

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 are entitled to claim Universal Credit (see our fact sheet on Universal Credit)
- Contribution ESA if you're not in a Universal Credit full service area and have paid enough National Insurance contributions
- Income- related ESA if you're not on Universal Credit and you are on a low income. It is means tested

For all types of ESA you will have a Work Capability Assessment. This is to see how your illness or disability affects your ability to work.

If you are found to be entitled you will be placed in one of two groups

- Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) where you'll have regular interviews with an advisor
- Support group where you do not have interviews

ESA isn't normally affected if you work for less than 16 hours / week and earn up to £125.50 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 call the Universal Credit full service helpline
Telephone: 0800 3285644 (option 2 and option 6)
Not in a full service area?
Telephone: 0800 3289344
- Contributory and income-related ESA call the contact centre
Telephone: 0800 055 6688

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.