

Welfare Reform

in the West of England District



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Filename: Reassessment of incapacity benefits

Date: 08/10/10

Version: 3.0

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for Work and Pensions

Welcome, Domestic and Introductions

Agenda

Welcome/Domestics	Clair Silcocks
Introductions	Clair Silcocks
Setting the Context for Welfare Reform	Julie Macnamara
Background to IB/IS Reassessment	Clair Silcocks
The Customer Journey	Julie Macnamara
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Welfare Reform Changes 2010/2011

In the Government's recent Spending Review Announcements, the following new initiatives were confirmed or announced:

- the Work Programme will be implemented from June 2011
- The Get Britain Working Initiative which includes Work Together, Work Experience, Work Clubs and Work for Yourself
- the Universal Credit and
- IB/IS Reassessment

The Work Programme

The Work Programme will be implemented from June 2011 and will replace all existing training courses offered by DWP apart from Work Choice and Access to Work

DWP will offer stronger incentives for providers to work with the harder to help and for the first time, pay providers out of the additional benefits that are saved as a result of moving customers into work.

The Work Programme

The Work Programme will be delivered by private providers contracted by DWP

The Flexible New Deal and Pathways to Work will be phased out and replaced by The Work Programme in the summer of next year.

The Work Programme will be far more personalised than existing programmes - support being determined by front line providers based on the needs of individuals.

Get Britain Working

Get Britain Working is built around two linked changes :
The Work Programme, and the new integrated Welfare to Work Initiative which includes four supplementary programmes :

- - Work Together
- - Work Clubs
- - Work Experience
- - Work for Yourself

Get Britain Working

Work Together- *launched 4th October*

Enables every individual particularly the unemployed, to have greater opportunities to take up volunteering whilst they are looking for work.

Work Clubs – *launched 4th October*

Work Clubs will provide unemployed people with a place to meet and exchange skills, share experiences, find opportunities, make contacts and get support to help them in their return to work.

Get Britain Working

Work Experience - expected Spring 2011

DWP and JCP colleagues are working to ensure that there is support available to help young people develop the skills needed to secure a sustainable job by offering them a period of work experience

Work for Yourself - expected Spring 2011

A coherent and structured route for those wanting to start a business to access the support they need to succeed.

Get Britain Working

Service Academies - expected Spring 2011

- Will offer pre-employment training and work placements for unemployed people with the aim to provide support that is flexible and responsive to meet the skills needs of those seeking work and the requirements of employers.

Post Work Programme Support

- A variety of options will be available to support customers who have completed the Work Programme to help them optimise their newly found skills and experience.

21st Century Welfare – the Universal Credit

The **21st Century Welfare paper** launched a public consultation which ended on 1st October, about ideas for improving the working age benefit system.

- One of the ideas was Universal Credit, which would incorporate out-of-work benefits, in-work support and appropriate amounts for housing, disability and families for people of working age, ensuring that anyone on benefits who starts work will be better off than they would have been on benefits.
- On 5 October it was announced that the Universal Credit proposal was the best way of achieving those aims.
- Implementation plans are to be developed, with a launch in **2013**

Reassessment of incapacity benefits



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What are the changes and when are they taking place?

- Between October 2010 and Spring 2014 customers who receive Incapacity Benefit, Severe Disablement Allowance and Income Support paid on the grounds of illness or disability will be assessed for Employment and Support Allowance.
- Those assessed fully capable of work will be invited to make a claim to Jobseeker's Allowance, be able to claim Income Support (if they are entitled under a different condition of entitlement) or will move off benefit. Those who cannot work or have limited capability to work will move to Employment and Support Allowance.

Wembley Stadium - London



Incapacity benefits – Changes you need to know about

How will this affect customers?

- All existing incapacity benefits customers are to have their claims reassessed between October 2010 and 2014. As part of this reassessment the majority of incapacity benefits customers will undergo a Work Capability Assessment to determine their future benefit entitlement.
- Current incapacity benefits customers will be referred to Atos Healthcare, our medical services provider, for consideration of a Work Capability Assessment. The assessment will concentrate on what people can do rather than only focusing on what they can't.
- Customers will continue to receive their current benefit (subject to continuing to satisfy the conditions of entitlement) until a decision is made on their case upon receipt of the Work Capability Assessment outcome.

