

# BenefitsBulletin

Aberdeen City & Shire Advice Forum is a local network for people working in advice services to share information and experiences. The Forum meets quarterly throughout the year.



**Carers Week**  
8 - 14 June 2020



**£300,000**

to support young carers and improve their quality of life



[Find out more...](#)

## VSA Carers Service

All Carers Advisors are working remotely from home but our contact numbers and emails remain the same.



Please feel free to contact your Carer Advisor for any information or advice you may be looking for. Or even if you need a chat – the team are just at the end of the phone.

Tel: 01224 212021 or  
email: [carers.info@vsa.org.uk](mailto:carers.info@vsa.org.uk).  
Check out our May [NEWSLETTER](#)

## Extra payment for carers to help through coronavirus

Eligible carers to get an additional £230.10.

In recognition of the additional pressure that unpaid carers are under at this time, the Scottish Government will be making a Coronavirus Carer's Allowance Supplement payment later this month.

This one-off payment is in addition to the regular six monthly Carer's Allowance Supplement. As a result, eligible carers will get a payment of at least £460.20. This will be paid from **Friday 26 June**.

As with the current supplement, carers will not need to do anything to get this extra payment as it will be paid automatically to people who were living in Scotland and in receipt of Carer's Allowance on 13 April 2020 eligibility date. Social Security Scotland will write to eligible carers in advance.

## New website created to help parents and carers support learning at home

Aberdeen City Council's Children's and Family Services team have created a Digital Learning Hub website to help parents and carers support home learning in the run up to the city's schools re-opening.

Aberdeen's schools are scheduled to re-open in August for the new academic year and in the meantime, pupils have been accessing their curriculum remotely at home.

The website is designed to help parents and carers build confidence and knowledge to support their children's learning at home. With so much information available online, the team has created a trusted place to share quality information and reliable advice as well as helpful tips, links and ideas for learning, supporting parenting and family wellbeing.

Councillor John Wheeler, Education Operational Delivery Convener, said: "While schools are gearing up for their return in August, it's important that we can provide and support home learning in the interim.

"Our Education Services team have done an outstanding job throughout the lockdown in maintaining learning and the new Hub designed by our Children's and Family Services team is a really welcome additional support which I'm sure will be appreciated by parents and carers".

The website, which is updated regularly with new content can be viewed [HERE](#).



## Minister confirms that DWP is continuing to refer new claims to work capability assessment provider during coronavirus outbreak

Written answer in parliament also confirms that claimants who report deterioration in condition will be referred for reassessment and that the DWP will continue to process cases that have already been referred 'where possible'

Minister for Disabled People Justin Tomlinson has confirmed that the DWP is continuing to refer new claims to its work capability assessment (WCA) provider during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

Responding yesterday to a written question in parliament on whether it is the DWP's policy for WCA referrals to continue during the COVID-19 outbreak, and for staff to process those referrals as normal, Mr Tomlinson said -

'From 17 March 2020 we suspended all face-to-face assessments for sickness and disability benefits for three months to protect vulnerable people (and assessment centre staff) from unnecessary risk of exposure to COVID-19. The Department continues to refer new claims for a WCA to our provider, CHDA. If it is not possible to complete an assessment based on the paper evidence, a WCA will be conducted, where possible, over the telephone'.

In relation to existing claimants, Mr Tomlinson said -

'We also announced that from 24 March 2020 we were suspending all new referrals for reviews and reassessments across disability benefits. However, where a claimant has reported a deterioration in their condition, we will refer them for a reassessment. Where possible we will also continue to process cases that have already been referred to our assessment provider'.

Details in [Mr Tomlinson's written answer](#).



Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

## Bill introduced in Scottish Parliament to limit rent increases in the private rented sector



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

### The Fair Rents

(Scotland) Bill, introduced in the Scottish Parliament this week, includes provisions to limit rent increases in the private rented sector and for tenants to seek a fair rent determination.

The primary purpose of the Bill is to -

'... improve the way rents are set in Scotland in the private rented sector, to bring fairness into the private rented sector, to reduce poverty and support low income tenants and their families. It will regulate rents to protect tenants in Scotland and help create a better balance of power between the landlord and tenant in Scotland.'

For further information, see Fair Rents (Scotland) Bill.

