



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Personal Independence Payment Assessment – Independent Review

A Call for Evidence

June 2014

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Introduction

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Paul Gray CB to undertake an independent review of how the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment is working, as required by Section 89 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012. This call for evidence will be one of several methods used to gather information. Evidence submitted will be used to inform a final independent report which will be laid before Parliament.

About this call for evidence

Who this call for evidence is aimed at

This call for evidence is aimed at organisations and individuals who have information that is relevant to how the PIP assessment is operating both for new claims and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) reassessment claims. This includes claims made under the Special Rules for terminally ill people.

We are interested in everyone's views, so please provide as much evidence as you can on the questions asked in this document. We know that people and organisations will have different levels of experience in the PIP process at this early stage. So do not feel you have to answer questions that are not relevant to you, for example where you do not have personal experience.

We have sent this call for evidence document to a large number of people and organisations who have already been involved in PIP work in some way or who have expressed an interest. Please share this document with, or tell us about, anyone you think will want to be involved in this call for evidence.

Purpose of the call for evidence

This call for evidence will be used to inform the independent reviewer's conclusions. The independent reviewer will then make recommendations to the Secretary of State, which will be laid before Parliament in the form of a report. As an independent review, the Secretary of State is not required to enact any or all of the recommendations, and any recommendations may be subject to further assessment by the DWP.

Scope for the call for evidence

This consultation applies to England, Wales and Scotland.

Duration of the call for evidence

The call for evidence period begins on **23 June 2014** and runs until **5 September 2014**.

How to respond

Please complete the [online form](#).

If you are unable to use the online form, please use one of the following methods:

Email: pip.independentreview@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Post: PIP Independent Review Team, Room 3S25, Zone South H, Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UA

Please ensure your response reaches us by **5 September 2014**.

We will acknowledge your response.

Accessible formats

This call for evidence is available in a range of formats. Large print, audio and British Sign Language (BSL) documents are available online. In addition Braille, large print, audio cassettes, CDs and BSL DVDs can also be provided in hard copy.

To request these formats, please contact:

Email: pip.independentreview@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Post: PIP Independent Review Team, Room 3S25, Zone South H, Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UA

Queries about the call for evidence

Please direct any queries about this call for evidence to:

Post: PIP Independent Review Team, Room 3S25, Zone South H, Quarry House, Quarry Hill, Leeds, LS2 7UA

Phone: 020 7449 7536

Email: pip.independentreview@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

How we carry out calls for evidence

Freedom of information

The information you send us may need to be passed to colleagues within the DWP, published in a summary of responses received and referred to in the published independent report.

All information contained in your response, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure if requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. By providing personal information for the purposes of the call for evidence exercise, it is understood that you consent to its disclosure and publication. If this is not the case, you should limit any personal information provided, or remove it completely. If you want the information in your response to be kept confidential, you should explain why as part of your response, although we cannot guarantee to do this.

To find out more about the general principles of Freedom of Information (Fol) and how they are applied within DWP, please contact:

Freedom of Information Team

Caxton House

6-12 Tothill Street

London

SW1H 9NA

Freedom-of-information-request@dpw.gsi.gov.uk

The Central Fol team cannot advise on this specific call for evidence exercise, only on Freedom of Information issues. More information about the Freedom of Information Act can be found at www.dpw.gov.uk/freedom-of-information

Terminology

Where we use the word “condition” in this document we mean disabilities, health conditions and impairments. We use “condition” for short.

Foreword from Paul Gray

The Minister of State for Disabled People has asked me to undertake this first independent review of the operation of the PIP assessment in line with the timescale specified in the Welfare Reform Act 2012

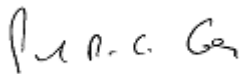
I am very conscious that this legislative requirement means the review is taking place at a relatively early stage in PIP's history. While that inevitably implies that much of the evidence about its operation will be at a preliminary stage, it also offers the opportunity to make observations and recommendations at a formative stage in the rollout of the system. For that reason I intend using my Terms of Reference ([Annex A](#)) as a framework to allow me to take a broad look at all aspects of the PIP process.

The stated aim of the DWP, in their development of the PIP assessment, was more accurately, objectively and consistently to assess an individual's requirement for additional support. Disabled people face very differing circumstances, so the assessment is intended to measure the impact of a person's health condition or impairment on their ability to carry out daily living or mobility activities, not to focus solely on the health condition or impairment itself. How effectively that challenging aim is being met, and being perceived to be met, will be a central part of this review

But I also plan to look at all other stages of the PIP process. For example, how people claim and receive decisions is just as important as ensuring they have been treated fairly and effectively, and the operation of the assessment also needs to be seen in that broader context.