Why are we reassessing incapacity benefits customers?

- It has always been the intention to replace the current working age incapacity benefits, once Employment and Support Allowance was established. We are keen to phase out these benefits as it makes no sense to have several different benefits for customers with health conditions.
- There are currently 2.6 million people on incapacity benefits. We know that many of them, with the right support, could and indeed do want to work but the current system doesn't give them that option.
- For someone on incapacity benefits it could be a considerable length of time before they have to speak to anyone at the DWP about their condition or their work options.
- Moving people onto Employment and Support Allowance and Jobseeker's Allowance will mean they get the right help and support to find work.

Concentrating on what people can do rather than only focusing on what they can't

There is strong evidence that long periods out of work can contribute to:

- 2 to 3 times decrease in general health
- 2 to 3 times increase in mental health problems
- 20% greater risk of mortality

Source - Waddell, Burton, 'Is Work Good for Your Health and Wellbeing?': 2006

There is growing evidence that work can:

- promote recovery from both mental and physical health problems
- minimise the risk of the physical, mental and social effects of long-term unemployment such as social exclusion and poverty

Source - Black: Carol, 'Working for a Healthier Tomorrow, Review of the Health of Britain's Working Population': 2008

When a decision has been made - Employment and Support Allowance

Where a customer is assessed as eligible for Employment and Support Allowance their claim will be transferred automatically.

We are determined that the transition will run smoothly for all customers. For those who transfer to Employment and Support Allowance we will ensure that benefit payments are not disrupted.

No one moving from their existing benefit to Employment and Support Allowance will see a reduction in the level of their benefit entitlement at the point of change.

There are two groups in Employment and Support Allowance, with different allowances and conditionality:

- Work Related Activity Group
- Support Group

Employment and Support Allowance – Work Related Activity Group

Work-Related Activity Group

- Those for whom we assess an eventual return to work is realistic will be placed in the Employment and Support Allowance Work-Related Activity group. If a customer is placed in the Work Related Activity Group, they will be expected to take part in work focused interviews with their personal adviser.
- If a customer is placed in the Work Related Activity Group they will get support to help them prepare for suitable work. In return, they will receive a Work Related Activity component in addition to their basic rate of benefit.
- If a customer refuses to go to the Work Focused Interviews, or to take part fully in the Work Focused Interviews, it may affect their entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance.

Employment and Support Allowance - Support Group

Support Group

- If a customer is placed in the Support Group because their illness or disability has a severe effect on their ability to work, they will not be expected to take part in any work related activity to receive their benefit. They can do so on a voluntary basis if they want to.
- The customer will receive a support component in addition to their basic rate of benefit.
- If a customer is placed in the Support Group they do not have to go to interviews, but they can ask to talk to a personal adviser if they want to.

When a decision has been made - Jobseeker's Allowance

If a customer is found capable of work they may be able to claim Jobseeker's Allowance. They will be given the option to make a claim when they are informed that their claim for Employment and Support Allowance has been disallowed.

There are two types of Jobseeker's Allowance:

Contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance

- Jobcentre Plus can pay this for up to 182 days. It's based on how much National Insurance a customer has paid. Generally, self-employed contributions will not help a customer qualify for contribution-based Jobseeker's Allowance.

Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

- This is based on a customer's income and savings. They may get this if they have not paid enough National Insurance contributions (NICs) (or they have only paid contributions for self-employment) and they are on a low income.

When a decision has been made – Underlying entitlement to Income Support

- Some customers who are found capable of work will be entitled to Income Support on other grounds. For example if they have young children.
- Where this is the case, and we are aware of the entitlement, the customer will be given the option of continuing to claim Income Support. Although the amount of benefit may change.
- The customer will not need to make a new claim.