## New financial capability webinars

In line with a focus on overall wellbeing, our financial capability team has created two new series of webinars.

### Money Works

This session will be hosted via Zoom on 9 June (10:00 -11:00am) and will cover budgeting.

### Financial Wellbeing

This session will be hosted via zoom on 11 June (10:00 -11:00am and will cover budgeting. Following sessions will each focus on different topics.

Both series of webinars will offer participants the chance to learn more about a financial topic each session, hosted by our financial capability team, who throughout 2019/20 delivered 759 workshops to 17,550 individuals in workplaces, colleges, schools, and in the community across Scotland.

For questions about either webinar series, please email [financialcapability@moneyadvicescotland.org.uk](mailto:financialcapability@moneyadvicescotland.org.uk). To book, please complete THIS FORM. A member of the financial capability team will be in touch to confirm your booking and provide login details for the Zoom session.

moneyadvicescotland  
Scotland's Money Charity

On the 19th June, Shared Futures invite you to join for a virtual, online screening of the powerful documentary "For Sama", followed by reflection and discussion.

The event will start with a meeting online at 6.30pm via Zoom - details will be circulated to everyone who has registered.

Eventbrite link: <https://sharedfutures.eventbrite.co.uk>

For queries contact Dave at [dblack@grec.co.uk](mailto:dblack@grec.co.uk)

World Refugee Day Sat 20th June

grec

## Manage Your Appeal (MYA)

This is an online service for new Personal Independence Payment (PIP) and Employment Support Allowance (ESA) appeals.

MYA enables users to both track their appeal, upload further evidence or make a statement about their PIP or ESA appeal. New users who submit an appeal online and who provide an email address will be invited to sign up to the service.

As a representative, you will also be able to access the service and will need to register individually on each case that you are providing representation for. Once you have done this, when you sign into the MYA service, you will be able to see all the cases currently assigned to you. By clicking on each of your cases, you will then be able to access any of the MYA features for your client's appeal.

[www.gov.uk/appeal-benefit-decision/submit-appeal](http://www.gov.uk/appeal-benefit-decision/submit-appeal)

We are encouraging users to use our online services wherever possible. As well as allowing you to submit work remotely, it also means our staff can continue to deal with applications and appeals without needing to be in an office. As now, a non-digital service will also continue to be provided.

We are also running as many hearings as possible via telephone and video conferencing. This is helping us to hold a great many hearings and keep delays to a minimum.

Act now to help us make sure street design changes being made by Councils to aid social distancing, are accessible for everyone.

Use our simple online tool to write to your local Councillor: <https://bit.ly/RNIBwalking> #GiveMeSpace

cma

Freedom from debt  
Hope for the future

We are holding a free webinar to explain how your church, food-bank or community project can respond to the COVID-19 debt crisis affecting families in your community.

The meeting will be held on Zoom. You will be sent a meeting invite 24 hours before the event. Date: Fri, 19 June 2020. 10:00 – 11:00.

RNIB

Campaigns

## Struggling to get DWP to change a UC decision?

Department  
for Work &  
Pensions

A recent decision by an Upper Tribunal will help many UC claimants who wish to challenge a Universal Credit decision but who have struggled to get the DWP to follow the normal procedures for doing so.

If they have not been notified that they must request a Mandatory Reconsideration before submitting an appeal - then that requirement does not exist, and they can go straight for an appeal without the need for the DWP to review their decision first.

PP v SSWP (UC) [2020] UKUT 0109 (AAC)

This case covered a variety of issues - the key one for the purposes of challenging a UC decision was that the claimant had gone straight for an appeal without requesting a Mandatory Reconsideration first.

## Aberdeen Action on Disability

Founded in 1992 as a user-led organisation to give a helping hand to people with physical and sensory disabilities in the city of Aberdeen.



Since then, we've been staffed and managed by people who have disabilities of their own - giving us a level of expertise that you just can't get in any other way.

We can offer you information on all aspects of physical and sensory disability, representation on local and national bodies and help raise awareness of any issues you might have.

Office manned Monday – Friday 10am – 4pm for enquiries and support.

Tel: 01224 641355

E-mail: [office@aad-online.com](mailto:office@aad-online.com)

Facebook: [Aberdeen Action on Disability Official](#)