

Non-Residential Services - Charging Policy 2025-26

Appendix A

Disability Related Expenditure (DRE)

If you receive Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payment Care Element or Disability Living Allowance Care Element an allowance may be made in your non-residential financial assessment for additional expenses due to a disability or medical condition.

DRE expenses are considered when:

- the extra cost is **unavoidable, essential to maintain independence; and**
- the cost meets your specific need due to a medical condition or disability, as identified in your care and support assessment of needs; **and**
- the ACTUAL spend is reasonable and can be verified; **and**
- it is not reasonable for a lower cost or free alternative item or service to be used. If a lower cost alternative item or service could have been used, the expense considered will be the **lower** cost.

This guide sets out our usual standard or maximum allowances for a full assessment of DRE.

- If you have one or more of the expenses listed, we will allow the amount you spend up to the maximum amount shown. We will consider a higher allowance in exceptional circumstances.
- Costs for DRE that support the whole household (like a cleaner) will be treated as shared equally between all adults in the household (unless you have a good reason for us to consider a different way of sharing costs).
- Where a service is made up of different elements, we will only consider costs for the part(s) that meet a disability-related need.
- You must provide evidence such as contract, invoices, bank statements to support your assessment. If you don't, we will use our discretion to decide if the expenses meet the criteria above.
- Allowances for special equipment needed due to a disability or condition will be based on the life span of the equipment and either the purchase price you paid or a lower cost alternative if we believe that would be reasonable to meet your identified needs.



What is disability related expenditure (DRE)?

Disability related expenditure is money that you spend on items and services that help you manage or cope with a disability or a long-term health condition. It is money that we may recognise as an 'outgoing' when we do a financial assessment to work out how much you can afford to pay towards your care. The payments must be unavoidable. Unavoidable means that if you stopped paying it would severely affect your health or wellbeing.

Thinking about what would be classed as disability related expenditure

It can be difficult to think about DRE and what costs relate to your disability and what costs relate to day-to-day life. Try to think about what is different between what you spend compared to a relative, friend or neighbour who does not have your disability or long-term health condition. DRE costs usually fall into one of these two categories:

- Specialised items and services: you may use things that are made specially to help with your disability, such as wheelchairs and care support. These items 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 specialist shoes.

When we consider your disability related expenditure, we will:

- Look at the information you give us including the receipts and any other evidence. We cannot take these costs into account without evidence.
- Check to see if the costs you have given us are to do with your care needs that are in your care plan - a care plan details how your care needs are met. If your care plan does not give the evidence, then you may supply evidence from your own Doctor or other specialist.
- Check to see if any income you receive already covers these costs. For example, a community alarm system paid within housing benefit, support to a carer from a Carers Budget to pay for cleaning or gardening.
- Consider whether the costs you have asked us to consider are already available from the NHS.
- Consider if your costs are more than it would cost for someone without a disability.
- Consider if there are cheaper or free alternatives.
- Consider if the spend is unavoidable and essential to maintain independence.

What Next?

It is important we see receipts or other evidence of the extra money you spend because of your disability. This will help us to work out any extra allowances you can get. We can offer new Service User the chance to give us the receipts and other evidence later.

We will give you a first assessment and let you know the outcome of the assessment in writing.

If you then provide receipts and evidence later, we will work out how much you will have to pay towards your care. We will backdate this amount to the first assessment.

Disability-related expense item	Amount considered in Financial Assessment
Community Alarm System	Actual cost paid unless included in Housing Benefit award
Privately-arranged registered[1] care services and medical treatments/therapies – if it is part of the agreed care and support and council-arranged support is reduced accordingly	Actual cost paid up to a maximum of £1,570 per year (average £30.20 per week)
Privately Arranged Care that is NOT part of the agreed Care and Support Plan	No allowance will be made for Care NOT part of the Care and Support Plan.
Private domestic help[2] – where Social Care Assessment confirms this is necessary due to disability and isn't provided through Council-arranged support.	Actual cost paid up to £17.20 per week for single person household or cost proportionately divided by the number of other adult household members. If the service user chooses a higher cost provider they will have to pay the difference
Chiropody	Actual cost up to a maximum £4.45 per week.
PPE	Actual costs identified by the Care Plan
Continence products (where social care assessment confirms need and products are not available through the NHS)	Actual cost paid for waterproof under sheet / bed pads. An amount of £12.00 per week for up to six weeks where buying own incontinence pads ahead of an NHS continence assessment.
Additional laundry and replacement bedding costs (where more than 4 loads washing/week needed due to incontinence or other disability-related or medical reason)	An amount of £5.00 per week.
Additional Clothing costs	An amount up to £8.00 per week
Additional Bedding costs	An amount up to £4.75 per week
Reasonable Gardening Costs	An amount up to £5.85 per week
Window Cleaning	An Amount up to £1.60 per week
Additional cost of specialist dietary items required due to confirmed[3] medical condition or disability	Actual cost paid for specific dietary items purchased due to illness or disability

