

# Employment Support Allowance (ESA)

If you are unable to work due to illness / disability ESA might give you financial support if you are unable to work and personalized help so you can work if you are able to.

There are 3 types of ESA:

- 'New style' ESA if you have paid National Insurance contributions for normally the last 2-3 years. Or entitled to claim Universal Credit (see our fact sheet on Universal Credit)
- Contribution ESA is only available if you already receive the Severe Disability Premium or have done in the last month. Eligibility is affected by any National Insurance contributions in the last 2-3 years
- Income-based ESA is only available if you already receive the Severe Disability Premium or have done in the last month. Eligibility is not affected by National Insurance contributions.

At around 4 weeks after your claim you will have a 'Health and Work Conversation'. You will be asked to complete a 'Capability for Work Questionnaire' and then attend a 'Work Capability Assessment'. This is to see how your illness or disability affects your ability to work.

ESA isn't normally affected if you work for less than 16 hours / week and earn up to £131.50 a week. This is called permitted work, but you must inform the DWP (Department for Work and Pensions) of this. You also need to inform them if you do any voluntary work.

To claim for:

- 'New style' ESA you can call the Universal Credit helpline  
Telephone: 0800 3285644
- Contributory and income-related ESA call the contact centre  
Telephone: 0800 1690350

For more information see

<https://www.gov.uk/employment-support-allowance/overview>

Here are some useful factsheets

<http://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/employment-and-support-allowance-overview>

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/Documents/Advice%20factsheets/Benefits/b-employment-and-support-allowance.pdf>

If you need any advice or support in claiming for ESA please do not hesitate to contact our Patient and Family Support Worker.