

Citizens Advice Bureau



Our ref: appeals team

Your ref:

Date: 3 July 2013

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PIP Assessment Development Team
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Dear Sirs

Consultation on the PIP assessment Moving around activity

We should like to present our views on the Moving around activity in the new PIP assessment. We are a small team of volunteer advisers who have many years' benefit experience. Our current remit is to advise clients on the benefit appeals process, from explaining benefit qualifying criteria through to representation at appeal tribunals. We also undertake benefits training for new volunteers in the Bureau. As such, we have extensive knowledge, from the claimant's perspective, of the mobility criteria in DLA, ESA and PIP.

What are your views on the Moving around activity within the current PIP assessment criteria?

We welcome the greater clarification in PIP of this activity. The criteria are far more specific than "unable to walk" or "virtually unable to walk" and this makes it easier to assist claimants.

In general, we find that clients have no idea of distances, and many have no idea of how far they can mobilise with ease. Our solution has been to measure fixed distances from the door of our office, so that we can ask claimants if they can walk as far as the corner, or to the end of the street. We make use of Google Maps to identify distances from the client's home, for example, to the nearest bus stop. This is information which could probably be elicited in the Claimant Story form, but we think that question 14a may be difficult for many claimants to answer accurately.

Hours of opening
Mondays to Fridays 9.30am – 4.30pm

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We infer from the different levels within this activity that:

- the 20m distance equates broadly to moving around inside the home,
- the 50m distance equates broadly to being able to get outside and into a car or taxi parked close to the dwelling, and
- distances up to 200m equate broadly to being able to access public transport, or walk round a supermarket

It may be helpful for claimants to have these descriptions included in guidance, perhaps by expanding question 14 Extra Information.

In conclusion, we agree with the current descriptors attached to the activity, but would like to make the following recommendations in connection with the application form.

Firstly, we would like to see more questions asked about this activity – initially focussing on whether the claimant can mobilise inside and outside, or inside only. It may be helpful to know if they use public transport, or travel by car or taxi.

Secondly, many claimants are put off by having to provide narrative, and miss out relevant points. Or alternatively they provide narrative that is not relevant. We suggest that claimants would be more comfortable being directed to choose from a range of answers to specific questions that will establish more clearly their ability to carry out this activity. If the application process were more focussed on obtaining relevant information, we feel that many appeals could be eliminated.

We trust you will find our opinion useful in the consultation process, and would be happy to provide case-based examples if required.

Yours faithfully



Fiona Campbell & Martin Delaney
Appeals Team

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