



Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) A guide

ESA is designed to provide financial help to people who are unable to work because of illness or disability. ESA is broken up into two elements: contributory ESA and income-related ESA. You may receive either one of these, or both, depending on your circumstances.

Our Advocacy Ambassadors' top tips

- 1. Seek advice on how to fill out the forms.** The suggested phone line is very helpful. Or get support from Muscular Dystrophy UK or an Advocacy Ambassador.
- 2. Ask your GP or neurologist for a supporting letter** to go with your application.
- 3. Find out what you are entitled to.** Many people are unsure what they are entitled to, and it often requires your own research to discover whether ESA is right for you. Muscular Dystrophy UK has a really helpful guide called '*Financial and practical support: Find out what you are entitled to*' that may help you find the right benefits available for you.
- 4. Consider how well you can carry out the tasks they ask you about.** If you struggle to do these tasks in appropriate time, safely, repeatedly or to an acceptable standard, let the assessor know.
- 5. Keep a diary.** This can be used as evidence, as it documents how your muscle-wasting condition affects you day-to-day.

For any further information on ESA, please read our *Employment and Support Allowance* factsheet. You can download this from our website or call our office and we'll send it to you.

Muscular Dystrophy UK Advocacy Ambassadors are here to provide support on independent living. Through their experience of living with a muscle-wasting condition, either their own or a family member's, they are able to provide great advice and support.

If you need advice getting the services, benefits or equipment you are entitled to, our Advocacy Ambassadors can help. Get in touch today:

0800 652 6352 (freephone) or ambassadors@muscular dystrophyuk.org