Understanding our customers

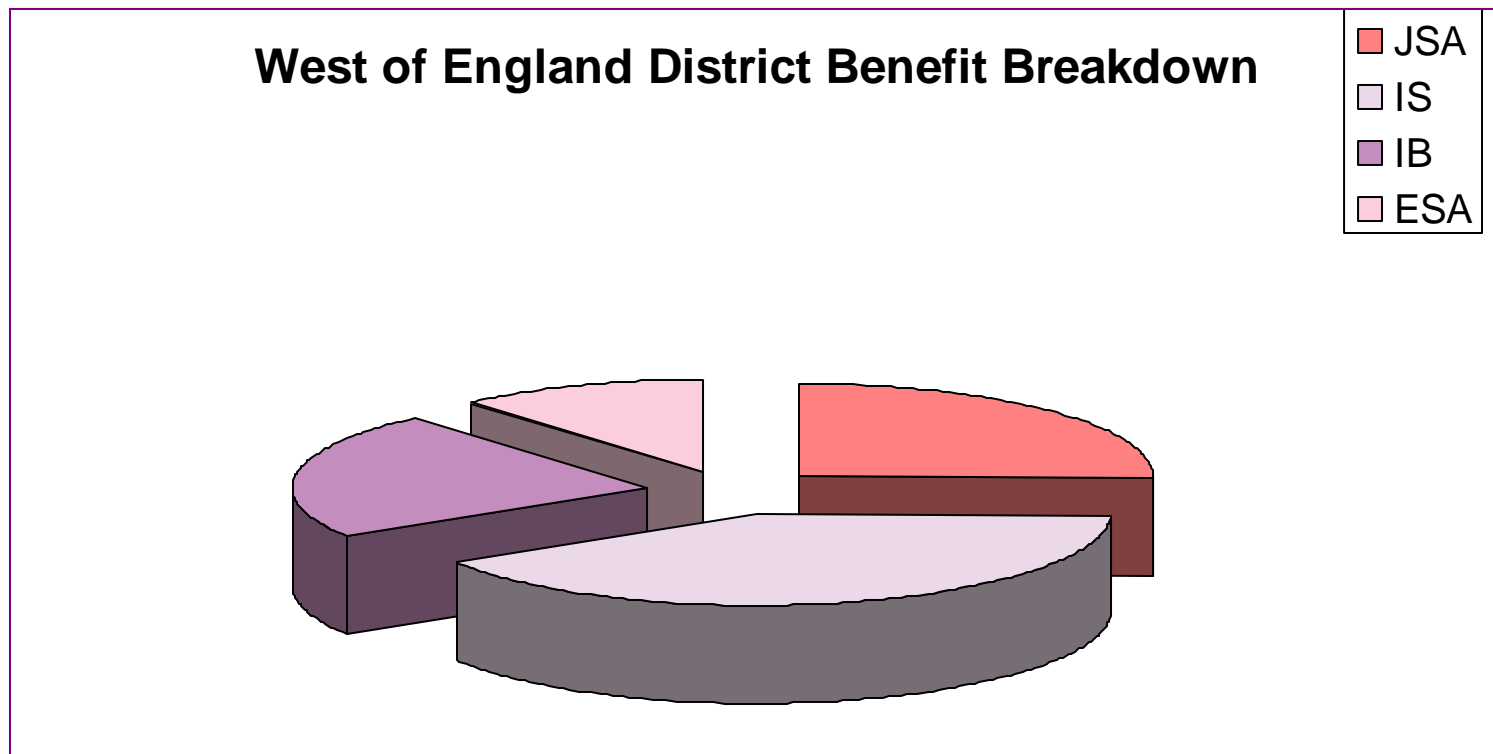
- We have undertaken extensive field research with incapacity benefits customers and Jobcentre Plus staff.
- Outlined below is a summary of customer categories identified, their average length of time out of work and the proportion of reassessment population each group represent.

Customer group	Average duration on Incapacity benefits	Proportion of reassessment population
Aged 35-55 with other physical conditions	7.7 years	18%
Men aged 55-60	8.6 years	9%
Aged 35-55 with musculo-skeletal conditions	7.8 years	9%
Aged under 35	5.7 years	12%
Aged 35-55 with mental health conditions	7.8 years	24%
< 5 years from state pension age	9.7 years	5%
IB Youth and SDA claimants	11.7 years	15%
Over 15 years on incapacity benefits	16 years	8%

Data for the West of England District

	No of Customers	% Share
JSA	18384	25.5%
IS	29287	40.7%
IB	16095	22.4%
ESA	8193	11.4%
TOTAL	71959	100%

Data for the West of England District



Information for the West of England District

Locations of Atos healthcare centres

Flowers Hill, Bristol

Weston-super-Mare (on request)

