

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY L.V. FELTHAM OF ST. HELIER CENTRAL
QUESTION SUBMITTED ON MONDAY 23rd OCTOBER 2023
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON MONDAY 30th OCTOBER 2023**

Question

“Will the Minister outline what financial support is available for parents who find themselves unable to continue to work, or who have to take a break from work, due to their child having a health condition?”

Answer

Financial support available to parents caring for a child with a medical/health condition

Home Carers Allowance (HCA)

HCA is a contributory benefit for carers of working age who spend 35 hours (or more) per week caring for someone who requires a very high level of personal care. This includes children. HCA is not a means tested benefit.

The allowance is designed for working age carers who decide to stop working or reduce their working week because of their caring commitments.

Carers have their contribution record protected with credits so that they do not lose their own right to future Social Security benefits.

People claiming HCA are able to continue working a maximum of 15 hours a week.

The benefit is paid every 4 weeks and the amount is based on the standard rate of social security benefit (£265.93 per week). The total someone can receive is, therefore, £1063.72 every 4 weeks.

Child Personal Care benefit

This benefit supports parents where a child needs a high level of personal care e.g. for a physical, sensory, emotional or cognitive condition expected to last more than 6 months. To receive this benefit one of the parents must pass the Income Support residence test. The current amount of this benefit, which is not means tested, is:

- £122.22 per week for a child with a level 2 need of personal care
- £175.20 per week for a child with a level 3 need of personal care

Income Support

All eligible low-income parents can access Income Support benefit, which provides a broader range of support.

A parent caring for a child with high care needs for at least 35 hours a week may be eligible for the carer's component, in addition to adult, child, household and rental components. This currently has a value of £63.35 per week. Eligible families can also receive HCA.

Income Support families can access GP services through the Health Access Scheme. This provides subsidised services for adults (e.g. adult surgery consultation with a GP is £12).

All children up to the age of 18 receive free GP surgery consultations.

Home Responsibility Protection (HRP)

HRP supports parents of working age who stop working or reduce their hours, in order to take care of a young child.

The HRP scheme protects the parent's future entitlement to an old age pension in the form of deemed social security contributions. A parent receiving HRP can work for up to 20 hours per week. The benefit can be received for up to 10 years.

Neo natal care

The Minister's Ministerial plan for 2024 includes the following commitment "taking action as necessary including providing financial support for parents of babies needing neo natal care."