

Benefits Advice Note

Disability Living Allowance

As a person with narcolepsy, you may be entitled to receive a number of government-funded benefits. One of the most relevant of these is called Disability Living Allowance (DLA), though this is now only available to children under the age of 16.

What is DLA?

PIP is a type of benefit paid by the government to people who have a disability or serious health problem. It is now awarded only to children up to the age of 16. Anyone aged 16 to 64 should instead apply for Personal Independence Payment (PIP). See our Advice Note on PIP for more information about that benefit. Previously, DLA was also awarded to older people, but anyone of working age who is receiving DLA will at some point in the future be asked to switch to PIP.

Key points

Your child can claim disability living allowance (DLA) if he or she is under 16, disabled and needs extra help to look after themselves or has difficulty getting around. Entitlement to DLA is not affected by your child's savings and DLA is not means-tested.

There are **two parts** to PIP:

- The **care component**, which has three rates of payment, from £21.80 to £82.30 per week; and
- The **mobility component**, which has two rates of payment, £21.80 or £57.45 per week.

Your child can be paid one or both components, depending on their needs. These payments are **tax-free** and are not affected by any other benefits that you receive.

How do I get DLA?

DLA is paid by the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). If you feel your child should be eligible for DLA, you need to complete the DLA Claim Form. The form can be downloaded here: www.gov.uk/government/publications/disability-living-allowance-for-children-claim-form. Alternatively, you can request a printed form via the DLA helpline 0345 712 3456. You will also need a DS1500 medical condition report; this can be obtained from your child's GP, specialist or consultant.

You should **complete the form** as fully as you can, and you may send it back with a **covering letter** that explains how narcolepsy affects you. It is usually a good idea to ask a member of your family or someone else who knows you well, or someone with experience of applying for benefits (see *Let us help you* below), to help you write that letter.

Find out more

You can find details of DLA at the official government website: www.gov.uk/dla.

The charity Disability Rights UK publishes more information about DLA in its Factsheet F23, which can be found on its: <http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/disability-living-allowance-dla>.

Let us help you

Narcolepsy UK has an **excellent record** of helping people with narcolepsy obtain DLA.

The questions on the DLA application form are in many ways not really appropriate to the issues faced by someone with narcolepsy. It is therefore critical that the answers are formulated carefully and that a covering letter is drafted in a way that maximises your chances of success.

We can help you to do this, but it is much easier for us to do so if you get in touch with us **before you apply**. If you leave it until after you have sent your application to DWP, for instance after they have told you that your child will not be given DLA, it will be much harder for us to help you.

Contact us

Call our helpline: 0345 450 0394

Or **email**: info@narcolepsy.org.uk

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IMPORTANT NOTE: Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this Note is accurate, it is for general guidance only. Specific advice on your individual circumstances should always be sought. Narcolepsy UK cannot accept any responsibility or liability for actions taken in reliance on the information contained in this Note.