

PENSION BENEFIT AND HEALTHCARE TEAM



BREAKING NEWS:

DISABILITY LIVING ALLOWANCE, ATTENDANCE ALLOWANCE AND CARER'S ALLOWANCE.

Back in October 2007, the European Court of Justice ruled that Disability Living Allowance (care component), Attendance Allowance and Carer's Allowance may be paid to people who leave the UK to live in another part of the EEA.

Part of the new eligibility criteria for first-time applicants abroad is that they must have been resident in the UK for 26 out of the previous 52 weeks to their claim.

Recently, however, the government published new information for those who lost their entitlement to benefit because they moved abroad before the 2007 ECJ ruling. If you have found yourself in this position, the new rules mean that, providing you moved abroad no earlier than 8th March 2001, you will now no longer have to satisfy the residency criterion when applying for re-instatement of benefit.

The Pension, Disability and Carer's Service will be writing to all those who have already applied for the reinstatement of their benefit with further information. If you have not reapplied, but now wish to do so, you should contact the Exportability Team. Their contact details and more information on the above can be found at www.direct.gov.uk.

QUESTIONS ON TAX?

As the end of one financial year approaches and another one begins, tax may be an issue at the forefront of your mind. The team often get asked questions relating to tax at the road shows and association talks. Unfortunately we are unable to answer these queries as tax is an issue solely dealt with by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

If you have a question regarding UK tax, please see www.hmrc.gov.uk or call Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs on 0044 151 210 2222.

Alternatively, if your query is regarding tax in Spain, you should contact the Agencia Tributaria www.aeat.es.

BEREAVEMENT

Last month's newsletter provided information on financial support available for those not yet in receipt of their pension. In this edition we focus on the help available for pensioners and those whose spouse or civil partner worked in Spain.

If you are in receipt of a pension...

...and your spouse or civil partner was in receipt of a UK State Pension when they died, rather than receiving the allowances mentioned in last month's newsletter, you may be eligible for an increase in your own State Pension payments. If, however, your late spouse or civil partner was not in receipt of a pension, you may also be entitled to a Bereavement Payment of £2000. Contact the IPC on 0044 191 218 7777 or see www.direct.gov.uk for more details.

If your late spouse or civil partner worked in Spain...

...you may be eligible for Bereavement Benefit (Pensión de Viudedad) from Spain. This is available to the husband, wife or *de facto* partner of anybody who was paying National Insurance contributions in Spain or receiving a Spanish pension. Contact your local Spanish Social Security office to apply (a list of offices can be found on www.seg-social.es).

PENSION REFORM

The Pension Reform Act will come into effect on 5th April 2010, bringing with it important changes to the rules regarding the UK State Pension. In particular it will introduce changes to the state pension age for women and to the number of years you need to work to get a pension from the UK.

If you are already a pensioner, be rest assured your pension entitlements will not be effected by the new rules. However, if you have not yet reached state pension age, find out more about how the changes may affect you at www.direct.gov.uk.

GOOD NEWS STORY!

The PBHT were contacted by the family of an elderly customer who is in a residential home in Tenerife. Although, as a UK State Pensioner, he believed he was registered with an E121 form, he was being charged for all his prescriptions. The PBHT established the customer needed to register new forms and assisted him in doing so. He is now able to get the medication he needs for free. *(Case dealt with by PBHT Malaga)*

UPCOMING EVENTS

The PBHT are holding the following events in the coming months:

19th May – Open day in Nerja, Málaga - See ukinspain.fco.gov.uk for more details



THE ROYAL AIR FORCE ASSOCIATION (RAFA) IN SPAIN

RAFA is a membership organisation of serving and former members of the Royal Air Force, their families, dependants and all those supporting the aims of the Association.

RAFA provides help, advice, assistance, comradeship and where required, welfare and care for the whole RAF family. Its welfare work in Spain is undertaken by dedicated volunteers and, given the geographical challenges, RAFA, The Royal British Legion (TRBL), Age Concern España and SAFFA, increasingly work closely together to ensure that the needs of our mutual beneficiaries across Spain are met.

The 3 branches of RAFA in Spain are:

- Benalmádena – the senior branch (www.rafabenalmadena.co.uk),
- Costa Blanca (Alicante) and North Costa Blanca.
- Gibraltar.

General & welfare information with regards to all three branches can be found at www.rafa.org.uk (Area information)

PARTNERING

The CWO for The Royal British Legion was very pleased to be invited to attend the recent Age Concern Training event in Mallorca.

There are number of volunteers who wear two hats (who knows where they get their energy?!) and it was a great opportunity to network and to look at possible future synergy regarding volunteer training.

OUR NEXT TRAINING EVENTS

Our next Volunteer Caseworker training days and Visitors courses will be held in:

Alicante – 14, 15, & 16 May and Malaga – 26, 27 & 28 May

We would be particularly grateful to hear from anyone with a good command of the Spanish language who would like to become a volunteer. Contact dmwilson@britishlegion.org.uk



EVENT IN CHICLANA

Sarah Rogers, the Country Casework Manager for the British Consulate/Age Concern Partnership Project, recently visited the Chiclana Foreign Residents Association (www.chifra.org) and presented information on the national Casework Service and the many ways Age Concern España help older expatriates in Spain. She described the role of a volunteer caseworker and how the home assessments that they undertake can help elderly British nationals resident in Spain access both Spanish and UK welfare entitlements and funds from UK charities. She implored the residents of Chiclana to become involved in volunteering and make a real difference to the elderly residents in their area.

Louise Fitchinger, an experienced caseworker based in Malaga, also described some of the many cases that she has been involved in. During the Q&A session, Louise answered provided information relating to local services and benefit entitlements. If you would like a presentation in your area to hear about how the casework service could help you or if you would like to become involved in volunteering please contact Sarah Rogers at CCM@ageconcern-espana.org or go to www.acespana.org.

VOLUNTEER CASEWORKER TRAINING EVENT

Age Concern España volunteer caseworkers undergo training in order to provide them with the skills and information that they require to undertake casework assessments. These volunteers help individuals to overcome financial poverty through income maximization, assist them in dealing with debt, ensure people receive the benefits that they are entitled to and provide them with information and advice about local activities and services available to them to reduce social exclusion and to support them to live full and independent lives.

This year the Casework Service held a two day training course in Mallorca which over 60 volunteer caseworkers from across Spain attended. This course included detailed information about the role of a caseworker, the casework process and skills designed to handle complex casework situations. There were also presentations by the British Consul to the Balears, Paul Abrey, the Pension, Benefit and Healthcare Team, an eminent neurologist and a specialist on Mental Capacity Advocacy. Funding for the Tenerife volunteers was kindly provided by the Cabildo of Tenerife, the Tenerife Sur Lions and the British Consulate in the Canaries.

The Casework Service would like to thank all of these organizations for their donations.

We are hoping that our **"Spring Garden Party"** fundraiser in **Fuengirola on 27th May 2010** will provide the remainder of funding for the volunteers. Please come along as all proceeds go to charity. If you cannot make it why not help the cause by making a donation at www.acespana.org.

The information provided in the PBHT, Royal British Legion and Age Concern articles in this publication is given in good faith. At the time of publication, all efforts have been made to ensure that the information provided is accurate. The contributors of these articles accept no liability for the content of this publication, or for the consequences of any actions taken on the basis of the information provided.