

Freedom of Information request 2012-5216

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Information request

“Please can you tell me how many people within my area suffer the same condition (Chronic fatigue syndrome and fibromyalgia) under the freedom of information act are receiving benefits that I am appealing your decision for.”

DWP response

I can confirm that the Department does hold some information falling within the description specified in your request. However, we estimate that the cost of fully complying with your request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600.

The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to fully comply with your request.

For Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Allowance (IB/SDA) and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) claimant's Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS) and Fibromyalgia are recorded, on datasets available for analysis, under a number of high level categories.

For ESA and IB/SDA CFS falls within the *Other Disorders of the Brain* and Fibromyalgia under *Other Soft Tissue Disorders, not specified elsewhere*. For DLA CFS and Fibromyalgia both fall within *Chronic Pain Syndromes*.

The information available within the appropriate limit for these categories is given in the tables below.

Number of ESA and IB/SDA claimants with *Other Disorders of Brain*² or *Other Soft Tissue Disorders, not specified elsewhere*³ as main disabling condition by Area: February 2012

Benefit	Area	Main disabling condition	
		<i>Other Disorders of Brain</i> ²	<i>Other Soft Tissue Disorders, not</i>

			<i>specified elsewhere</i> ³
ESA	Total	9,320	9,390
	Wales	390	480
	Torfaen	-	20
IB/SDA	Total	17,690	10,000
	Wales	830	560
	Torfaen	20	30

Source: DWP Information, Governance and Security Directorate

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10. “-“ denotes nil or negligible.
2. **Other Disorders of Brain:** Other Disorders of the Brain includes the following disabling conditions; Myalgic Encephalomyelitis (ME), Brain Damage, Post Viral Fatigue Syndrome, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), Viral Fatigue and Anoxic Brain Injury
3. **Other Soft Tissue Disorders, not specified elsewhere:** Other Soft Tissue Disorders, not elsewhere includes the following disabling conditions; Fibrositis, Myalgia, Neuralgia (Except Trigeminal Neuralgia), Neuritis Unspecified, Neuritis, Any Specified Form, Rheumatism Acute, Rheumatism Other, Musculo-Skeletal Pains, Fibromyalgia and Neuritis
4. To qualify for Incapacity Benefit (IB), claimants have to undertake a medical assessment of incapacity for work called a Personal Capability Assessment. Under the Employment Support Allowance regime, new claimants have to undergo the Work Capability assessment. From April 2011 Incapacity Benefit recipients will begin also to undertake this assessment. **The medical condition recorded on the claim form does not itself confer entitlement to Incapacity Benefit or Employment Support Allowance.** So, for example, a decision on entitlement for a customer claiming IB or ESA on the basis of Other Disorders of Brain would be based on their ability to carry out the range of activities assessed by the Personal / Work Capability Assessment; or on the effects of any associated mental health problems.
5. Incapacity Benefit was replaced by Employment Support Allowance (ESA) from October 2008

Number of DLA claimants with *Chronic Pain Syndromes*² as main disabling condition by Area: February 2012

Benefit	Area	Main disabling condition
		<i>Chronic Pain Syndromes</i>²
DLA	Total	41,390
	Wales	2,130

Source: DWP Information, Governance and Security Directorate

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
2. **Chronic Pain Syndromes:** Chronic Pain Syndromes includes the following disabling conditions; Chronic Fatigue Syndrome (CFS), Fibromyalgia and Pain syndromes - Chronic - Other / type not known
3. DLA caseloads give the number of people with DLA in payment and so excludes people with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital.
4. **A diagnosed medical condition does not mean that someone is automatically entitled to DLA.** Entitlement is dependent on an assessment of how much help someone needs with personal care and/or mobility because of their disability. For example, a customer would not be awarded DLA on the basis of a diagnosis of Chronic Pain Syndromes the decision is based upon the care/supervision and difficulty getting around as a result of the condition and any associated physical or psychological complications. These statistics are only collected for administrative purposes