Local escalation routes within Benefit Delivery Centres for enquiries

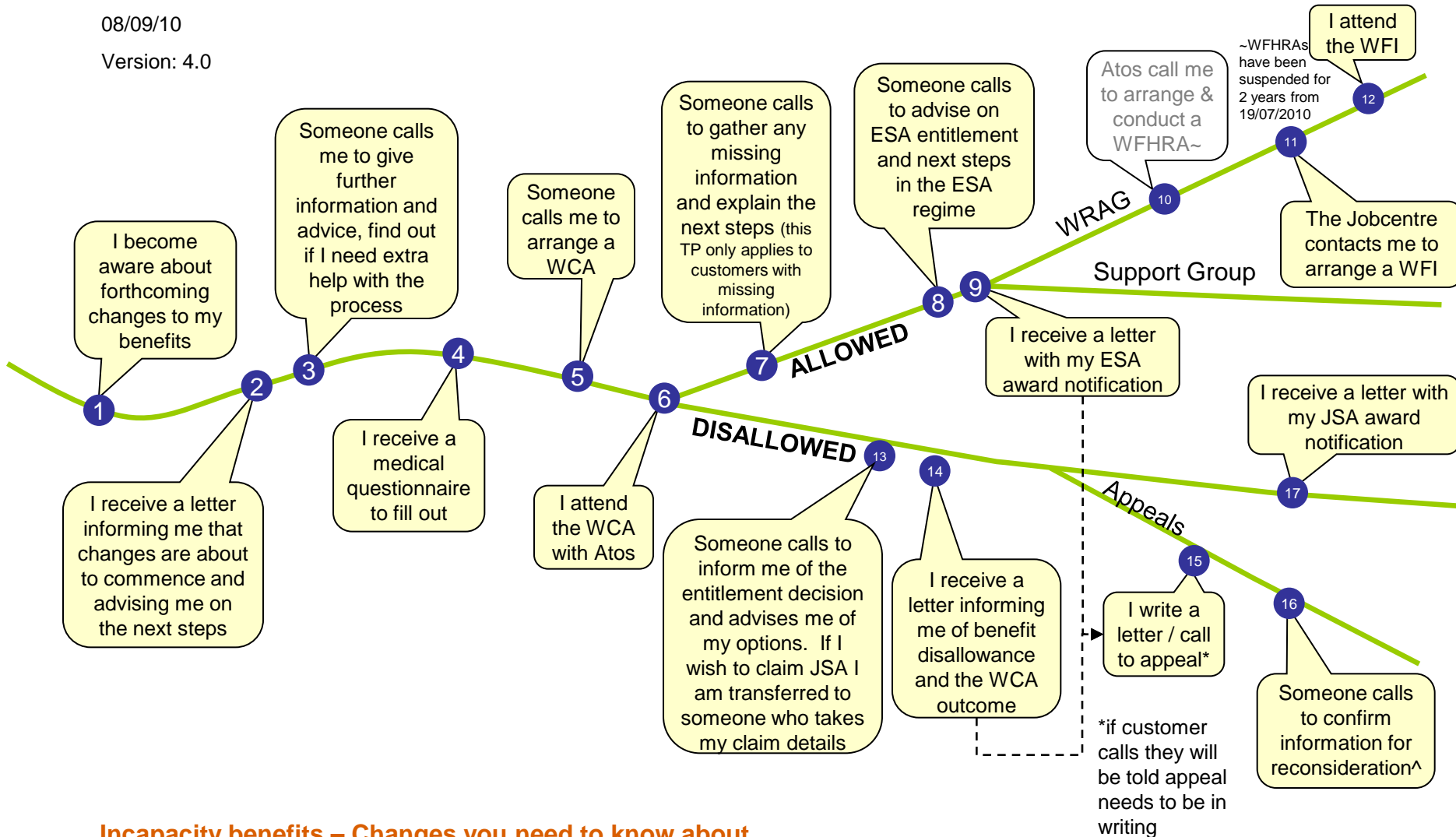
Customers will be given the Contact Centre Phone number and referred to the Reassessment Centre if necessary

- Current Pathways provision
 - Working Links based in Bristol,
 - Weston-super-Mare and Bath

Customer journey

08/09/10

Version: 4.0



The customer journey, explained step by step

In response to feedback/lessons learnt from the implementation of Employment and Support Allowance, we have added additional contact points to the customer journey.