Any review can of course only be as good as the quality of the evidence on which it is based. In launching this important first stage of the review, I therefore hope that everyone who is in a position to provide me with relevant and robustly based evidence will do so. I will use this to make recommendations, where I see that they are needed, on the future development and effectiveness of PIP.

Thank you in advance for your help.



Paul Gray CB

Context

Replacing Disability Living Allowance

When Personal Independence Payment (PIP) was introduced in April 2013 it followed a period where Disability Living Allowance (DLA) had not been fundamentally reformed since it was introduced over 20 years ago. The Government's stated intention was to develop a new benefit that reflected a modern understanding of disability and was financially sustainable for the future.

PIP is designed to maintain the key principles of DLA. It helps towards some of the extra costs because of a long-term condition. It is based on how a person's condition affects them, not the condition they have. It is not means-tested or subject to tax and it is payable to people who are both in and out of work. PIP is made up of two components (parts) - i) daily living component and ii) mobility. Each component has two rates; a standard rate and an enhanced rate. If a claimant is entitled to PIP, they will get one or both components. The components people receive depend on how their condition affects them.

Introducing Personal Independence Payment

PIP started to replace DLA for eligible people aged 16 to 64, from 8 April 2013. The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) initially started taking new claims to PIP in parts of the North of England. This was extended to cover Great Britain from 10 June 2013.

From 28 October 2013 the DWP started to invite some existing DLA claimants to claim PIP from across Wales, the Midlands, and East Anglia where:

- a change of circumstance was reported which would affect their rate of payment (this does not include payability decisions as a result of going into a care home, hospital or prison);
- a fixed term award was due to expire on or after 17 March 2014;
- a child turned 16 years old on or after 7 October 2013 (unless they have been awarded DLA under the Special Rules for terminally ill people); and
- an individual chose to claim PIP instead of their DLA

This process of "natural reassessment" continued with two further phases covering postcodes beginning with DG (Dumfries and Galloway), EH (Edinburgh), TD (Galashiels) and ML (Motherwell) from 13 January 2014 and from 3 February for postcodes beginning with CA (Carlisle), DL (Darlington), HG (Harrogate), LA (Lancaster) and YO (York).

DWP will continue to monitor both the new claims and reassessment processes before making any decisions on widening natural reassessment roll-out.

Personal Independence Payment claims process

Information about PIP, and how to claim, is available online at GOV.UK (<https://www.gov.uk/pip>) and within a PIP leaflet available from the DWP Leaflet Line (Telephone: 0845 7 31 32 33). DWP also send information about PIP directly to DLA claimants with their annual DLA uprating letter.

General information about PIP for support organisations and advisers is included in a PIP Toolkit (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-personal-independence-payment-toolkit-for-partners>). This includes fact sheets, sample PIP letters and suggested text to use in organisations' own communications and guidance.

Claimants phone DWP to make a new claim for PIP. Someone else can call on the claimant's behalf, but the claimant needs to be with them when they call. Claimants can also write to ask for a form. When a claim to PIP has been made, DWP will post a form called 'How your disability affects you' to the claimant except in those cases where a claim has been made under the Special Rules for terminal illness.

Most PIP claimants will be assessed by an independent health professional. Health professionals employed by Atos Healthcare and Capita Health and Wellbeing (known as assessment providers) consider any evidence the claimant has provided and also whether further evidence will help them in providing advice to the DWP.

The PIP assessment looks at an individual's ability to carry out a series of key everyday activities, including their ability to prepare food, eat, dress and undress, wash and bathe, make budgeting decisions, manage and monitor their health condition, communicate, engage with other people, plan and follow journeys, and move around.

DWP makes the decision about entitlement to PIP based on the advice of the assessment provider, the claimant's questionnaire and any supporting evidence available. DWP sends the claimant a letter once a decision has been made, explaining the decision and why it has been made. If the decision is not to award PIP, a DWP decision maker will try to contact the claimant to explain why. This also happens in DLA reassessment cases where the claim is not allowed or the award is less than the DLA one.

If a claimant wishes to dispute a decision on entitlement to PIP they can ask for a reconsideration of the original decision. Reconsideration is a mandatory step ahead of making an appeal. This step provides claimants with a further opportunity to present any additional evidence that could help the decision maker revise a decision if appropriate. After this, if the claimant still thinks the decision is incorrect, they can appeal to an independent tribunal.

Questions

About you

Question 1a: Are you responding as:

- An individual?
- An organisation - if so, please tell us which one and who the organisation represents? Where applicable, explain how the views of members were gathered.

