

Consultation arrangements and contact details



Chapter 8

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Working in partnership to improve our services

- 1 Proposals outlined in this paper are informed by ongoing informal consultation with key stakeholders. Indeed, we have been consulting on incapacity benefits reform since 2002, when we published *Pathways to work – Helping people into employment*.³⁹ Proposals for lone parents, Housing Benefit and occupational health are similarly the product of a lengthy process of consultation and evaluation of evidence from existing policies.

Formal consultation

- 2 Publication of this paper signals the start of a formal consultation period in line with the best practice guidance in the Cabinet Office's Code of Practice on Consultation. A partial Regulatory Impact Assessment is available at www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/welfarereform
- 3 The formal consultation period will continue for 12 weeks from 24 January to 21 April 2006.
- 4 Copies of this paper are available in a variety of formats (including audio, Braille, Easy Read, large print and Welsh versions) and can be ordered by contacting:

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(Lines are open Monday to Friday, 9am – 4pm.)

Feedback

- 5 To facilitate the consultation process, a series of key questions have been posed throughout the paper and these are pulled together at the end of this section. A template is also available at www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/welfarereform
- 6 The deadline for responses is 21 April 2006. Please ensure that your response reaches us by that date. Please send consultation responses to the Welfare Reform Team.
- 7 When responding, please state whether you are responding as an individual or representing the views of an organisation. If responding on behalf of a larger organisation, please make it clear who the organisation represents, and, where applicable, how the views of members were assembled.

- 8 A list of those consulted is available at www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/welfarereform. If you have any suggestions of others who may wish to be involved in this process, please contact us.
- 9 The information you send to us may need to be passed to colleagues within the Department for Work and Pensions and may be published in a summary of responses to this consultation, along with a response from the Government.
- 10 Because of the law about access to information that public organisations hold, we may at some time in the future share some or all of your information with other individuals or the general public. If you would not want us to do this, please explain why as part of your answer. We will consider your request if it is possible that your information might be shared. However, we cannot promise to keep your information secret or private. If you are worried about sharing information about yourself with other people, please limit what you tell us, or do not tell us anything personal. If you want to talk to someone about this before you give us your views, please contact the Welfare Reform Team.
- 11 More information about the Freedom of Information Act can be found on the website of the Department for Constitutional Affairs at: www.dca.gov.uk/foi/guidance/exguide/index.htm
- 12 Throughout the formal consultation period, we will be facilitating a range of events to gather feedback. Details of these events will be available at:

www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/welfarereform, alongside contact details for those wishing to participate.

- 13 We will produce a report of consultation feedback. The report will be available at: www.dwp.gov.uk/aboutus/welfarereform

Consultation questions

- 1 What else should we consider to give the right incentives to employers to provide increased health support to their workforce?
- 2 How can we best share the evidence for the role of work in recuperation and good practice regarding sickness certification to medical professionals?
- 3 Does this simplification package for Statutory Sick Pay provide incentives for improved absence management and meet the need for reduced bureaucracy? How could the redirected sums of the percentage threshold scheme be most effectively utilised?
- 4 Do the types of 'suitable activity' we have set out provide a sensible range of activities that could be undertaken in order to fulfil an acceptable action plan?
- 5 Is the combination of Disability Living Allowance plus the Enhanced Disability Premium/Severe Disability Premium for those on low incomes, the right way to target support towards disabled people with the greatest needs?

- 6 Do you agree that these proposed simplifications more accurately reflect the principles underpinning our modern society?
- 7 How do you think that we can best improve work incentives within the new Employment and Support Allowance so that individuals have the opportunity to try out periods of work and progress to full-time work where possible?
- 8 Would it be reasonable to extend the Work-Related Activity Premium, and the associated requirement to take steps back to employment, to lone parents with children younger than 11? If so, what age should be the cut-off point?
- 9 In what circumstances do you think it would be reasonable to extend the six-month Work-Related Activity Premium period?
- 10 Does utilising voluntary sector and private providers in this way sound sensible? Would outcome-based payments incentivise providers to meet the challenges of delivering Pathways to Work and the new arrangements described in Chapter 4?
- 11 Will this proposal provide an effective mechanism to join up the work of different agencies and make better use of existing funding to tackle the problems in cities?
- 12 How should Housing Benefit be adapted to meet our welfare reform objectives for tenants in the social housing sector?

References

Chapter 1: The challenge

- 1 Excludes Incapacity Benefit short-term lower rate claimants.

