

Dear Sir/Madam,

Research shows that the everyday cost of having a disability can be substantial, relative to the cost a non-disabled person would otherwise have to spend in order to meet their physical and social needs. Much of the additional cost arises from how disabled people lead their lives, which is not well recognised by the benefits system. Understanding the true cost of living with a disability is critical for any social support system to ensure that people do not have to live in undue hardship.

With this in mind:

1. If a person can evidence disability related expenses, do you pay these / subtract them from a person's care charges?

We currently allow a standard rate of £20 per week when the person is in receipt of disability benefits

2. Do you have a definitive list of what constitutes disability related expenses?

We refer to Care and Support Statutory Guidance Annex C

3. If yes to 2 above, please supply the list.
4. If no to 2 above, can you give examples of what you would consider as disability related expenses, based on what you have paid for in the past.

As per response to Q2

5. Please say if you would pay for any of the following as disability related expenses to enable disabled people to reach a minimal acceptable standard of living:
  - Technological equipment, software and IT training (eg. laptop, mobile phone, screen reader software, etc.) to enable communication, facilitate access to written materials, make the best use of a person's sight, etc; **Yes, we provide funding for this where it is used to meet peoples' outcomes.**
  - Domestic help, eg. regular help with cleaning, dealing with particular jobs; **Not usually but may do in some circumstances if, for example, where it enables a relative to support with other caring tasks.**
  - Additional travel costs, eg. taxi journeys to medical appointments, visits to dispersed social networks; **There is a transport assessment undertaken to assess peoples' individual needs.**
  - Additional costs of socialising and going on holiday, eg. companion's travel costs (without whom a holiday would be impossible), using a hotel rather than self-catering accommodation, etc; **Costs towards short breaks/respite would be identified in an individual's support plan if this was identified as an outcome.**
  - Additional cost of household goods, eg. better lighting, floor coverings, paying someone to help with home maintenance, etc; **This would usually be funded via increased housing rents in specialist accommodation with care. An Occupation**

Therapy assessment may recommend specific equipment to meet someone's needs – this would be funded via social care.

- Additional health care costs, eg. increase in the number of prescriptions, purchase of sanitary/hygiene items, etc; No, we would expect the NHS to fund this
- Utilities, eg. additional cost of electricity to run technological equipment, additional lighting, etc; No
- Specialist support, eg. sign language interpreters, which is not always considered a 'reasonable adjustment' to providing services; Yes, we provide funding for this on a regular basis
- Social activities, eg. to combat the risk of social isolation; Yes, if this contributes towards the outcomes identified in the support plan
  - Anything else?