

## 8. Completing the 'How your disability affects you' form

**This fact sheet summarises the Information Booklet that will be sent to claimants with the form 'How your disability affects you'**

### Introduction

When a claim to PIP has been made, DWP will check basic eligibility conditions and will then post a ['How your disability affects you' form](#) to the claimant with a [PIP Information booklet](#). The form will be bar-coded and contain basic claimant details so it should only be used by the person it is sent to. Claimants should read the PIP Information booklet before they start to fill the form in.

A claimant may need to complete the 'How your disability affects you' form when they make a new claim to PIP, including if they are in receipt of DLA and are being reassessed for PIP, or if they are in receipt of PIP and their needs improve or get worse.

The claimant has one calendar month to return the completed 'How your disability affects you' form. An envelope will be provided in which they can return the form. If the claimant has not returned the form after 20 days, a reminder

letter will be issued to the claimant. If the form has not been returned after one calendar month, the case will be referred to a DWP decision maker and the claim may be turned down or terminated unless there are good reasons why it hasn't been returned in time.

Sample notification letters can be found at [PIP Forms, leaflets and letters](#)

Claimants who are making a claim to PIP because they are terminally ill will not have to complete the 'How your disability affects you' form. DWP will obtain the information required about mobility needs at the initial claim stage and the claimant will be encouraged to send in a DS1500. See [fact sheet 12](#) for more information.

Where claimants in vulnerable situations are unable to return their 'How your disability affects you' form, a referral direct to the assessment provider will be arranged. See [fact sheet 15](#) for more information.

If the claimant is unable to complete the 'How your disability affects you' form within the given timescales they should contact DWP by phone to ask for an extension. Initially the telephony agent will be able to grant this.

If the claimant loses the 'How your disability affects you' form, they will need to contact DWP to request a further form.

Further extensions can be granted but only at the discretion of the DWP decision maker, who will consider whether there is good reason for the late return of the form.

### **About the questions in the form**

When filling in the ['How your disability affects you' form](#) the claimant may find it useful to have to hand:

- details of their medication or an up-to-date printed prescription list if they have one; and
- the name of any professionals who might be supporting them on a regular basis.

The 'How your disability affects you' form includes a number of questions about the claimant's ability to carry out key everyday activities. These will help DWP to understand the impact of the claimant's health condition or

disability on their everyday life and to assess their entitlement to the benefit.

The questions will help establish whether claimants can do things:

- safely
- to an acceptable standard
- as often as they need to and are reasonably required to
- in a reasonable time period.

Other questions also ask about whether the claimant uses aids and appliances or has help from another person to carry out the activities.

In each section and for each question, there is a tick box for the claimant to state 'yes', 'no' or 'sometimes'.

Claimants are asked to provide more detail in the "Extra Information" box so that they can explain how their health condition or disability affects their ability to carry out the activities; the difficulties they face and the help they need. Where they need help from another person they can tell DWP what kind of help they need and when they need it.

If the claimant is having difficulty completing the 'How your disability affects you' form, they

can ask a friend, relative, care provider or external organisation to assist them with completion.

DWP is providing advice and information to external organisations like Citizens Advice to ensure that they understand the PIP process. This will enable them to provide assistance and support to claimants throughout the claims process.

The claimant can also contact DWP by:

**Telephone: 0845 850 3322**

**Textphone: 0845 6016677**

The DWP telephony agent will be able to assist with basic enquiries and will also find out what level of support the claimant requires to complete the ['How your disability affects you' form](#). Depending on the level of support the claimant needs, the agent may arrange a call back to support the claimant in completing the form. They may refer the most vulnerable cases to DWP Visiting for face to face support. Further information can be found in [fact sheet 15](#).

If a DWP Visiting Officer is at the home of a claimant when they decide that they want to claim PIP, the Visiting Officer will be able to

assist the claimant to make the initial phone call to claim PIP and to complete the 'How your disability affects you' form if appropriate.

## **Sending in additional supporting evidence**

Claimants will be encouraged to send copies of supporting evidence with the completed 'How your disability affects you' form, for example, care plans, reports or information from professionals such as a GP, hospital doctor, specialist nurse or community psychiatric nurse. There are more examples of types of supporting evidence in the [PIP Information booklet](#).

