

# Disability Related Expenditure

*Is life more expensive because of your disability or illness?  
You could be entitled to a reduction in your care charges.*

## **1. What is Disability Related Expenditure?**

Disability Related Expenditure, or 'DRE' is the extra expenses you face because of your disability or illness. These can be anything from heating to clothing, specialist food to basic domestic or gardening services. This should be clearly recorded in your Care and Support Plan.

If you have a disability benefit and pay towards your care, the amount you pay may be reduced to make allowance for these extra expenses, if these conditions are met:

- you have some evidence that you buy the items or services regularly,
- they are reasonable expenses given your level of need
- they are not provided to you in another way (for example through your mobility benefits, your Personal Budget or a charitable grant).
- The cost is reasonable for the type of expense.

Any reduction in your care charges will depend on the expenses you tell us about. It's important that you tell us about everything. Below is some guidance about what can be claimed as Disability Related Expenditure and how to make sure your expenses are taken into account.

## **2. Do I qualify for DRE?**

To qualify to have your contribution reduced because of your extra disability expenses, you must:

- Be using Social care services which are chargeable under the Royal Borough of Greenwich Charging Policy.

- Be in receipt of disability benefits, for example Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (Care Component) or Personal Independence Payment (Daily living Component)

### **3. Flat Rate**

When working out how much you can afford to pay in your Financial Assessment, we will make a standard allowance of £15.30 per week for everyone who receives disability benefits. This means that you only need to claim disability related expenditure and provide evidence if you believe you have disability-related costs of more than £15.30 per week.

### **4. What sort of thing can I claim for?**

Please see the **end of the document for a longer list of Disability Related Expenses**. Here are the main categories of things you may claim for.

- **Specialist items and services:** you may use things that are made specially to help with your disability, such as wheelchairs which may have additional costs, like repair and insurance.
- **Increased use of non-specialised items and services:** you may have to use things more because of your disability such as transport and heating.
- **Higher cost non-specialist items and services:** you may have to use things that cost more than average such as paying for domestic support or home delivery of shopping.
- **Remember, not all costs are eligible.** For instance, if you choose to buy items / services when there is a cheaper alternative that meets your needs, or if it is something that could be provided by the NHS for free. If you are unsure whether a cost counts as Disability Related Expenditure or not, include it on the form anyway.

### **5. How do I apply for Disability Related expenditure to be taken off my contribution?**

If you think your disability related expenses are no more than £15.30 per week, there is nothing you need to do.

The financial assessment team can send you a DRE claim form that you can complete and return with your evidence that is required, or the officer can visit you to complete and view your evidence.

If you do not receive a qualifying benefit the financially assessment officer can assist you in completing the form for the DWP, who will decide if you are entitled to receive the appropriate benefit, if received you can then apply for a DRE assessment.

## **6. How do I work out what my Disability Related Expenses are?**

It can be difficult to think about DRE. Your life is what you experience every day and you are probably not used to considering what additional costs you incur each month due to your disability.

Think about your day-to-day life and what items and services you use. Try to think about what differences there are between what you have to spend compared to a relative, friend or neighbour who does not have a disability or long-term health condition.

You may use some items and services more at certain times than others. It may help to look through records you have about your disability and any invoices/ bills receipts to see what you spend in a week/month/year and which costs arise from your disability. It may be easier to think about the extra costs you spend over a whole year.

## **7. What evidence will I need to provide?**

The Council will process all reasonable costs without you having to provide evidence.

The Council will ask for evidence of any particularly high or unusual DRE.

### **Evidence could be:**

- Proof of the expenses such as bills/ invoices/receipts, contracts and bank statements, along with an explanation of why an expense is because of your disability.
- Your Care and Support Plan, (co-produced with your social worker), can highlight disabilities or medical conditions which give rise to your DRE.

**If you do not have evidence:** Don't worry, you can still apply. You then have 3 months to gather and submit your evidence. During this period, any care charges you have been asked to pay must continue to be paid.

The below list includes examples of the sort of expenditure that could be claimed, what is considered a reasonable cost (anything below this does not require evidence), as well as where actual costs will be considered which will require evidence.

## **8. Examples of Disability Related Expenditure**

**Everyone's costs will be different, and a list of examples cannot contain everything. If you have a Disability Related expense that is not listed below, you should still include it on your form and we will consider it.**

Not all costs will be considered eligible. For instance, if you choose to buy items / services when there is a cheaper alternative that meets your needs, or if it is something that could be provided by the NHS for free.

**Regular expenses:** We will ask for evidence of your regular expenses to see how much you spend and how often. This will allow us to work out your weekly average.

**For example:** Elsie cannot clean her flat and this is not covered in her care plan. Elsie spends £16 per week for a cleaner to help her. Elsie has provided the receipts for the last 4 weeks showing her expenditure. We have awarded £16 of DRE per week.

**One-off expenses:** Larger, one-off expenses are usually for equipment or adaptations, such as wheelchairs or hoists. Always do your research and check with your social worker if the equipment you need can be provided or funded. We will consider this and any cheaper alternatives available on the market. We cannot consider DRE for equipment purchased using grants or funded by the NHS.

**For example:** Rahul spent £3,000 for a powered wheelchair. We have found that a similar wheelchair costs £2,500, so we can only consider £2,500. We have divided £2,500 by 500 (10 years life expectancy of the wheelchair) and arrived at £5 DRE per week.