Simplifying the journey for the customer in this way, enables us to:

- provide further information to the customer at each step
- provide the customer with more opportunities to ask questions
- explain what will happen next so that they understand exactly where they are in the journey

Customer journey

Step 1 - Customer may become aware of forthcoming changes to their benefit via the media.

Step 2 - Customer will receive a letter informing them that changes are about to commence and advising them on next steps.

Step 3 – Customer will receive a call to provide further information and to find out if they need extra help.

Customer journey, step by step

Step 4 - Customer will receive a medical questionnaire to fill out.

Step 5 - Customer will receive a call from Atos Healthcare to arrange a Work Capability Assessment.

Step 6 - Customer attends the Work Capability Assessment with Atos Healthcare.

Step 7 - Customer will receive a call to gather any missing information and to explain the next steps (this will only apply to customers for whom there is missing information).

Limited capability for work questionnaire

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We need you to fill in this questionnaire if you have claimed or are getting any of the following

- Employment and Support Allowance
- National Insurance (NI) credits
- Housing Benefit

Please send this form back as soon as you can. If you do not send it back within 4 weeks you might lose benefit. If you are sending the form in late we need to know why. You can use the space on page 25 to explain.

You may wish to fill in this form a bit at a time as it may take some time to complete.

If we are able to get enough information about you from this form, your doctor or the person treating you, we may not need to ask you to attend a medical assessment.

If you want help filling in this form or any part of it

Ask a friend or relative to help you, or get in touch with Jobcentre Plus. The person from Jobcentre Plus will have a copy of the form and they will go through the questions you are having trouble with over the phone.

Sometimes they may be able to fill in a form for you. If they do this, they will send the form to you. You can then check, sign and send it back. They can send you a completed claim form in braille or large print.

For information about benefits and services visit our website at www.direct.gov.uk/benefits

About you

Please tell us about yourself.

Surname

Other names

Title

Address

Postcode

Date of birth / /

National Insurance (NI) number

EBASO 01/10

The assessment process does not make the decision about your benefit or credits.

AL1 Flyer 12/09

Customer journey – if a customer is entitled to Employment and Support Allowance

Step 8 – Customer will receive a call to advise on Employment and Support Allowance entitlement and next steps.

Step 9 – Customer will receive an Employment and Support Allowance award notification.



Step 10 – Following careful consideration, it has been decided that the Work Focused Health Related Assessment (WFHRA) element of the Work Capability Assessment will be suspended for a period of 2 years.

Step 11 – Customer will be contacted to arrange a Work Focused Interview (WFI).

Step 12 – Customer attends the Work Focused Interview.

Customer journey – if a customer is not entitled to receive Employment and Support Allowance

Step 13 – A Jobcentre Plus decision maker reviews the outcome of the customer's Work Capability Assessment – face to face assessment, Atos Healthcare's medical report, the contents of the limited capability for work medical questionnaire and any other available information. The Jobcentre Plus decision maker will reach a view as to whether or not the customer will be entitled to Employment and Support Allowance on the information available.

The Jobcentre Plus decision maker will then advise the customer of their options. If they wish to claim Jobseeker's Allowance they will be transferred to someone who will take their claim details.

Step 14 – Customer will receive a letter informing them of benefit disallowance and the Work Capability Assessment outcome.

Step 17 – Customer will receive a letter with their Jobseeker's Allowance award notification.

Customer journey – appealing a decision

Step 15 – Customer will write or call with a request to appeal. If a customer appeals a decision they will continue to receive the assessment rate for Employment and Support Allowance, pending the outcome of the decision. To appeal against a decision the customer must make the appeal in writing.

Step 16 – Upon receipt of an appeal a Jobcentre Plus decision maker will undertake a reconsideration of the original decision. This will involve a call to the customer to confirm that they have provided all of the information needed. This to ensure that the Jobcentre Plus decision maker has all of the available information before undertaking the reconsideration.

Jobcentre Plus decision maker will then undertake reconsideration, notify the customer and continue with appeals process where it is appropriate to do so.

Further information and useful contacts



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We have also developed information that our customers and stakeholders can access direct. This includes a page on [Directgov](http://www.direct.gov.uk/ibchanges) (www.direct.gov.uk/ibchanges or www.direct.gov.uk/newidiadauba for Welsh speaking customers) and information on the [DWP Adviser](#) webpage.

DWP Department for
Work and Pensions

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