

# Carer Allowance – Department of Human Services (Centrelink)

## Carer Allowance (for a child under 16 years)

You may be eligible to receive the Carer Allowance (caring for a child under 16 years) if you:

- are looking after a child with a physical, intellectual or psychiatric disability who needs additional care and attention on a daily basis, or
- care for 2 children with disabilities and the children do not individually qualify you for Carer Allowance (child) but together create a substantial caring responsibility, and
- live with the child (or children) you are caring for.

**Note:** If you qualify for Carer Payment (caring for a child under 16 years) you will generally receive Carer Allowance automatically.

## What disabilities qualify for the Carer Allowance?

The type of disability can include:

Autistic Disorder or Asperger's Disorder (not including Pervasive Developmental Disorder not otherwise specified) when diagnosed:

- by a psychiatrist, developmental paediatrician, or a psychologist experienced in the assessment of Pervasive Developmental Disorders, and
- using the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM).

## Taking a break from caring

You can take a number of breaks from caring, up to 63 days per calendar year (1 January to 31 December) for respite and still be eligible for Carer Allowance.

## If the child goes into hospital

You can continue to receive Carer Allowance if the child you are caring for goes into hospital, as long as you continue to provide care for the child while they are in hospital and you intend to resume caring for the child when they return home. It is important that you tell Centrelink if this occurs. They will contact you after your child has been in hospital for a continuous period of 12 weeks.

## Medical reviews

To check your eligibility for Carer Allowance, the child you care for may be required to have a medical review on reaching developmental milestones at the ages of:

- 4 years 8 months
- 10 years
- 13 years

If the child's disability or medical condition is on the list of recognised disabilities they will not generally have milestone reviews except if required at a particular age, or after a specific period or treatment.

This payment rate of Carer Allowance (caring for a child under 16 years) is effective from 1 January 2012.

You can get either:

- a fortnightly payment of \$114.00 plus a Health Care Card[1] for the child, or
- a Health Care Card for the child.

Which of these you receive depends on the level of functional disability of the child.

If you are receiving a Carer Allowance (caring for a child under 16 years) payment on 1 July each year, you are also paid an annual:

- Child Disability Assistance payment of up to \$1,000 to help you with the costs of caring for a child with a disability, and
- Carer Supplement of up to \$600 for each child in your care who qualifies you for Carer Allowance.

For further information please visit <http://www.centrelink.gov.au>