

Conference FAQs

General Information

Q: When and where is the conference taking place?

A: The conference will be held on 26th – 28th of September at East Midlands Conference Centre, Beeston Ln, Nottingham, Beeston NG7 2RJ.

Q: Who can attend the conference?

A: The conference is open to all members of the SMA community, as well as professionals in the field. Day tickets are available for Community members and professionals that wish to attend and participate in the event.

Q: Can I book more than one room through SMA UK?

A: Rooms are limited; therefore, to ensure as many members of the SMA community as possible can attend, you may only book up to two rooms per family group. Bookings are for immediate family only through SMA UK.

Q: How many people can this ticket accommodate?

A: This ticket will accommodate up to two adults (in either a double or twin bed), plus, if required, up to one child and one additional child under 5 in a travel cot. If you have older children, you will need to book two rooms

Q: Is there a dress code for the conference?

A: The dress code is casual.

Registration & Tickets

Q: How do I register for the conference?

A: You can register online at **SMA UK Big Weekend 2025 | Spinal Muscular Atrophy UK**.

Q: What is the cost of attending the conference?

A: Ticket prices vary based on registration type. Please check **SMA UK Big Weekend 2025 | Spinal Muscular Atrophy UK** for details.

Q: Can I bring my extended family?

A: Extended family are welcome to join when the sale of day tickets is released in May.

Q: Can I bring a personal assistant (PA) or caregiver?

A: Yes, attendees requiring support can bring a PA or caregiver. Please indicate this when registering. If you require an extra room for your PA or caregiver, this will need to be booked separately, and an additional room charge will apply

Q: Can I get a refund if I can't attend?

A: Tickets are non-refundable and non-transferable. In the event of cancellation due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., severe weather, venue closure, government restrictions), the organiser reserves the right to reschedule the event or provide an alternative arrangement. If rescheduling is not possible, ticket holders will be offered a refund.

Q: Can I transfer my ticket to someone else if I can't attend?

A: No, tickets are non-transferable. If you cannot attend, please contact us for further guidance.

Q: Can I purchase a ticket at the door?

A: No, all tickets must be purchased in advance.

Q: Are group discounts available for tickets?

A: We don't offer group discounts on registrations; however, your ticket will include:

- Accommodation for up to two adults (in either a double or twin bed).
- One child and an additional child under five in a travel cot (if required).
- One allocated room per group.

For full details, please visit **SMA UK Big Weekend 2025 | Spinal Muscular Atrophy UK**.

Agenda & Sessions

Q: Where can I find the conference schedule?

A: The full schedule is available on our website at **SMA UK** and will also be provided at the venue.

Q: Will there be breakout sessions or workshops?

A: Yes, there will be breakout sessions and workshops on Sunday, 28/09/2025. Please check the agenda for details.

Q: Are the sessions recorded for later viewing?

A: Some sessions may be recorded and available post-event. Details will be shared after the conference.

Q: Can I suggest topics for discussion or workshops?

A: Yes! We welcome community input. Please send suggestions to gary.edgecombe@smauk.org.uk before 30/06/2025.

Q: Will there be a Q&A session with speakers?

A: Yes, most sessions will include time for Q&A.

Q: Will there be any entertainment for children?

A: Yes, there will be entertainment for children on both Saturday and Sunday at the conference. Please check the agenda for details and specific timings.

Q: Will childcare be provided over the weekend?

A: We won't be providing formal childcare, but a room with soft play and other activities will be available. A parent must be present with the child at all times in this space. Parents remain fully responsible for all their children at all times and must be aware of their whereabouts.

Travel & Accommodation

Q: Are there hotels nearby?

A: Yes, accommodation is available both on-site and at nearby hotels.

If you book through us, you will stay at **The Orchard Hotel**, which is located at the East Midlands Conference Centre.

Alternative nearby options include:

- [The Orchard Hotel & Restaurant - Nottingham Venues](#)
- [The Jubilee Conference Venue Hotel | Nottingham Venues](#)
- [Holiday Inn Nottingham - Guest Reservations](#)
- [Crowne Plaza Nottingham](#)

Q: How do I get to the venue?

- **By road:** East Midlands Conference Centre is off the M1, JCT 25, 3 miles from Nottingham (Postcode NG7 2RJ).
- **By rail:** Nottingham railway station is 4 miles away. The nearest tram stop is University Boulevard, a 10-minute walk away.
- **By air:**
 - East Midlands Airport: 14 miles, 20 mins by car.
 - Birmingham Airport: 50 miles, 90 mins by car.
- **Parking:** Free on-site parking & electric charging points There are 4 electric charging bays in the car park, three of which are specifically for Tesla vehicles.

Directions can be found at [East Midlands Conference Centre](#).

Q: Can I extend my stay at the conference hotel?

A: Yes, but depending on availability with the venue. additional nights must be booked separately through the hotel.