Expense	Details	Tips and Evidence Required
<b>Community alarm</b>	If you use Telecare, a community alarm service or warden-call system you can include the weekly cost in your Disability Related Expenditure claim.	Actual Cost with Contract / Bills from Provider
Expense	Details	Tips and Evidence Required
<b>Clothing/ shoes/ bedding</b>	<p>You may have extra costs if you need to get clothes or shoes specially made or adapted (e.g. having buttons replaced with Velcro).</p> <p>You may have extra costs of replacing clothing /shoes (including carers' clothing) due to damage caused by a behavioural difficulty</p>	<p>Need identified in the Care and Support Plan</p> <p>Receipts</p>
<b>Heating</b>	<p>You may have higher heating bills if you feel the cold and need the temperature set higher, you need the heating on constantly at night, or you spend more time at home because of disability and use more power.</p> <p>In the same way if you have a carer who needs to be awake at night, you may need to have the heating on more.</p>	<p>Receipts /Annual statement. Costs over these standard annual amounts are allowed:</p> <p><b>Single person</b> – Flat/Terrace £1,311.00 Semi Detached £1,392.44, Detached £1,694.10</p> <p><b>Couple</b> Flat/Terrace £1,729.65, Semi-Detached £1,835.18 Detached £2,233.18</p>
<b>Gardening or housework</b>	If you pay someone to do basic garden maintenance/ domestic assistance where you cannot do this, or you require adaptations or equipment to do it.	<p>Receipts for three months</p> <p>Evidence of need and receipt</p>

<b>Expense</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Tips and Evidence Required</b>
<b>Private Care</b>	<p>If you require additional support to meet your care and support needs and you pay for this (it's not funded by the Council) this can be a disability related expense- for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• private therapies such as counselling, chiropody, physiotherapy.</li> <li>• sensory pool or room, reflexology, massage, music therapy, natural remedies, therapeutic activities and breaks.</li> </ul>	<p>Need identified in the Care and Support Plan but not covered by your Personal Budget</p> <p>Receipts for three months</p>
<b>Transport and travel (after any mobility benefit you receive)</b>	<p>Use of taxis if you are unable to use public transport or the taxi card service.</p> <p>Transport to health appointments where hospital transport is not available or suitable.</p> <p>If you need to pay for your PA/ carer's travel costs while they support you to attend appointments or take part in work/ activities you can claim for this if it is not covered by your Personal Budget.</p> <p>If you receive the mobility component of DLA or PIP, the transport costs you include must be the amount you need to pay more than the mobility benefit</p>	<p>Receipts if on your care and support plan and the amount is over your weekly mobility benefit</p>

Expense	Details	Tips and Evidence Required
<b>Specialist washing powder or laundry</b>	Do you spend extra on washing clothes or bed linen or need to change your clothes more often due to your disability? This may be because of incontinence problems. You may need frequent cleaning of furniture and carpets, and protective treatments to minimise damage or staining, due to disability.	Care and support plan may identify a need. If not evidence from other sources and consideration of the nature and impact of any health problem or disability may provide a guide. Identify more than 4 loads per week
<b>Wheelchair</b>	Wheelchair purchased if required model is not provided free of charge by the NHS	Evidence of purchase.
<b>Powered bed</b>	Purchased if required but not provided free of charge by the Council/ NHS	Evidence of purchase if available. Cost divided by 500 (10 yr life) up to a maximum of £4.43 per week
<b>Powered reclining chair</b>	Purchased if not provided free of charge by the Council/ NHS	Evidence of purchase if available Cost divided by 500 up to a maximum of £3.52 per week
<b>Stair-lift</b>	Purchased if required and not provided free of charge by the Council/ NHS	Evidence of purchase without Disabled Facility Grant input. Cost divided by 500 up to a maximum of £6.27 per week
<b>Hoist</b>	Purchased if required and not provided free of charge by the Council/ NHS	Evidence of purchase without Disabled Facility Grant input. Cost divided by 500 up to a maximum of £3.07 per week

<b>DRE</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Tips and Evidence Required</b>
<b>Chemist items / Prescriptions</b>	<p>If you pay for your prescriptions for medication and other chemist items which are needed due to your disability. This may also include things that your Carers use.</p> <p>This may include additional pads/panty liners, continence pads, latex gloves if not provided by support), disposable aprons, specialist creams, additional wet wipes, toilet paper, bandages / plasters / dressings</p>	<p>Need identified in the Care and Support Plan</p> <p>Prescription card £104 per year Receipts for three months</p>
<b>Special Diet &amp; Food</b>	<p>Special dietary needs that means food is more expensive than normal food purchases due to your illness or disability. You may have allergies to certain foods or ingredients, which make meals more expensive</p>	<p>GP letter Receipts for the additional cost. Need identified in Support Plan</p>
<b>Internet Access and telephone</b>	<p>You may be unable to leave your home or have sensory or mental health issues which mean that you, or your carer, have to manage your affairs by a computer.</p> <p>If you share your home with others the costs should be shared and only the share for the person claiming should be included as DRE.</p>	<p>Evidence of how shared and eligible need.</p> <p>Need identified in the Care and Support Plan</p> <p>£2.70 internet £2.70 phone</p>