financial help during this time would allow you to be comfortable in the last few months of your life, without needing to worry about money. It could also mean that you have the finances to do activities you might not otherwise had the resources to do. Therefore, we encourage you to apply for all financial assistance available as soon as possible after you receive your news.

Terminal illness can allow you to be fast tracked for certain benefits, including Attendance Allowance, which are then

automatically paid at the highest rate possible. You will not have to complete the part of the claim form that asks about your personal care or supervision needs. This is called the special rules. If you have been given a terminal diagnosis, these special rules will ensure that you get the support you need as soon as possible. Under these special rules, you do not have to satisfy the qualifying period (that you have had the disability or been in ill health for at least six months). Your claim will be dealt with quickly and a medical examination is not normally necessary.

Someone can make the claim on your behalf if you are terminally ill, with or without your knowledge. This makes it possible for you to receive AA under the special rules without knowing your prognosis should you wish.

Step 1 – call to begin your claim (cont.)

A doctor must confirm that you are reasonably expected to die within the next six months to qualify as a terminal diagnosis. If you are in this position, you will be given a form called the DS1500. This is a factual statement made by your medical team, hospital or specialist nurse, which you can send to the assessors along with your Attendance Allowance application form.

The application process can be started before the form is received from the doctor. When you phone the DWP to make an Attendance Allowance claim, you will be asked if you want to claim under the special rules. Just say yes and then send the DS1500 form to the assessor once you have it from the doctor.

If you live beyond the initial six months diagnosis, then you will continue to keep receiving Attendance Allowance

as benefits awarded under the special rules are usually reviewed every three years.

Step 2 – Completing the form

The Department of Work and Pensions decides a lot of the claims purely on the information you put in your claim form, so it is important to clearly explain the problems you have because of blood cancer and any other health problems.

You will need to complete a lengthy claim form (30 pages long). This can feel overwhelming; you should set aside a good amount of time to complete it. You may want to complete the application in more than one sitting; the online version of the form allows you to save your progress and come back to it later.

Who can help me apply for attendance allowance?

We recommend you get help from our welfare officer to fill in the form by emailing advocacy@leukaemiacare.org.uk.

[org.uk](http://www.leukaemiacare.org.uk) or calling **07903 219525**. The whole form takes about two hours to discuss.

Things to consider before completing the form

The first few pages of the form ask for your personal details and are quite straightforward to complete.

Before completing the form, it would be a good idea to collect the following information, this will help you to ensure you have everything you need to complete the application.

- National Insurance number and your hospital record number
- GP name and the surgery's address
- Details of medication
- Details of anyone consulted about your illness or

Step 2 – Completing the form (cont.)

disability in the last twelve months, apart from a GP

- Name, address and dates of stay in a hospital, care home or similar place

The form will then ask about any disabilities or health conditions, you have and if you see any doctors or specialists. You can list your disabilities, how long you have had them and any medication you take.

Remember that Attendance Allowance is not based on what your diagnosis is (e.g. what leukaemia type you have or how many illnesses you have been diagnosed with), but on how your daily life is affected by your leukaemia and/or other conditions and whether you need attention and supervision as a result of how your leukaemia (and other illnesses) affects you.

You may find it helpful to talk about aspects of your daily life

with someone who cares for you to make sure that you capture everything that could support your application.

The most important parts of the form are question 27 to question 43, as this is where you explain how your leukaemia (and any other health problems) affect you. You will need to explain:

- Help you need during the day
- Help you need during the night
- What difficulties you have that mean you need that help
- When you began to need help

What evidence do the DWP need on the form to make a decision on my claim?

The most important source of evidence used to support your claim are the answers you provide on the claim form.

It may be useful for you to use

a care diary for a minimum of a week, showing how your condition affects your daily life, the tasks you find difficult and the type of help you need to make life easier. Keeping a diary is one of the best ways to show that you need frequent attention throughout the day.

Make notes of tasks you need help with during the day, night, or both, such as:

- Getting in and out of bed and sleeping
- Getting up from the toilet
- Getting in and out of the bath and shower safely
- Dressing and undressing
- Getting around indoors and outdoors, such as shopping, visiting friends or family, going to a religious activity or doing a hobby such as gardening or singing lesson.
- Help with medication and

treatment

- Help communicating with others

This may be especially helpful if the impact of your leukaemia (and/or any other health conditions) varies from day to day. A diary showing dates and times can illustrate a compelling picture of your needs over an average day. For example, we know that symptoms and side effects like fatigue can be worse on some days than others for leukaemia patients. This is especially those who are receiving blood transfusions or other treatments delivered in cycles over time.

You can attach the diary to the completed AA claim form to send to DWP.

Please see the following example of a care diary and the sort of things you might include.

Step 2 – Completing the form (cont.)