Chapter 2: Helping ill or disabled people

- 2 'Incapacity benefits' refers to people on contributory Incapacity Benefit or Severe Disablement Allowance and people on means-tested Income Support on the grounds of incapacity.
- 3 Woodward A, Kazimirskia A, Shaw A, and Pires C, 2003, *New Deal for Disabled People. Evaluation. Eligible population survey. Wave one. Interim report*, DWP Research Report No. W170, DWP.
- 4 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2003, *Transforming disability into ability, policies to promote work and income security for disabled people*, OECD.
- 5 DWP, 2001, *The short-term effects of compulsory participation in ONE – Survey of clients: Cohort two Wave one*, DWP Research Report No. 156, DWP.
- 6 The OECD has also said that Pathways to Work is "a considerable success" (OECD, 2005, *Economic Survey of the UK*) and the IMF commented that the pilots "have been successful" (www.imf.org/external/np/ms/2005/121905.htm).
- 7 HM Government, 2005, *Health, work and well-being – Caring for our future: A strategy for the health and well-being of working-age people*, DWP, DH, Health and Safety Executive.
- 8 Department of Health, 2004, *Choosing health: Making healthier choices easier*, Cm 6374, DH.
- 9 Department for Work and Pensions, 2004, *Building capacity for work: A UK framework for vocational rehabilitation*, DWP.
- 10 www.hse.gov.uk/businessbenefits/casestudy.htm
- 11 Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland, 2003, *Working for health: A long-term workplace strategy for Northern Ireland*, HSENI.
- 12 Confederation of British Industry, 2005, *Who cares wins: Absence and labour turnover survey 2005*, CBI.
- 13 Office for National Statistics, 2002, *Office for National Statistics: Labour market trends*, TSO. The article on trends and sources of data on sickness absence by Barham and Leonard is contained in the April 2002 publication.
- 14 Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2004, *Employee absence 2004: A survey of management policy and practice*, CIPD.

- 15 Confederation of British Industry in association with AXA, 2004, *Room for improvement: CBI absence and labour turnover survey 2004*, CBI.
- 16 From 10 days per employee in the Civil Service to 9.1, *Cabinet Office analysis of sickness absence in the Civil Service 2004*, and in local government from 10 days to 9.5 based on *Best Value Performance Indicator* returns to the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister.
- 17 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2003, *Transforming disability into ability, policies to promote work and income security for disabled people*, OECD.
- 18 Not participating in a medical intervention would not be subject to benefit sanction.
- 19 Legard R, Lewis J, Hiscock J and Scott J, 2003, *Evaluation of capability report: Identifying the work-related capabilities of incapacity benefits claimants*, DWP Research Report No. W162, DWP.
- 20 The exception to this was people eligible for Working Tax Credit, whose linking period was up to two years.
- 21 Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, joint report with Department for Work and Pensions, Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2005, *Improving the life chances of disabled people*, Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, DWP, DH, DfES, ODPM.
- 22 Department of Health, 2005, *Independence, well-being and choice: Our vision for the future of social care for adults in England*, Cm 6499, TSO.

Chapter 3: Helping lone parents

- 23 HM Treasury, 2004, *Choice for parents, the best start for children: A ten year strategy for childcare*, The Stationery Office.
- 24 The Scotland Office, 1998, *Meeting the childcare challenge: A childcare strategy for Scotland*, Cm 3958.
- 25 National Assembly for Wales, 2005, *Childcare is for children*, Department for Education and Training.
- 26 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2005, *Babies and bosses: OECD recommendations to help families balance work and family life*, OECD.

Chapter 4: Helping older workers

- 27 It is estimated (in a Cabinet Office report from 2000) that the drop in work rates since 1979 costs the economy £16 billion a year in lost output.
- 28 *Labour Force Survey Spring–Winter 2004* and population projections based on Government Actuary's Department 2004, GB.
- 29 Department for Work and Pensions, 2002, *Simplicity, security and choice: Working and saving for retirement*, Cm 5677, DWP.
- 30 Pensions Commission, 2004, *Pensions: Challenges and choices: The first report of the Pensions Commission*; Pensions Commission, 2005, *A new pension settlement for the twenty-first century: The second report of the Pensions Commission*, Pensions Commission.

Chapter 5: Delivering welfare reform

31. Level 1 – recognises the ability to learn with guidance and supervision, combined with basic knowledge and skills. Includes GCSEs at grades D to G, level 1 NVQs and vocational qualifications.

Level 2 – can be general, vocational or occupational. Provides foundation skills that help people get jobs or progress to further education or advanced-level study. Includes GCSEs at grades A* to C, intermediate GNVQs, level 2 NVQs and vocational qualifications such as Modern Apprenticeships.

Level 3 – provides higher technical, craft or professional skills. Can be general, vocational or occupational. Includes certificates for teaching assistants, A-levels, advanced extension awards and level 3 certificates.

32. HMT, 2005, *Skills in the UK: The long-term challenge*, TSO.
33. Department of Social Security, 1998, *Beating fraud is everybody's business: Securing the future*, Cm 4012, TSO.
34. Department of Social Security, 1999, *A new contract for welfare: Safeguarding social security*, Cm 4276, TSO.
35. Department for Work and Pensions, 2005, *Reducing fraud in the benefit system: Achievements and ambitions*, DWP.

Chapter 6: A radical new approach to Housing Benefit

36. Department for Work and Pensions, 2002, *Building choice and responsibility: A radical agenda for Housing Benefit*, DWP.
37. Housing Benefit processing times are measured in calendar days from the date the claim is received to the date the decision is made. This includes the time taken by tenants to provide evidence and any time needed for action by third parties. Although performance measures are not strictly comparable, the aggregate performance by local authorities is now equivalent to that delivered by Department for Work and Pensions agencies.
38. These can be found at: www.dwp.gov.uk/housingbenefit/lha/evaluation/index.asp

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39. Department for Work and Pensions, 2002, *Pathways to Work: Helping people into employment*, DWP.



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