

## Parkinson's UK Financial Assistance 2019

From January 2019, Parkinson's UK financial assistance grants will be available across the UK to people with Parkinson's and their unpaid carers.

Our grants cover a wide range of items and services to help people affected by Parkinson's feel more in control of their life with Parkinson's or simply to improve the quality of their everyday life with the condition.

The application form and guidance for applicants can be [downloaded from our webpage](#) or mailed to applicants on request. Feedback tells us that the application process is clear and straightforward and applicants are well-supported by our Local Adviser service.

Grants of up to £1,500 are available to help purchase specialist equipment like mobility scooters, profiling beds or home adaptations. We work carefully and closely with local authorities to make sure we work alongside any local statutory entitlement and we always insist that applicants have taken appropriate advice from an occupational therapist or physiotherapist when deciding on the right equipment for them.

Grants of up to £1,000 are available to fund day or residential respite care – though we do not fund holidays. As with specialist equipment, we work with local authorities and take advice from Local Advisers to ensure that local statutory entitlement has been explored.

We fund household items, including electrical items or digital equipment like tablets and laptops to a maximum of £500 and we can make grants of up to £250 in our 'activities' category to help someone to access a class or activity which would help them get physically active or feel more socially connected.

**You can read about grants we have made in each of these categories on the next page.**

Because we want to reach people with Parkinson's who are in greatest need, combined household savings **must be less than £16,000** to apply for a grant.

We protect each applicant's complete confidentiality. We remove identifying details from all application forms and supporting information before our volunteer grants review panel members – who all have a direct personal or professional connection with Parkinson's – make their decision on whether a grant should be awarded.

Since March 2018, we have received almost 40 fundable applications and we're on target to grant a total of £39,000 this year in just four 'roll-out' areas. We expect to award at least £100,000 in grants across the UK next year.

We hope that local groups that are in a strong financial position will consider including a transfer to our financial assistance grants scheme in their budgets for 2019 so that we can support even more people affected by Parkinson's next year.

## Parkinson's UK Financial Assistance 2018: What difference did we make?

In March 2018, Parkinson's UK financial assistance grants were launched in four 'roll-out' areas, representing approximately 25% of the UK population of people with Parkinson's. We wanted to test our new approach to grant-giving as we prepared to go UK-wide in 2019. In just six months, we received 36 fundable applications with a total value of £30,530.

Here are some of the ways that a financial assistance grant has changed the life of someone with Parkinson's who is facing financial challenge or need:-

*Mr A was without hot water and heating and despite significant mobility issues, was forced to cross town to use his close family's bathroom rather than the specially adapted facilities in his own home. Historic debt, caused by obsessive compulsive behaviour related to his Parkinson's meant his assessed, required contribution to a local grant scheme was way beyond his financial means. A financial assistance grant covered that contribution and work was able to start immediately to install a new boiler.*

*Recently widowed, Mrs P has lived with Parkinson's for over 10 years. A modest activity grant of less than £250 allowed her to make a sentimental journey back to her birthplace to reconnect with family and old friends, accompanied by her son and daughter-in-law. Mrs P told us **"Having someone else do the cooking for a day or two makes a complete break but seeing family and friends again is priceless."***

*Living alone in a hostel on subsistence funding, Mr Q needs carers to shop for him and prepare his food – often ready meals - in these most basic conditions. At 62, and seven years into his journey with Parkinson's, Mr Q has significant mobility problems. He has worked hard with help from the local rehabilitation team to master the flight of concrete steps he needs to negotiate to leave the hostel. He can't walk far, nor manage public transport. With the benefit of a financial assistance grant of £250, Mr Q can now afford to use a local taxi firm to access a community choir for people with Parkinson's and attend his place of worship. He also plans to join his local Parkinson's group.*

*Diagnosed with a rare, genetic form of young onset Parkinson's at 29, Mrs H has lived with Parkinson's for over 20 years. In her application she told us she **"is unable to travel and rarely leaves the house these days"** Her new Apple iPad, supplied by a financial assistance grant, enables Mrs H to stay in contact with her children who live some distance away and she now takes advantage of our online support groups. On hearing about the award Mrs H told us, **"I honestly have never done anything like this before, though my friend had been encouraging me to join Parkinson's UK and meet people. I'm so happy I will now be able to speak to my children on a daily basis via an iPad"***

*At 77, Mr B's Parkinson's had begun to affect his ability to walk upstairs safely and his wife, who is also his carer confided to us that she **"followed up behind him, just in case he was to topple"** putting them both at risk of falling and injury. Mr and Mrs B were keen to purchase a stair-lift with our help but our experienced grants panel needed to be sure that the couple had the advice they needed from a professional source. Following a detailed assessment report from an occupational therapist, Mr and Mrs B were awarded a financial assistance grant and now have a stair-lift which Mrs B rang to say **"has completely transformed our lives and taken so much worry away."***

**By the end of 2018, our financial assistance grants will have provided....**

- ✓ 13 items of specialist equipment
- ✓ 6 household electrical items
- ✓ 4 activity opportunities
- ✓ 5 home adaptations
- ✓ 5 laptops or tablets
- ✓ 2 residential respite breaks

**.... and improved at least 35 lives.**