



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Personal Independence Payment Assessment - The Second Independent Review

A Call for Evidence

July 2016

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Introduction

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has commissioned Paul Gray to undertake the second Independent Review of how the Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment is working, as required by Section 89 of the Welfare Reform Act 2012. This call for evidence will be one of several methods used to gather information. Evidence submitted will be used to inform a final independent report which will be laid before Parliament.

About this call for evidence

Who this call for evidence is aimed at

This call for evidence is aimed at organisations and individuals who have information that is relevant to how the PIP assessment is operating both for new claims and Disability Living Allowance (DLA) reassessment claims. This includes claims made under the Special Rules for terminally ill people.

We are interested in everyone's views, so please provide as much evidence as you can on the questions asked in this document. We know that people and organisations will have different levels of experience in the PIP process so do not feel you have to answer questions that are not relevant to you, for example where you do not have personal experience.

Purpose of the call for evidence

This call for evidence will be used to inform the Independent Reviewer's conclusions. The Independent Reviewer will then make recommendations to the Secretary of State, which will be laid before Parliament in the form of a report to which the Government will produce a response.

Scope of the call for evidence

This consultation applies to England, Wales and Scotland.

Duration of the call for evidence

The call for evidence period begins on Monday 11th July 2016 and runs until Friday 16th September 2016 at 5pm.

How to respond

You can respond via the [online form](#).

If you are unable to use the online form, please use one of the following methods:

Email: pip.independentreview@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Post: PIP Independent Review Team, Department for Work and Pensions, Floor 4
Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA

Please ensure your response reaches us by 5pm on Friday 16th September 2016.

We will acknowledge your response. Please note the PIP Independent Review Team cannot respond to individual customer queries about their PIP claim.

Accessible formats

This call for evidence is available in a range of formats, including large print, Easy Read, audio, British Sign Language (BSL), Braille, large print, audio cassettes, CDs and BSL DVDs.

To request these formats, please contact:

Email: pip.independentreview@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Post: PIP Independent Review Team, Department for Work and Pensions, Floor 4
Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA

Queries about the call for evidence

Please direct any queries about this call for evidence to:

Post: PIP Independent Review Team, Department for Work and Pensions, Floor 4
Caxton House, Tothill Street, London, SW1H 9NA

Email: pip.independentreview@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

How we carry out calls for evidence

Freedom of information

The information you send us may need to be passed to colleagues within the DWP, published in a summary of responses received and referred to in the published independent report.

All information contained in your response, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure if requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. By providing personal information for the purposes of the call for evidence exercise, it is understood that you consent to its disclosure and publication. If this is not the case, you should limit any personal information provided, or remove it completely. If you want the information in your response to be kept confidential, you should explain why as part of your response, although we cannot guarantee to do this.

To find out more about the general principles of Freedom of Information (Fol) and how they are applied within DWP, please contact:

Freedom of Information Team
Caxton House
6-12 Tothill Street
London
SW1H 9NA
Freedom-of-information-request@dwpgsi.gov.uk

The Central Fol team cannot advise on this specific call for evidence exercise, only on Freedom of Information issues. More information about the Freedom of Information Act can be found at www.dwp.gov.uk/freedom-of-information

Terminology

Where we use the word “condition” in this document we mean disabilities, health conditions and impairments. We use “condition” for short.

Foreword from Paul Gray

This is the second Independent Review of the Personal Independence Payment (PIP), following my first Review in 2014, and in line with the timescales established by the Welfare Reform Act 2012. The first Review took place at an early stage of PIP implementation, during a period of long delays and backlogs in the assessment process. I took a view early on that the backlog itself, and the Department's remedial work to clear it, would not be my main focus – what felt most appropriate and vital for the public interest was a set of recommendations directed at the longer-term operation of the benefit.

The implementation of PIP is now further advanced, with new seams of data and evidence about its operation opening up, and I am pleased to have an opportunity to build on the work of the first Review. In addition, I am happy to note that following my earlier recommendation to put in place a rigorous quantitative and qualitative evaluation strategy to examine the claimant experience of PIP, the Department has announced its intention to put this in place, with initial findings to be published by early 2017. This will run alongside the Independent Review and may help to inform my final conclusions; the shared ambition of both Review and research will be a widening of perspective about the impact of PIP and a comprehensive evidence base to inform future decisions about how best to deliver it.