A lady, aged 75, with a diagnosis of chronic lymphocytic leukaemia and arthritis and who lives with her husband

Sunday 5th Sep	Task	What problems I had or what help I need	How long it took	How many times in the day I needed that help
7.30am	Getting out of bed	I had problems with dizziness and stiffness when going from lying down to sitting up. My husband is on hand to support me, help me to the side of the bed, and get my bearings. He lays my slippers out for me.	10 minutes	once
7.40am	Making a drink	My husband makes me a cup of tea.	5 minutes	Four times

7.50am to 8.35am	Washing and dressing	My husband helps me get into the shower. He then helps me to get dressed as I struggled to pull my top over my head and do the buttons up.	45 minutes	Twice
9am to 9.10am	Taking medication	My husband reminds me to take my medication. He then takes them out of the packet to give to me.	5 minutes	Four times
	Going to the toilet	My husband helps me get up from the chair to go to the toilet.	10 minutes	five times
	Move around indoors			
6pm to 6.45pm	Cooking tea	My husband cooked the tea. I am not able to stand for too long. I cannot lift heavy pots and pans.	45 minutes	once
8pm to 8.10pm	Getting ready for bed	My husband helps me to get undressed, and put my nightclothes on.	10 minutes	once
Other notes about the day	Today was the day before my next blood transfusion, which is always my most difficult day.			

Step 2 – Completing the form (cont.)

It does not matter if you are not getting any help now, the important thing to remember is that you need the help. For example, you might need to hold on to furniture to move around your home or have difficulty getting to and from the toilet and are currently making do on your own but it would be less stressful for you to have help. Remember to write every difficulty you have and the total number of times it happens.

Here are more top tips to help you complete the form:

1. Give detailed information

It is extremely important to give as much information as you can about the help and supervision you need in the blank boxes in each section for questions 27-43. The more information you can give, the more the assessor making the decision can

understand what life is like. Be realistic, do not underestimate your needs, and do not worry about repeating yourself. You need to describe how another person helps you or would be able to help you if you had the resources to pay someone.

For example, rather than saying, "I have difficulty getting in the bath", you should say, "I need help to get in and out of the bath. My medication makes me feel dizzy so I cannot safely get into it on my own but could if I had some help. The last time I had a bath by myself I fell in and banged my head. Also my wife helps me to wash my hair, as I cannot lift my arms up".

In summary, each section should include the following:

- Is it painful for you to do something alone?
- Does it take a long time?
- Does it put you or someone

else in danger to do it currently?

- Does it make you feel breathless, unsteady or any discomfort?

Example answer for question

29: Do you usually have difficulty or do you need help with washing, bathing, showering or looking after your appearance?

"Rose has Essential Thrombocythaemia (ET) and arthritis in her hands, and knees.

"To use the shower, my husband will ensure that I am safe and will need to be close by. I cannot use the bath. If I am feeling dizzy or breathless, my husband can access the shower quickly. Due to my ET, I am experiencing fatigue and weakness and so cannot stand for long periods. I do not have grab rails or a stool but think this would make

washing easier for me. Often I have a wash instead of taking a shower because it takes me a long time to shower and makes me feel unsafe."

2. Make sure to consider all activities you do day to day

When filling in the form, you can include any of the following:

- **Washing** - do you need help getting into and out of the bath or shower, washing your hair or shaving?
- **Going to the toilet** - do you need help going to the toilet during the day or night? Do you suffer from incontinence? Might you need help with changing beds? Do you need help adjusting your clothes after using the toilet?
- **Getting dressed and undressed** - Do you need help with fastenings, shoelaces and buttons? Do you need help with putting clothes on

Step 2 – Completing the form (cont.)

or taking off?

- **Mealtimes** - do you need any help with eating or drinking? Do you have difficulty operating the oven, opening cans or doing other things in the kitchen?
- **Medical treatment** - Do you need help identifying your tablets? Reading and understanding instructions? Do you need help with administering medication or treatment to yourself? Do you need help with dealing with the side effects of your medication?
- **Getting around indoors and outdoors** - Do you need help navigating stairs, moving from room to room or getting in and out of chairs or bed? Do you need help when completing hobbies such as gardening, visiting friends and family, attending hospital appointments?

- **Communicating** - If you have poor eyesight, do you need help reading your post? If you are deaf, do you need help communicating? Can you hear the doorbell? Are you able to answer the phone? Read and write letters?
- **Supervision** - Are you in danger of falling? Do you need someone to watch over you in case you have a seizure or a fall? Do you become confused easily? Do you feel you might be in danger if no one is there to support you? Do you need help to calm down during a panic attack?
- **Shopping** - Do you need help to read labels? Are you able to count your money and change? Do you need someone to guide you to and around the shops? Do you need help to put away the shopping?

It is important to explain any

falls, stumbles or accidents you have had in the past, and how often you have them.