Claimants are advised only to send things in that they already have available to them. They are asked not to request evidence or other documents as this might slow down the claim or they might be charged a fee for asking for them.

The PIP Information booklet also suggests that claimants might want to write down a list of things they have needed help with or found difficult over a number of days. If the impact of their health condition or disability varies over time, they may also want to keep a record of this.

The completed 'How your disability affects you' form; any supporting evidence and notes that the claimant wants to send in should be sent back to DWP in the envelope provided.

## **The Questions in the 'How your disability affects you' form**

### **Q1 About professionals you may see**

Claimants should provide details of where they see their health professional, such as the health centre or hospital address. These professionals may be contacted by the assessment providers to provide further information to support the claim.

### **Q2 About your health conditions or disabilities**

By health conditions or disabilities, DWP means physical, sight, hearing or speech difficulty, learning, developmental or behavioral difficulties or mental health problems.

### **Q3 Preparing Food**

This section is about ability to prepare and cook a simple one course meal for one from fresh ingredients. This includes things like:

- food preparation such as peeling, chopping or opening a can; and
- safely cooking or heating food on a cooker hob or in a microwave oven.

Aids and appliances in this section might include things like, prostheses, perching stool, lightweight pots and pans, easy grip handles on utensils, adapted cutlery and single lever arm taps.

### **Q4 Eating and Drinking**

This section is about ability to eat and drink, including cutting food into pieces, getting food and drink to the mouth, chewing food and swallowing. It includes the use of therapeutic sources such as feeding tubes. A feeding tube could be a parenteral or enteral tube feeding with a rate limiting device such as a delivery system or feed pump.

## **Q5 Managing treatments**

This section is about ability to monitor any health conditions, manage medication and manage treatments.

## **Q6 Washing and Bathing**

This section is about ability to wash and bathe, including getting in and out of a normal bath or shower.

## **Q7 Managing toilet needs**

This section is about ability to manage toilet needs, including getting on or off and being able to use a normal toilet; being able to pass water or solids; dealing with incontinence, including any aids and appliances used, and cleaning afterwards.

## **Q8 Dressing and undressing**

This section is about ability to dress and undress, including selecting, putting on and taking off appropriate and un-adapted clothing, which may include fastenings such as zips or buttons. This includes putting on and taking off socks and shoes.

## **Q9 Communicating**

This section is about communicating with people in the claimant's native language, including speaking to people and hearing and understanding what others are saying.

## **Q10 Reading**

This section is about ability to read and understand signs, symbols and words written or printed in the claimant's native written language and includes help the claimant might need, like someone reading for them. It does not include Braille.

## **Q11 Mixing with other people**

This section is about ability to get on with other people, and the claimant's understanding of how others are behaving towards them and behaving appropriately to others, including whether severe anxiety or stress prevents them from doing this.

## **Q12 Making decisions about money**

This section is about ability to make decisions about spending and managing money. This includes being able to understand how much things cost, how much change the claimant should get in a shop, managing budgets,

paying bills and planning future purchases. It looks only at their decision making ability, not the physical elements of managing their money.

### Q13 Going out

This section is about ability to work out and follow a route to another place, including using public transport, and whether severe anxiety or distress prevents the claimant from being able to go out. It does not look at the claimant's physical ability to get around as this is covered in the next section.

### Q14 Moving around

This section is about the claimant's ability to physically move around. The questions ask how far the claimant is able to walk and whether they use aids and appliances to get around, including walking sticks, frames, prostheses or wheelchairs. It is important that the claimant details how long it takes and whether they have any side effects like pain, breathlessness, tiredness or dizziness.

### Q15 Additional Information

This section is for any other information the claimant wants to include. Carers, friends or family could also provide information in this section. It does not have to be filled in if the claimant feels they have included everything in the rest of the form.

More detailed information on the assessment criteria and how DWP use the information that the claimant provides, see [fact sheet 2](#).

More detailed information about Personal Independence Payment: [www.dwp.gov.uk/pip](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/pip)