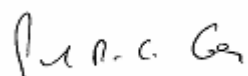
A major objective of this review will be to assess the impact of 'further evidence' on coming to entitlement decisions which properly reflect claimant needs and the day-to-day functional impacts of their condition. I plan to consider, for instance, how evidence that a PIP claimant has already obtained, such as a care plan, or specialist report from a health professional, is currently being used to assist the claim decision, and in what cases these may act as an alternative to face-to-face consultations. This Review will also consider how data may be better shared across the Department and with external organisations, such as the health and social care sector, to support the claim process. Finally, I intend on using the Terms of Reference as a framework to allow me to take a broader look at PIP and understand the quality and consistency of assessments and the claimant experience at all stages of the process.

In reaching my conclusions and final recommendations, I plan on speaking to a wide range of interested stakeholders, including claimants, carers, charitable organisations and employers. In particular, I am keen to speak to the full range of health professionals who are often called upon to provide additional, relevant evidence in support of a claim for PIP.

This call for evidence is split in two to ensure that responses are focused on parts of the PIP process with which their contributors are likely to be familiar. Past and current PIP claimants are asked questions which seek to draw out their experiences in making a claim undergoing assessments and receiving the final award decision; while organisations with experience of the PIP process or representing claimants are asked for their views about the reliability, availability and impact of different forms of evidence, as well as technical solutions that improve the use of IT, data-exchange and effectiveness of the information-gathering process.

Finally, any review can only be as good as its evidence base. In launching this call for evidence I hope that everyone who is able to provide me with relevant, robust evidence and analysis will do so. I will use this to make recommendations, where I see that they are needed, on the future development of PIP.

Thank you in advance for your help.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Gray". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Paul Gray
July 2016

Context

Introducing Personal Independence Payment

When Personal Independence Payment (PIP) replaced Disability Living Allowance (DLA) in April 2013, it followed a period where DLA had not been fundamentally reformed since it was introduced almost 25 years ago. The Government's stated intention was to develop a new benefit that reflected a modern understanding of disability and was financially sustainable for the future.

PIP is designed to maintain the key principles of DLA. It helps towards some of the extra costs that result from a long-term condition. It is based on how a person's condition affects them, not the condition they have. It is not means-tested or subject to tax and it is payable to people who are both in and out of work. PIP is made up of two components- i) daily living component and ii) mobility. Each part component has two rates: a standard rate and an enhanced rate. If a claimant is entitled to PIP, they will get one or both components. The components people receive depend on how their condition affects them.

PIP started to replace DLA for eligible people aged 16 to 64 from 8 April 2013. Initially this only applied to new claims, but it was gradually extended from October 2013 to a limited category of DLA recipients: persons reaching 16 years old, persons reporting a change of circumstance, those choosing to claim PIP and finally persons whose fixed term award was due to expire. In July 2015, the Department commenced full roll-out, a phased reassessment of all remaining DLA working age recipients for PIP.

Personal Independence Payment claims process

Information about PIP, and how to claim, is available online at GOV.UK ([/www.gov.uk/pip](http://www.gov.uk/pip)).

General information about PIP for support organisations and advisers is included in a PIP Toolkit (www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-personal-independence-payment-toolkit-for-partners/the-personal-independence-payment-pip-toolkit). This includes fact sheets, sample PIP letters and suggested text to use in organisations' own communications and guidance.

The first Independent Review of the Personal Independence Payment Assessment

The Welfare Reform Act 2012 requires the Secretary of State to lay before Parliament an independent report on the operation of assessments; (a) within 2 years beginning with the date on which the first regulations under that section come into force; and (b) within 4 years beginning with that date.

The [first PIP Independent Review](#) was published on 17 December 2014. It focused on three main areas: improving the claimant experience, clarifying and improving the collection of further evidence and assuring the fairness and consistency of PIP award outcomes.

The report found that the PIP process at the time gave a disjointed experience for claimants. It recommended some short term improvements, for example to communications including decision letters. In the longer term it recommended that there should be a more integrated, digitally enabled claims process under common branding that would improve claimant experience and effectiveness.

In addition, it found that the way in which further evidence was collected could be clarified and improved. It also recommended that a rigorous evaluation strategy be put in place with a scheduled plan for the publication of findings and which includes a focus on the effectiveness of PIP assessments for people with a mental health condition or learning disability.

The Government's [first](#) and [second](#) responses accepted the majority of the review's recommendations.