3. Describe your equipment or adaptations you already have

If you have equipment or adaptations that help you with your daily life, explain any help you need to use them, and any help you need from another person in addition to the equipment and adaptations. Remember to list them all and clarify exactly what they are used for.

4. Don't be confined to the space on the form

If you need more space, include a covering letter or extra paper. Put your name and national insurance number on the letter or extra paper, sign it and attach to the rest of the claim pack.

Remember: We recommend that you contact the welfare

officer by emailing advocacy@leukaemiacare.org.uk or calling **07903 219525** who would be happy to help you complete the form to ensure that it has enough detail.

Step 3 - Provide supporting information

What else do I need to provide with the form for the DWP to make a decision on my claim?

The most important source of evidence used to support your claim are the answers you provide on the claim form. However, it is helpful if you can collect as much evidence as you can about your illness and the help you need from the people treating you, such as a letter from your GP, haematologist, a report from your occupational therapist, or a support worker. Provide appointment letters, reports and prescription lists for any medication.

Towards the end of the claim form in question 49, there is the option to include a statement from someone who knows you and understands your needs. It helps if the person knows a little about the rules for Attendance

Allowance so they can include the relevant information. You could ask someone who helps care for you, such as friends, family members, or a professional carer, to provide a statement with how you are experiencing difficulties with completing personal tasks and how you satisfy the tests. Continue on a separate sheet of paper if they run out of space, making sure you put your name and NI number on each separate sheet.

Step four - Ensure that you sign the form

Once you have finished the form, it is important that you read the form again to ensure that what has been written reflects your situation. Then sign the form yourself; this is especially important if someone has helped you to fill in the form as it means you can confirm it is accurate. If the person filling

in the form holds a Power of Attorney for you, or there are other reasons that you cannot sign it, the form will explain what you need to do.

Always keep a copy of any forms you complete before sending back. This will be helpful in case you need to refer to it later on.

Step five - Return your form

Once you have completed your form, send it to **Freepost DWP Attendance Allowance**.

After your claim form has been received

What happens next?

After you submit the form, you may be asked to attend a medical assessment. If this happens, you will meet with a health professional such as a doctor or nurse who will check your eligibility. You can request a home assessment if this would make you feel more comfortable or getting to an assessment is difficult for you. You can also take someone with you; this can be a friend, family member, or carer. You may be asked to provide identification, which could be a birth certificate, passport, or driving licence.

What happens if my claim is approved?

You will then receive a written decision on your claim stating whether you are being awarded Attendance Allowance, how long for and at what rate. You will be awarded indefinitely or

for a fixed period. You will be informed in the decision letter when the period ends if you have been awarded for a fixed period and will receive a new claim form before your award ends.

What happens if my claim is rejected? - challenging an Attendance Allowance decision

If you are unhappy with the outcome of your attendance allowance decision and have been told you cannot get the benefit or you have been given a lower rate than you expected to have, don't give up! We know this can be disappointing. There is an appeals system if you feel the decision is the wrong one. Please see our toolkit, challenging a benefit decision.

Reporting changes

It is important to notify the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) of any changes affecting your entitlement to Attendance Allowance. DWP may want to reassess you to check you are receiving the correct amount. You can be penalised if you fail to notify them of changes that are relevant.

If you go abroad, into hospital for more than 28 days or you go into a hospice or a care home, your benefit payment may be affected. This includes if you have one stay, as well as several stays. The rules are complex, so it is a good idea to get advice from our welfare officer by emailing advocacy@leukaemicare.org.uk or calling **07903 219525**.

You need to tell the DWP as soon as possible if your condition or level of help changes and you want them to look at your award again. To be considered

for an increased award, such as if you now need help day and night rather than just either day or night, you can contact the DWP and ask for your case to be looked at again. You will be asked to complete a form giving details of how your needs have changed. DWP will look at the whole Attendance Allowance award again, so it is important to remember that they can reduce your award or keep it at the same level, as well as increase it. If you are unsure about this, it is best to get help from our welfare officer by emailing advocacy@leukaemicare.org.uk or calling **07903 219525** before you contact DWP.

Further information

We recommend you contact our Welfare Officer for advice when applying, appealing or making any changes to your benefits. We are best able to help you if you contact us before you start the process, but we can help regardless of the stage. You can call us on **07903219525**, email us at advocacy@leukaemiacare.org.uk or fill in our online form here: <https://www.leukaemiacare.org.uk/support-and-information/support-for-you/advocacy-caseworker/>.

To check if you have reached State Pension Age please visit: <https://www.gov.uk/state-pension-age>

For information about appealing decisions visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/appeal-benefit-decision>, if you live in England, Scotland or Wales.

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/appeal-benefits-decision> if you live in Northern Ireland.