Question 1b: Are you:

- Someone who has claimed PIP for yourself?
- Someone with a condition who has not claimed PIP?
- A friend, carer or family member acting on behalf of someone claiming PIP?
- A member of an organisation who has directly supported someone claiming PIP?
- A healthcare professional?
- Atos or Capita staff?
- DWP staff?
- Other? Please give details
- Prefer not to say

Question 1c: Please provide the following details in case there is further information we want to follow up on with you:

- Name

Address

Email

Telephone Number

- Prefer not to say

Claimant experience

Question 2: Consider the PIP process. This includes making a claim, the daily living and mobility criteria used in the PIP assessment and getting a decision. Please describe:

- a) How easy is it for people to understand the whole process?
- b) How easy is it for people to make a claim?

Face to face consultation

Atos Healthcare and Capita Health and Wellbeing carry out face to face consultations for DWP, either in a consultation centre or clinic or in the claimant's home.

Question 3: Please tell us about the experience of having a face to face consultation with an Atos or Capita health professional.

Further evidence

Key to the accuracy and quality of the assessment is getting the best, most relevant evidence (known as further evidence) from a variety of sources including GPs, hospitals, social workers, family members, carers and existing DLA information. Claimants can send supporting evidence with their 'How your disability affects you' form but they do not have to do so. It is part of the Atos or Capita health professional's role to consider what additional evidence will help them in providing advice on the claim to the DWP. They are responsible for requesting it from people listed on the claimants' form where they feel it is necessary.

Question 4: Consider how further evidence is used in the PIP process. Please provide information about whether further evidence is being:

- a) Requested appropriately by Atos or Capita?**
- b) Provided on time?**
- c) Used appropriately and fairly to inform decisions?**

Assessment criteria and process

The PIP assessment considers the impact of an individual's physical, mental, cognitive, sensory or learning condition on their daily life, taking account of multiple or fluctuating conditions. It is designed to measure the impact of a person's condition on their ability to participate, rather than the condition itself. It does this by looking at a number of key daily living and mobility activities.

Most assessments are carried out as a face-to-face consultation in a clinic or the claimant's own home. Where there is sufficient evidence available already, sent in by the claimant or gathered from other sources, some assessments can be completed on a paper basis. People claiming under Special Rules for terminal illness are not required to attend a face-to-face assessment.

Question 5: Where you have evidence of any of the following, please describe how effective the PIP assessment is:

- a. For people with one condition?**
- b. For people with more than one condition?**
- c. For people with conditions that change (fluctuating conditions)?**
- d. For terminally ill people?**
- e. In identifying whether someone is eligible for the standard rate or the enhanced rate?**

- f. **In identifying those eligible for the mobility component of PIP as a result of needs arising from their condition?**

Reconsideration and Appeals

If people are unhappy with the decision made on their PIP claim, they can ask DWP to look at it again. The first stage in this process is reconsideration. If people are still unhappy after this has happened, they can appeal via Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service.

Question 6: In your experience what are the reasons for people asking the DWP to look again at their PIP decision?

Question 7: In your experience what are the reasons for people making an appeal to Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS)?

Improvements

The DWP has acknowledged that currently the overall PIP process is taking longer than expected and has said that it is committed to making improvements as a priority.

Question 8: What has been your experience of the time it takes from making a claim to getting a decision?

Question 9: What have been the impacts of this?

DWP is introducing PIP in phases, learning from new claims experience and how natural reassessment is working in limited geographical areas before rolling out further.

Question 10: Consider the whole PIP process. This includes making a claim, going to a face to face consultation, the daily living and mobility criteria used in the PIP assessment and getting a decision. What improvements could be made? Please explain how these improvements would help.

Claimant satisfaction

Question 11: In your experience how satisfied are you with the overall process? Please tell us why you feel this way.

Question 12: Consider the decisions made on PIP claims. How satisfied are you that these are being made appropriately and fairly? Please tell us why you feel this way.

Additional information or evidence

Question 13: Please provide any additional evidence or information you think might help inform the review.

Annex A

Independent review of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Assessment - Terms of Reference

To provide the Secretary of State for Work & Pensions with an independent report evaluating the:

- operation of the Personal Independence Payment assessment
- PIP claimants' experience of taking part in the assessment
- perceptions of healthcare professionals and other staff involved in carrying out the assessment
- effectiveness of the PIP assessment in correctly identifying those claimants who are currently eligible for enhanced or standard rate PIP as a result of needs arising from their condition; and
- effectiveness of the PIP assessment in correctly identifying claimants whose needs arising from their condition are such that they are eligible for the mobility component of PIP.