

RESTRICTED

Peer Review

Customer: [REDACTED]

Review conducted by:

Name: [REDACTED]

Role: [REDACTED]

Address: Ebury House Jobcentre, 14 Dee Street, Aberdeen, AB11 6DR

Signed off by:

Guidance and Notes for Peer Review authors

1. The Peer Review process complies with the Ombudsman's Principles of complaint handling:
 - Getting it right
 - Being customer focused
 - Being open and accountable
 - Acting fairly and proportionally
 - Putting things right
 - Seeking continuous improvement
2. Consider all available evidence and if required ask for additional documents. The commissioning body will supply a detailed chronology.
3. For suicide/alleged suicide cases take into account actions that happened up until the customer's death, actions after that date can be considered but are usually outside of the scope of the investigation. Legal Services advice can be sought if required.
4. Any local recommendations identified by this review will be taken forward by the commissioning body.
5. Recommendations that impact on national Customer Journeys will be handed by Operational Intelligence Division.
6. This Peer Review must be signed off at SCS level, please ensure that this approval has been gained before returning the report to the Peer Review Focal Point.

Peer Review - purpose and methodology

This Peer Review has been commissioned by Southern England Group [REDACTED]
This review focuses on the whole claimant journey rather than the handling of any complaint – looking at both any variances from Customer Journey national standards at the local level and any improvements required to the Customer Journeys. Its purpose is as a continuous improvement tool and not to be used to seek out or apportion blame.

The review has been conducted by examining all available claimant records, relevant evidence and current/appropriate guidance.

Focus of Peer Review [REDACTED]

Background [REDACTED]

Summary of Findings [REDACTED]

Lessons Learnt [REDACTED]

Recommendations for Local consideration

Decision Makers should be reminded of the importance of making telephone contact with customers at specific points throughout the IBR process, especially when a customer is informed of a decision that they have no limited capability for work as they may be prompted to supply further medical evidence at that point or may need assistance to make a claim to an alternative benefit. It is important that the customer understands the implication of the decision and, although they are given written notification, a telephone conversation is the preferred method, particularly if a customer is identified as being vulnerable.

The local JCP office needs to review the advice they offer enquirers regarding methods to claim ESA. Stocks of clerical ESA1 forms are held in the local office and should be offered to face to face enquirers. If the enquirer's preferred method of claiming is online, they should be directed to www.Gov.uk and given clear advice on what form to look for, where to find it and where the completed form should be returned to.

A review should be undertaken of how documents being moved between offices are tracked, particularly in regards to documents being stored at the end of a claim. This should also cover how supporting medical evidence is received, recorded and actioned.

Recommendations for National Customer Journeys

As above, Decision Makers should be reminded of the importance of making telephone contact with customers to inform them of their decision where at all possible.

The advice on the www.Gov.uk publications page must be amended to reduce the possibility of misunderstandings about the ESA50. If possible a link should be provided to the Gov.uk page with information about how to make a claim and the wording "Fill in this form if you are making a claim for benefits or National Insurance credits on the basis of a limited capacity for work" should be revised.

A review of national guidance should be undertaken to consider improving the handling of ESA50s which are provided when there is no existing claim to ESA and improving the information recorded on systems when claim action needs to be taken for vulnerable customers, taking account of the history of contact with the customer.

Timetable of Events

[REDACTED]

Annexes:

Additional papers listed below. [embed as required]

Annex 1	Annex 2	Annex 3	Annex 4
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]