

Personal Independence Payment – Briefing note

High level reassessment strategy

Objectives

1. This note adds further detail to the Operational Delivery note published on 9 May 2011¹ and the note outlining our early thinking on the ways in which people of working age could become entitled to Personal Independence Payment published on 14 November 2011². This note should be read in conjunction with those already published.
2. Personal Independence Payment will be introduced from April 2013 for new claimants only. From October 2013, existing Disability Living Allowance (DLA) recipients who are of working-age (16 to 64)³ at the point of introduction of Personal Independence Payment will be assessed to establish if they are eligible for the new benefit. Where individuals satisfy the entitlement criteria for the benefit they will begin to receive Personal Independence Payment and their DLA will cease. Those individuals who are not entitled to Personal Independence Payment, or who choose not to claim it, will not be able to retain their DLA as an alternative. We anticipate that around two million existing working age DLA claimants will need to be asked if they want to claim Personal Independence Payment.
3. One of our core objectives in setting out how we will reassess existing DLA recipients has been to involve disabled people and their representative organisations to shape our approach, including the processes we need to develop and a timetable that takes account of lessons learned. We have held regular meetings with the Personal Independence Payment Implementation Development Group (IDG)⁴ and other groups e.g. Equality 2025, customer insight groups and disabled people directly to help shape our high level proposals contained in this Strategy Note. We intend to continue to engage with the IDG and other stakeholders to refine the detail.

What we have done

4. Following the work we did to identify the core considerations (set out in the Briefing Note published on 14 November 2011) we carried out a significant

¹ Personal Independence Payment: policy briefing note – Delivery – the operational approach. Department for Work and Pensions, May 2011. <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/pip-briefing-delivery.pdf>

² Personal Independence Payment: policy briefing note – Managing claims to Personal Independence Payment. Department for Work and Pensions, November 2011. <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/pip-briefing-managing-claims.pdf>

³ Every one aged 64 or under (excluding children age 15 or under) on 8 April 2013 will be subject to reassessment activity.

⁴ Personal Independence Payment Implementation Development Group, our primary mechanism to consult with national and local organisations that represent a broad range of disabled people on the operational design, development and implementation of Personal Independence Payment.

amount of work, including some engagement with the IDG, to develop a sensible implementation plan for reassessment that allows us to learn from the early stages of introducing Personal Independence Payment to new claimants. We have also considered how new systems and processes must have time to bed in before we move to reassess existing DLA claimants. On this basis we have committed to avoiding a “big-bang” approach to the introduction of Personal Independence Payment: instead providing for a controlled and measured approach that will start with new claims only⁵ before we move to the reassessment phase.

5. Under the controlled start we will be taking a few thousand new claims a month from a distinct geographical area. The Government announced on 12 March 2012 that we will be using Bootle Benefits Centre which takes claims from regions including Merseyside, North West England, Cumbria, Cheshire and North East England. We are still developing the details on how the controlled start will begin but individuals living outside the controlled area will claim DLA in the normal way and be reassessed for Personal Independence Payment at a later date.
6. Once we are satisfied that our approach to new claimants is working within that controlled environment we will begin to take new claims to Personal Independence Payment without restriction⁶. We will continue to monitor our processes for new claims for a number of months to ensure that they are working effectively for both claimants and the Department and make improvements where necessary. We anticipate that the controlled start to new claims will take around six months after which we will start the process of reassessing existing DLA claimants for entitlement to Personal Independence Payment, i.e. around October 2013. The following paragraphs outline our proposed approach, the timetable and the support we will provide through this process.

Reassessment approach and timetable

7. There are two broad categories of existing DLA claimants who we can expect to go through the reassessment process:
 - **Natural reassessment** – where an existing DLA claimant enters the reassessment process due to reporting a change in their care or mobility needs which might affect their award (known as supersession cases) or where a fixed term award comes to an end (known as renewal cases); and
 - **Managed reassessment** – where the Department initiates the reassessment process.

⁵ Lord Freud, Welfare Reform Bill, Lords Report, Hansard: 17 January, Columns 525 to 528 – <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201212/ldhansrd/text/120117-0002.htm#12011753000692>

⁶ New claims to Personal Independence Payment will not be permitted from existing DLA claimants until reassessment activity starts from October 2013.

Natural reassessment

8. Recognising that some claimants have fixed period awards which may need renewing, and wanting to avoid having to renew these as DLA once in the reassessment window, we have identified an opportunity to use the current renewal trigger point to invite a claim for Personal Independence Payment. The current 20 week renewal period provides a suitable timetable over which we can ensure there is sufficient time for a claimant to get through the end-to-end claim process for Personal Independence Payment without a break in payment where someone meets the entitlement conditions for the new benefit.
9. We therefore intend that from October 2013 we will begin inviting claims to Personal Independence Payment from DLA recipients who have a fixed term award.
10. October 2013 will also see the start of the process to invite claims to Personal Independence Payment from DLA recipients reporting a change in their care or mobility needs. In these circumstances the DLA award will not be subject to a supersession decision and will continue in payment so long as the individual engages with the reassessment process and until a decision is made on their claim to Personal Independence Payment.