Specialist clothing and footwear and replacements due to wear and tear	Expenditure on footwear over £42 per pair of specialist shoes (averaged over 1 year).
Internet connectivity / Broadband	Reasonable amount for additional cost due to disability such as monitoring or for disability aids to connect.
Smartphone / Tablet	If required for Monitoring or Communication – Max £10.00 per month
Subscriptions for essential Apps	Where there is an assessed need for a paid for App the cost will be allowed.
Travel and transport costs where social services have confirmed need for specialist transport requirements.	Where support with costs is available from other sources but have not been used this can be taken into account in considering reasonableness. For example, transport to hospital appointments or council provided transport to a day centre.
Running (petrol costs) and Maintenance costs of a Motability vehicle	<p>No Additional allowances will be made for Transport Costs if a Motability Vehicle (or equivalent) has been purchased. If costs relate to medical appointments service users should be signposted to the HealthCare Travel Costs Scheme.</p> <p>Average UK vehicle mileage = 6,600 per year. Additional petrol costs will be allowed at 20p per mile.</p> <p>We will not make allowances for a more expensive vehicle unless there is medical evidence of need</p>
Essential equipment purchased due to disability/condition to support independent living at home.	Manual wheelchair – actual cost paid divided by 250 up to a maximum of £1.26 per week
(if not supplied free of charge, through Adult Care or Health, and not supplied through a Disabled Facilities Grant)	Powered wheelchair or mobility scooter – actual cost paid divided by 500 up to a maximum of £6.19 per week
	Powered riser/recliner chair – actual cost paid divided by 500 up to a maximum of £4.08 per week

	Other essential equipment: 1 – Item costing £1,000 or more – actual cost paid, divided by 500
	2 – Equipment costing £100 – £1000 – actual cost paid divided by 250
	– Equipment costing less than £100 – actual cost paid divided by 52 weeks
	Other equipment may include stair lift, powered bed, turning bed, mobility equipment
Essential equipment maintenance/repair (if not maintained by social services)	Actual cost of maintaining equipment – costs would be relevant to the items listed above
Prescriptions, medical and chemist items	Actual cost if not supplied free through the NHS. Allowed when recommended by a GP or specialist.
Confirmed Therapeutic remedies [3]	Actual cost if not supplied free through the NHS.
Costs for management of Finances[4]	Ongoing Court of Protection Costs as detailed in the OPG Cost guidance. Appointeeship costs – where there is a charge made we will allow the actual charge – usually £45 per month.
Additional heating Allowance	In line with the National Association of Financial Assessment Officer Guidance – please contact us for up-to-date information
Water Meter Charges[5]	Metered amounts more than £213.00 per year (average annual household bill) [4].
Other disability related expenses	Other specific disability-related expenses may be allowed with good reason and proof of costs. The average cost for a typical person will be researched and results given.

In most cases receipts or invoices will be required to confirm the ACTUAL spend.

[1] Registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC)

[2] May include cleaning, shopping, domestic tasks, basic garden maintenance (e.g. grass cutting)

[3] Need to be confirmed by Social Services, GP or NHS

[4] Application fees should be paid from capital. There is a fee remission system if the applicant cannot afford their fees. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66aa659249b9c0597fdb090d/opg120-get-help-with-paying-opg-deputy-fees.pdf>

[5] Bristol Water average annual household bill

Please Note: We won't consider costs incurred for:

- General items or services required for daily living and used by the general population.
- Any item or service met by a payment from a Grant (e.g., Disability Facilities Grant) or where another funding source has been provided.
- Additional Costs for Food / Utilities / Kitchen / Porter services in Extra Care Housing or Supported Living. Service users will not be required to use part of their MIG for maintenance costs so their overall costs will be lower than someone living in their own home.
- Payments for carers costs unless the cost is unavoidable and essential to maintain independence.

*Where a request is made for an item not on the list we will seek advice, consider any evidence, and notify you of the outcome. We may talk to the provider of your services or a Social Worker. We may also seek advice from your GP or other Medical Practitioner. We may arrange to meet, with or without you, to discuss the request. We may use sources such as the Office for National Statistics to work out the average spend for the public. Where we do this, we will notify you of the actions we have undertaken.

More Information or if you are unhappy with the outcome.

If you are unhappy about how your financial assessment has been worked out, you can appeal. The easiest way to do this is on our website at:

<https://n-somerset.gov.uk/council-democracy/complaints-feedback/complaints-about-council-services>

If you are still not happy with the outcome you may have further routes of Appeal either by making a complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman at:

<https://www.lgo.org.uk/make-a-complaint>

Or asking a Court for a Judicial Review. Please seek independent Legal Advice before commencing any legal action.

For more information about this or any queries about the financial charging assessment process, please call 01275 888777.