The second Independent Review of the Personal Independent Payment Assessment

In July 2016 Paul Gray was announced as the Reviewer for the second Independent Review of PIP. This review will be laid before Parliament by April 2017 in accordance with the Act.

This review will provide the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions with an independent report evaluating the progress made on the PIP claims process as a result of the longer term recommendations made in the first Independent Review of the PIP assessment, in particular looking at;

- the use of IT and speed and effectiveness of the information gathering process during the assessment, looking at data sharing within the Department and across government, including the way information gained from the PIP assessment is shared with other organisations to improve health and care services; and

- how effectively further evidence is being used to assist the correct claim decision, exploring the balance between how much and the type of evidence DWP source and what the claimant is asked to provide.
- build on the recommendations and lessons learnt from the first review using, where relevant, findings from the evaluation and Full PIP Rollout data.

The questions that follow in this call for evidence focus in particular on the use of further evidence in the claim process, data sharing and the claimant experience.

Questions

We invite individuals and organisations to submit evidence to help us assess how PIP is operating by answering the following questions. The set of questions you should answer depends on whether;

- a) you are an individual who has claimed PIP for yourself or on someone's behalf;
- b) you are an individual or organisation with a professional interest in the PIP process.

Questions for individuals who have claimed PIP for themselves or on someone's behalf

About you

1. Are you responding as;

- Someone who has claimed PIP for yourself?
- A friend, carer or family member acting on behalf of someone claiming PIP?
- Prefer not to say

2. From where else do you/ the person receiving PIP receive support to help manage your/ their condition?

- A GP
- A hospital doctor
- Other healthcare professionals (e.g. specialist psychiatric nurse, occupational therapist)
- A social worker
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please state)

3. Who did you/ the person receiving PIP receive support from to submit your/ their claim?

- A carer
- A family member
- A friend
- A support organisation (e.g. Citizen's Advice)
- A health or social care professional
- Other (please state)

4. We may want to follow up further information with you or quote your evidence in our report. If you are happy for us to contact you please provide the following details;

- **Name**
- **Address**
- **Email**
- **Telephone number**

Further evidence

During the PIP claim process, claimants are asked to provide any relevant evidence or information they already have that explains their circumstances (known as further evidence). Claimants can send supporting evidence with their 'How your disability affects you' form but they do not have to do so. Evidence might include:

- prescription lists
- care plans
- reports or information from professionals who help the claimant, such as a GP, hospital doctor, specialist nurse, community psychiatric nurse, occupational therapist, social worker, counsellor or support worker.

If appropriate when conducting an assessment and providing advice on a claim to DWP, Atos and Capita health professionals can consider requesting additional evidence to help them from people listed on the claimant's form. Most assessments require a face-to-face consultation but some assessments can be completed on the basis of a review of the available paper based evidence. We are investigating:

- how effectively further evidence is being used to assist the correct claim decision and identify whether a face-to-face consultation is required
- the balance between how much and the type of evidence DWP sources and what the claimant is asked to provide.

5. In addition to your claim form, did you send any further evidence as part of your claim? If yes, what was this?

6. Was it clear what further evidence you should or should not provide? Please briefly explain your answer.

7. When you submitted the claim, how important did you think it was to submit further evidence? Why?

8. Where you had access to additional evidence, how easily were you able to submit this evidence? Please briefly explain your answer.

9. If you went through the appeals system, did you provide further evidence? Please briefly explain your answer.

Data sharing

We are looking at whether further data should be shared across the Department and with external organisations, such as the health and social care sector, to support the claim process and to improve the support offered to claimants. This could include sharing information between DWP benefit systems, for example sharing recent Work Capability Assessment reports with health professionals working on PIP. It could also include gathering information from social care assessments or healthcare providers. Personal information would need to be subject to appropriate data protection, as set out in [the DWP's Personal Information Charter](#).

10. Have you previously submitted other evidence to the Department for Work and Pensions e.g. from previous benefit claims, that you feel was relevant or should have been considered in the claim for PIP? What was this?

11. Are there other parts of government (e.g. the NHS, social services) that hold information on you that you feel was relevant or should have been considered in your PIP claim? If yes, what was this?

12. If you had other evidence available that you felt would be relevant, would you consider submitting this as part of the PIP claim? Why?

13. Would you feel comfortable with the Department sharing information between different benefit systems or with other parts of government, such as the health and social care sector, to support your PIP claim? Please briefly explain your answer.

