

DWP Stakeholder Bulletin – May 2013

Welcome to the May 2013 issue of the DWP Stakeholder Bulletin – a newsletter to let you know what is happening in the Department for Work and Pensions.

If you have a comment or feedback about this bulletin, please email corporate.stakeholders@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

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Universal Credit launched in parts of the North-West of England

The early introduction of Universal Credit has begun in the Greater Manchester and Cheshire area. This is known as a Pathfinder, and it will trial Universal Credit before progressive national roll-out begins in October.

It is being delivered through the four local Jobcentres in selected areas within the local authorities of Tameside, Oldham, Warrington and Wigan. Ashton-under-Lyne Jobcentre is already accepting claims for Universal Credit. Wigan, Warrington and Oldham Jobcentres are trialling the new Claimant Commitment and will take claims for Universal Credit starting from July. The Claimant Commitment is part of the support that Universal Credit will provide to help claimants find work. It sets out the responsibilities that claimants of out-of-work benefits must accept in return for getting those benefits.

We have refreshed the [Universal Credit toolkit for partner organisations](#) to provide information about Universal Credit in different formats, including short films showing personal stories from people who have made a success of their jobsearch.

Personal Independence Payment Update

As we [previously told you](#), Personal Independence Payment (PIP) was designed using research conducted with disabled people and those who represent them. The full research report has now been published on the [DWP website](#).

We are keen to continue to learn from feedback and would ask that those in your organisation who have supported a claimant in making a claim to PIP in northern England share feedback with their local [DWP Partnership Manager](#).

From 10 June 2013, claimants across Great Britain aged between 16-64 will be able to make a new claim to PIP. Full details are available in the [PIP Toolkit](#).

Appeals process changes – new information for external stakeholders now available

Changes to DWP's appeals process were introduced in April, initially as part of the design of the new benefits Personal Independence Payment and Universal Credit. The changes are mandatory reconsideration, direct lodgement and time limits for appeal responses. They will be introduced for all other benefits and child maintenance cases from 28 October 2013.

To support customer representative and advisory groups in explaining the changes to those affected, DWP has published an [information pack](#) and [detailed lines to take](#), which are available in English and Welsh. Both versions are available from the [Advisers and Intermediaries pages](#) of the DWP website.

Social Justice One Year On Report and October Conference

A year on from the Social Justice strategy, DWP has launched [Social Justice: transforming lives – one year on](#). This sets out progress made against over one hundred different commitments across government to show what has been achieved so far. The key indicators include tackling the root causes of family breakdown, worklessness, drug and alcohol addiction and promoting social investment.

Our second Social Justice national conference in October 2013 will check on the progress in delivering Social Justice. It will include presentations and speeches from ministers, policy makers and policy implementers and show how the Government is measuring the success of the strategy.

Social Fund Reform

Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans ended on 31 March 2013.

From 1 April 2013:

- DWP introduced Short Term Benefit Advances (STBAs); and
- English local authorities (LAs) and the Scottish and Welsh devolved administrations (DAs) introduced new provision that better meets the needs of their communities.

Local engagement between DWP and LAs/DAs has been critical to the successful transition to this new provision.

To support these significant changes and to address some initial issues, additional guidance updates have been issued to DWP staff and LAs/DAs

have been supported with further information, including details of the STBA process.

Campaign to promote the New Enterprise Allowance –‘You’re Not Alone’

DWP launched a New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) campaign, supported by entrepreneur Levi Roots, on 9 May. Its title, ‘You’re Not Alone’, is to emphasise the valuable support available through NEA from a business mentor in the early months of trading.

Throughout the summer, Jobcentres will be encouraging unemployed customers to consider NEA as a future career prospect. Posters and flyers will be prominently displayed to generate interest. Jobcentre Plus advisers will be exploring the possibility of self-employment with their customers and explaining what help and support is available in their local area. There will also be a range of other campaign activity using social media channels as well as press and PR.

Information on who is eligible for NEA is available on the [DWP website](#).

Balance of Competence Review: Free Movement of Persons

DWP and the Home Office are seeking evidence from stakeholders on how the free movement of persons within the EU, and the social security rules which underpin free movement, impact on the UK and the national interest.

This [Call for Evidence](#) launched on 16 May and will close on 5 August. A final report which will inform the policy debate on free movement of persons within the EU will be published late in 2013.

This report is part of a cross-Government review of the nature of the UK’s relationship with the EU. More information about the review is available [here](#).

DWP consultations

All current live DWP consultations and the latest published consultation responses are available on the [consultation pages](#) of GOV.UK.

No new consultations have been launched since the April Bulletin.