Q: Is financial assistance available for travel?

A:

Travel bursaries are not generally available. However, in exceptional circumstances, limited assistance may be considered on a case-by-case basis. Please contact Office@smauk.org.uk for further information.

Accessibility

Q: Is the venue wheelchair accessible?

A: Yes, the venue is fully wheelchair accessible, with step-free access, accessible restrooms, and elevators. The dimensions of the lift are 120cm x 132cm (3ft 11in x 4ft 4in). The internal controls for the lift are within 90cm - 120cm from the floor, and the weight limit for the lift is 800kg.

Q: Will there be a changing room toilet on-site?

A: Yes, there are five accessible bathrooms at the hotel, and a Mobiloo will also be available. Additional changing facilities are at the swimming pool.

Q: Will a mobile hoist be available for the community to use?

A: Yes, we will have some communal mobile hoists available for community members to use on each floor. However, you are more than welcome to bring your own equipment.

Q: How many power supplies are available in a room for medical purposes?

A: All rooms will have power outlets available; however, if you need to power more than two devices, we recommend bringing your own extension cord to ensure you have enough access points.

Q: Will there be tables in the room for BiPAPs and other respiratory equipment?

A: Yes, each room has small tables, along with a larger table for refreshments. The larger table can be moved around to accommodate your needs.

Q: Will there be accessible seating available?

A: Yes, accessible seating will be available throughout the event. Please let us know in advance if you have specific seating needs.

Q: Will sign language interpreters or other accessibility services be provided?

A: If you require a BSL interpreter or other accommodations, please contact gary.edgecombe@smauk.org.uk in advance.

Q: Is there a quiet room available?

A: Yes, a quiet space will be available for attendees who need a break from the event. Carers and PAs can also use this space.

Q: Will there be a private space for medical interventions?

A: Yes, a designated private space will be available. Our team will be available to assist with any questions on the day.

Q: Are service animals allowed?

A: Yes, registered service animals are welcome. Please let us know in advance if you will be bringing one.

Q: Will there be accessible transport options from the airport or train station?

A: We are exploring accessible transport options. Please check our website for updates or contact us if you require assistance.

Food & Refreshments

Q: Are meals included in my ticket?

A: Yes, meals and refreshments are included. Tea and coffee refreshments will be available upon arrival, as well as at 11:30 AM and 3:00 PM on both days. A hot and cold buffet will be served between 1:00–2:00 PM for all attendees. Please check the event schedule for more food and refreshment updates. If you would like to arrange a soft meal alternative or have any dietary requirements, please let us know in advance.

Q: Can I bring my own food?

A: Yes, you are welcome to bring personal food items, particularly if you have medical or dietary requirements. Please inform us in advance so we can update our records accordingly.

Q: Will there be vegetarian, vegan, or allergen-free food options?

A: Yes, we will offer a variety of meal options, including vegetarian, vegan, and allergen-free choices. Please specify dietary requirements when registering.

Networking & Social Events

Q: Will there be opportunities for networking?

A: Yes, the conference includes social and networking sessions where attendees can connect and share experiences.

Q: Is there an evening social event?

A: Yes, there will be a social gathering on the evening of 27/09/2025. More details will be provided in the event schedule. If you have a weekend ticket, there is an option to opt out of this gathering if you would like to go out as a family or individually for a meal in Nottingham or surrounding areas instead.

Q Will there be a designated space for informal meetups?

A: Yes, a community lounge area will be available for informal networking.

Safety Guidelines

Q: What should I do in case of an emergency?

A: Please contact any **SMA UK** or event staff or dial **999** for assistance.

Q: What are some nearby hospitals in case of an emergency?

- **Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust - Queen's Medical Centre Campus**
 - Derby Road, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG7 2UH
 - **Nottingham NHS Treatment Centre (Nations Healthcare)**
 - Lister Road, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG7 2FT
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COVID-19 & Health Precautions

Q: What COVID-19 safety measures will be in place?

A: We will follow current government and venue guidelines regarding health and safety. Hand sanitizing stations will be available, and masks are welcome but not required.

Q: What should I do if I feel unwell during the conference?

A: If you feel unwell, please inform event staff immediately. A first aid station will be available on-site.

Sponsorship & Volunteering

Q: How can I become a sponsor?

A: Contact gary.edgecombe@smauk.org.uk for sponsorship opportunities.

Q: Can I volunteer for the conference?

A: Yes! Visit *Our Policies – SMA UK* to apply as a volunteer or contact us on gary.edgecombe@smauk.org.uk. Please note that if you are volunteering, you will need to undertake a DBS check. Additionally, all required forms must be completed by **10/07/2025**.

Contact Information

Q: Who can I contact for more information?

A: Email gary.edgecombe@smauk.org.uk or visit **Big Weekend: Forty and Forward – SMA UK** for updates.