Claimant experience

Consider the PIP claim process. This includes making a claim, the assessment and getting a decision.

14. Overall how satisfied were you with the claim process? Why?

15. Could anything have improved your face to face consultation with Atos or Capita? Please briefly explain your answer.

16. Did you ask DWP to reconsider its original decision on your entitlement to PIP? If so, please tell us about your experience of the reconsideration process.

17. Did you appeal your PIP decision? If so, please tell us about your experience of the appeals process.

18. Have you had experience of other similar assessments (e.g. a social care assessment, an occupational health assessment, a Work Capability Assessment for Employment and Support Allowance)? How did it compare?

19. Has your PIP award had an impact on your ability to stay in, or return, to employment? Please briefly explain your answer.

20. Do you have any further comments regarding the PIP assessment process?

Questions for individuals or organisations with a professional interest in the PIP process

About you

1. Are you responding as;

- **An individual?**
 - **A healthcare professional**
 - **Atos or Capita staff**
 - **DWP staff**
 - **Other? Please state**
 - **Prefer not to say**

- **An organisation or part of an organisation?**
 - **Name of organisation**
 - **Who does the organisation represent?**
 - **Where applicable, explain how the views of the members were gathered.**
 - **Does your organisation directly support people claiming PIP?**

2. We may want to follow up further information with you or quote your evidence in our report. If you are happy for us to contact you please provide the following details;

- **Name**
- **Address**
- **Email**
- **Telephone number**

Further evidence

During the PIP claim process, claimants are asked to provide any relevant evidence or information they already have that explains their circumstances (known as further evidence). Claimants can send supporting evidence with their 'How your disability affects you' form but they do not have to do so. This might include prescription lists, care plans, reports or information from professionals who help the claimant, such as a GP, hospital doctor, specialist nurse, community psychiatric nurse, occupational therapist, social worker, counsellor or support worker.

If appropriate when conducting an assessment and providing advice on a claim to DWP, Atos and Capita health professionals can consider requesting additional evidence to help them from people listed on the claimant's form. Most assessments require a face-to-face consultation but some assessments can be completed on the basis of a review of the

available paper based evidence without the need for a face-to-face consultation as there is sufficient evidence available.

We are investigating how effectively further evidence is being used to assist the correct claim decision and identify whether a face-to-face consultation is required, exploring the balance between how much and the type of evidence DWP sources and what the claimant is asked to provide.

3. In your experience what types of further evidence do claimants send in as part of their claim?

4. In your experience what further evidence does Atos/ Capita request on claimants' behalf? Is this requested on time and used appropriately and fairly?

5. Is it clear what further evidence is being asked of claimants? Please briefly explain your answer.

6. From your understanding, when claimants submit their claim how important do they think it is to submit further evidence? Please briefly explain your answer.

7. Are there any barriers for claimants in providing further evidence? Please provide examples.

8. In your experience, when claimants go through the appeals system do they submit further evidence at this point? Why?

Data sharing

We are looking at whether further data should be shared across DWP and with external organisations, such as the health and social care sector, to support the claim process and to improve the support offered to claimants. This could include sharing information between DWP benefit systems, for example sharing recent Work Capability Assessment reports with health professionals working on PIP. It could also include gathering information from social care assessments or healthcare providers. Personal information would be subject to appropriate data protection, as set out in [the DWP's Personal Information Charter](#).

9. Are you aware of technology that DWP should consider using to improve the PIP data collection process? Please provide examples or suggestions.

10. Are you aware of any specific ways that DWP could share information gained from the PIP assessment with other organisations to improve health and care services? Please provide examples or suggestions.

11. In your experience, how effective are current PIP IT systems in delivering the PIP claim process? Please provide examples.

Claimant experience

Consider the PIP claim process. This includes making a claim, the assessment and getting a decision.

12. From your experience, how could the PIP claim process be improved? Please provide examples or suggestions.

13. From your experience, what impact do awards of PIP have on claimants' ability to stay in, or return, to employment?

14. How does the PIP process compare to similar assessments (e.g. ESA, an occupational health assessment)?

15. In your experience, what are the reasons for people making an appeal to Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) and what is their experience of this process? Please provide examples.

Progress since the last review

16. Since the first PIP Independent Review, DWP has implemented a number of the suggested recommendations. In your experience, how have these changes altered the experience of people going through the PIP claim process?

17. Do you have any further comments regarding the PIP assessment process?