To download a diary template to use for your attendance allowance claim, please see the following link: [https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Documents/Advice%20\(public\)/AA/AA-8-Template-diary.pdf](https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Documents/Advice%20(public)/AA/AA-8-Template-diary.pdf)

Other organisations

Age UK is a charity dedicated to helping everyone make the most of later life. You can visit their website on, www.ageuk.org.uk or telephone **0800 055 6112** (England), **0300 303 44 98** (Wales), **0800 124 4222** (Scotland), or **0809 808 7575** (Northern Ireland).

Citizens Advice - provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice (UK wide), visit their website - <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>

England: **0800 144 8848**

Wales: **0800 702 2020**

Scotland: **0800 028 1456**

Carers UK – Information and support for carers, including information about benefits.

<https://www.carers.org.uk>

Telephone – **0808 808 7777**

Carers Trust – offers practical help and assistance to carers.

Telephone – **0300 772 9600**

<https://carers.org/>

Macmillan – provide information, practical and support for cancer patients, their families and carers.

Telephone – **0800 808 0000**

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk>

Scope – Provide information and advice services run by and for disabled people.

Telephone – **0808 800 3333**

<https://www.scope.org.uk/helpline>

Benefit helplines

Attendance Allowance, England, Wales and Scotland –
Tel: **0800 731 0122** (textphone: **0800 731 0317**)

The Disability and Carers Service in Northern Ireland (for Attendance Allowance, Carer's Allowance and Disability Allowance – Tel: **0800 587 0912** (textphone: **0800 012 1574**)

Personal Independence Allowance – **0800 121 4433**

Carer's Allowance Unit England, Wales & Scotland –
Tel – **0800 731 0297** (Textphone: **0800 731 0317**)

To read more about carer's allowance please see the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/carers-allowance>

About Leukaemia Care

Leukaemia Care is a national charity dedicated to ensuring that people affected by blood cancer have access to the right information, advice and support.

Our services

Helpline

Our helpline is available 9:00am – 5:00pm Monday - Friday and 7:00pm – 10:00pm on Thursdays and Fridays. If you need someone to talk to, call **08088 010 444**.

Alternatively, you can send a message via WhatsApp on **07500068065** on weekdays 9:00am – 5:00pm.

Nurse service

We have two trained nurses on hand to answer your questions and offer advice and support, whether it be through emailing support@leukaemicare.org.uk or over the phone on **08088 010 444**.

Patient Information Booklets

We have a number of patient information booklets like this available to anyone who

has been affected by a blood cancer. A full list of titles – both disease specific and general information titles – can be found on our website at www.leukaemicare.org.uk/support-and-information/help-and-resources/information-booklets/

Support Groups

Our nationwide support groups are a chance to meet and talk to other people who are going through a similar experience. For more information about a support group local to your area, go to www.leukaemicare.org.uk/support-and-information/support-for-you/find-a-support-group/

Buddy Support

We offer one-to-one phone support with volunteers who have had blood cancer themselves or been affected by

it in some way. You can speak to someone who knows what you are going through. For more information on how to get a buddy call **08088 010 444** or email support@leukaemicare.org.uk

Online Forum

Our online forum, www.healthunlocked.com/leukaemia-care, is a place for people to ask questions anonymously or to join in the discussion with other people in a similar situation.

Webinars

Our webinars provide an opportunity to ask questions and listen to patient speakers and medical professionals who can provide valuable information and support. For information on upcoming webinars, go to www.leukaemicare.org.uk/support-and-information/support-for-you/onlinewebinars/

Website

You can access up-to-date information on our website, www.leukaemicare.org.uk.

Campaigning and Advocacy

Leukaemia Care is involved in campaigning for patient well-being, NHS funding and drug and treatment availability. If you would like an update on any of the work we are currently doing or want to know how to get involved, email advocacy@leukaemicare.org.uk

Patient magazine

Our magazine includes inspirational patient and carer stories as well as informative articles by medical professionals: www.leukaemicare.org.uk/communication-preferences/

Leukaemia Care is a national charity dedicated to providing information, advice and support to anyone affected by a blood cancer.

Around 34,000 new cases of blood cancer are diagnosed in the UK each year. We are here to support you, whether you're a patient, carer or family member.

Want to talk?

Helpline: **08088 010 444**

(free from landlines and all major mobile networks)

Office Line: **01905 755977**

www.leukaemiacare.org.uk

advocacy@leukaemiacare.org.uk

Leukaemia Care,
One Birch Court,
Blackpole East,
Worcester,
WR3 8SG

Leukaemia Care is registered as a charity in England and Wales (no.1183890) and Scotland (no. SC049802).

Company number: 11911752 (England and Wales).

Registered office address: One Birch Court, Blackpole East, Worcester, WR3 8SG

Leukaemia Care
YOUR Blood Cancer Charity