

Health and Disability Assessment Services Framework

The Framework for the provision of Health and Disability Assessment Services was awarded in April 2012. It supports the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and other contracting authorities, including the Department for Social Development in Northern Ireland (www.dsdni.gov.uk), in undertaking a range of functions including, but not limited to, supporting decisions on entitlement to social security benefits and wider requirements which may involve health assessments as part of business delivery.

The Framework Agreement is divided into the following Lots:

- Lot 1 - North West England/North East England/Scotland/Isle of Man
- Lot 2 - Central England/Wales
- Lot 3 - London/Southern England
- Lot 4 - Northern Ireland
- Lot 5 - United Kingdom (including Northern Ireland) and Isle of Man

The Framework tender documentation remains available for information purposes only, through [Contracts Finder](#).

[List of Framework suppliers by Lot.](#)

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) Assessment Service

In August 2012, DWP awarded the first contracts from the Framework, which were for suppliers of the new assessment for PIP in Lots 1, 2 and 3. The contract for Lot 4 was awarded in November 2012.

The PIP suppliers are:

- Lot 1 – Atos Healthcare
- Lot 2 – Capita Business Services Ltd
- Lot 3 – Atos Healthcare
- Lot 4 – Capita Business Services Ltd

PIP is part of the Government's welfare reform agenda and from 8 April 2013 replaced Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for people of working age (16 to 64). PIP is being introduced in stages over a number of years. The new benefit will better reflect today's understanding of disability which has changed a lot in the two decades since DLA was introduced.

A core feature of PIP is a new assessment of individual needs by a trained Health Professional. These face-to-face assessments ensure that, unlike in DLA, disabled people will be able to have a detailed discussion about how their impairment affects their everyday lives – rather than having to self-assess themselves through a complicated claim form. This means that decisions on benefit entitlement will be more accurate, objective and consistent than currently. All suppliers will be working to the same legislative framework, criteria and guidance and DWP will be closely monitoring and auditing assessments to ensure their quality and consistency.

The PIP tender documentation remains available for information purposes only, through [Contracts Finder](#).

Work Capability Assessments

To support delivery of the Medical Services Agreement (see below), the Government announced in July 2013, that DWP would seek additional capacity to deliver Work Capability Assessments from summer 2014. This additional capacity will be procured using the Framework Agreement. More information will be provided on this procurement exercise as it progresses.

Medical Services Agreement

The Medical Services Agreement (MSA) predates the establishment of the Health and Disability Assessment Services Framework. It was awarded on a national basis in 2005 to Atos Healthcare following a competitive tendering exercise.

The MSA contracts for medical advice and assessments, which assist DWP decision makers in determining a claimant's entitlement to the following benefits:

- Incapacity Benefit (Reassessment)
- Employment and Support Allowance (ESA)
- Disability Living Allowance
- Attendance Allowance
- Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit
- Veteran Agency War Pension Claims

The largest element of the contract revolves around delivering work capability assessments for ESA including Incapacity Benefit (Reassessment). Entitlement to ESA is based on an individual's functional ability rather than the condition itself. Anyone claiming ESA will undergo the Work Capability Assessment.

Contract for the Provision of Eye Care Professional Reports

Since August 2006, DWP has a contract with ASE Corporate Eyecare to undertake examinations and produce reports to support DWP in making decisions on DLA claims. This contract predates the establishment of the Health and Disability Assessment services Framework.