Managed reassessment

11. For the managed reassessment DLA caseload we intend to run a Pathfinder exercise of around 30,000 claims between October and December 2013. During this period we will monitor and evaluate a range of issues, for example claimant behaviours, how well they are responding to communications and whether our measures to identify those who may require additional support are working. To allow time for this, and to put in place measures to tackle any processes which need refining, we propose only expanding managed reassessment activities to all cases from January 2014.
12. On the basis of feedback received from the IDG and other stakeholders on how we approach managed reassessment we will select cases on a random basis to ensure that claimants are treated equitably. However, we have identified a small number of claim types that we believe will need to be brought through to reassessment on a different timescale, for example terminally ill individuals who may have an indefinite award or those in receipt of Incapacity Benefit who have been scheduled to be reassessed for Employment and Support Allowance. Once again, the IDG have been consulted on these additionally managed claims and agree that they can be brought outside the overarching random selection process. We should stress that in all cases we will give DLA claimants sufficient advance notice of when they will be invited to claim Personal Independence Payment and what they need to do.
13. Once all reassessment processes are running to full capacity the intention is that every DLA claimant will have been contacted and asked if they want to claim Personal Independence Payment by March 2016. Within this reassessment window, processes for selecting and inviting claims will allow for volumes to be adjusted, for example where there are operational capacity issues.

14. For those in the latter stages of the reassessment timetable, or where appeals on Personal Independence Payment decisions are outstanding, we would not expect their claim to Personal Independence Payment to have been fully completed until later during 2016.
15. Our timetable for reassessment is at Annex A together with estimates⁷ of the numbers of people expected to be reassessed under the different processes.

Support through the process

16. In all cases, except for those involving a change in their needs, we intend to contact existing DLA claimants in advance of their need to claim Personal Independence Payment to inform them of what they need to do. For people reporting a change in their needs we will explain that their request for a reconsideration of their existing claim will be taken as a request to claim Personal Independence Payment instead.
17. We intend that in all instances claimants to Personal Independence Payment will be given adequate time to claim. We will ensure that reminders are issued by post and/or by telephone and that those identified as needing additional help to claim will be fully supported through to a consultation with a trained independent assessment provider. Except where existing DLA claimants fail to claim Personal Independence Payment, or do not engage with post-claim activity, we will also ensure that their DLA will continue in payment until such time as a decision on entitlement to Personal Independence Payment has been made.

Further work we will do

18. We are actively considering what actions need to be taken where someone fails to engage with the invitation to claim, or to engage with post-claim activity such as participation in a face-to-face consultation. The key considerations around this are our commitment to support individuals to participate in processes, and to provide additional support for those identified as needing it, but in ways which do not promote behaviours or actions which place unwarranted delays on the reassessment process.
19. We intend to continue discussing our plans through our regular meetings with the IDG⁸ and other claimant representative groups to ensure that the operational design, development, implementation and delivery of Personal Independence Payment is informed by disabled people and their representative organisations. We will also be working with them to look at how we identify people who need help with the process (including those who might not already be supported by a representative) and what support that might be and how third parties can help.
20. We will also keep our approach to reassessment under review to ensure that it meets the diverse needs of both claimants and the Department.

⁷ The estimates are subject to change and should be taken as indicative.

⁸ The next meeting with the IDG is on 8 March 2012.

21. This high level outline of our reassessment strategy is still under review and will be further informed by a formal consultation on the lower level of detail needed for the Regulations to support Personal Independence Payment due to begin in the Spring.

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Percentage Breakdown of 2million Claimants to be Reassessed

Figures in this diagram show the proportion of the caseload which will be reassessed within each group

	Financial Year 2013/14												Financial Year 2014/15												Financial Year 2015/16																																			
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar																								
New Claims	<p>PIP New Claims Rollout June2013 PIP New Claim Limited Go Live 08April2013</p>																																																											
Natural Reassessment Renewals													5%												9%												5%																							
	<p>PIP Reassessment forms will be sent out from Oct2013 to to those with fixed term DLA awards</p>																																																											
Natural Reassessment Supersessions													2%												3%												1%																							
	<p>Supersessions received from Oct13 onwards will be invited to claim PIP. No action will be taken on their current DLA award</p>																																																											
Managed Reassessment Pathfinder													2%																																															
	<p>30k DLA recipients on indefinite awards will start the reassessment process during Oct-Dec2013</p>																																																											
Managed Reassessment Main Phase													10%												37%												19%												8%											
	<p>DLA claimants with indefinite awards will be randomly selected and reassessed during the period Jan14 to Mar16 Some groups will be left until the end of the reassessment window</p>																																																											
Percentage of the DLA caseload who have started the Reassessment process by the end of each Financial Year													19%												68%												100%																							

Annex A – text version

Two million claimants will be reassessed for Personal Independence Payment between 2013/14 and 2015/16. Figures quoted below represent the proportion of these claimants which will be reassessed within each group.

Financial year 2013/14

- Personal Independence Payment controlled start for new claims only on 8 April 2013
- New claims accepted everywhere from June 2013
- Natural reassessment starts from October 2013
 - Reassessment forms will be sent out to people reaching the end of a fixed term award. 2% of claimants.
 - People reporting a change to their condition will be invited to claim Personal Independence Payment. 2% of claimants.
- Managed reassessment starts from October 2013.
 - Pathfinder of 30,000 cases with indefinite award will start the reassessment process. Runs from October 2013 to December 2013. 2% of claimants.
 - Main phase begins from January 2014. Claimants with indefinite awards will start the reassessment process. 10% of claimants.
- Total of 19% of all claimants reassessed during 2013/14

Financial year 2014/15

- All reassessment activity continues throughout the year.
 - Further 9% of claimants taken through under fixed term awards coming to an end.
 - Further 3% of claimants taken through because they report a change in their condition.
 - Further 37% of cases under managed reassessment.
- Total of 68% of claimants will now have started or completed the reassessment process.

Financial year 2015/16

- All reassessment activity continues throughout the year.
 - Further 5% of claimants taken through under fixed term awards coming to an end.
 - Further 1% of claimants taken through because they report a change in their condition.
 - Further 19% of cases under managed reassessment.
- Claimants not due for managed or natural reassessment invited to claim from November 2014.
- All claimants invited to claim by March 2016.
- By March 2016 100% of DLA claimants will now have started or completed the reassessment process.