

# Doctor, Doctor. What's Employment and Support Allowance?



**DWP** Department for  
Work and Pensions

Employment and  
Support Allowance

Working for a better life

**Can someone  
bring me up to  
speed quickly?**



**From 27 October 2008, Employment and Support Allowance replaces Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on incapacity grounds for people making new claims.**

It's a new kind of benefit that will provide financial help for people unable to work due to an illness or disability. Those who are able to prepare for work will receive personalised help and support on their journey towards a suitable job.

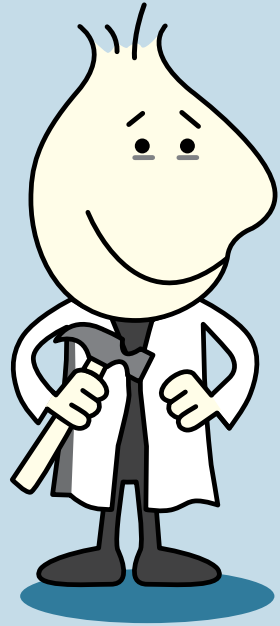
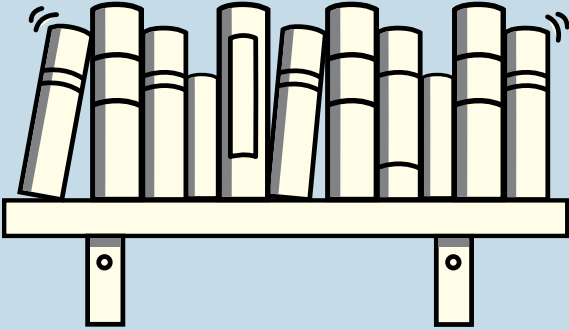
Evidence shows that the right type of work can be therapeutic for both mental and physical health problems and can even improve a patient's condition. By focusing on an individual's abilities – what they can do rather than what they can't – the allowance aims to help people reach their full potential through work.

Customers currently receiving incapacity benefits will continue to receive their existing benefits so long as they satisfy the entitlement conditions. In the longer term, we intend to move everyone to Employment and Support Allowance.

---

## **An introduction**

**That should  
do it.**



**Employment and Support Allowance builds on the successful Pathways to Work programme, which has helped more than 94,000 people into work since 2003.**

**Pathways to Work** provides support to help customers prepare for a move into work. This includes groundbreaking condition management programmes, designed to complement the work you are currently doing with your patients.

Employment and Support Allowance customers who are assessed as having some capacity for work will be expected to attend up to six work-focused interviews with a personal adviser, to ensure they receive appropriate help to prepare for suitable work. This includes condition management, training and employment support, as well as in-work help such as mentoring and financial incentives.

---

**Support on the way to work**

**Some extra  
support.**



**We understand that there are patients who will never recover totally from their illness, or may need a long recovery period before being able to prepare for work. Employment and Support Allowance recognises these patients' needs.**

Patients with a severe condition preventing them from undertaking work-related activity will join the allowance's **Support Group**. These individuals will not be required to prepare for work, but they are able to volunteer for any appropriate support if they choose and will receive additional financial help.

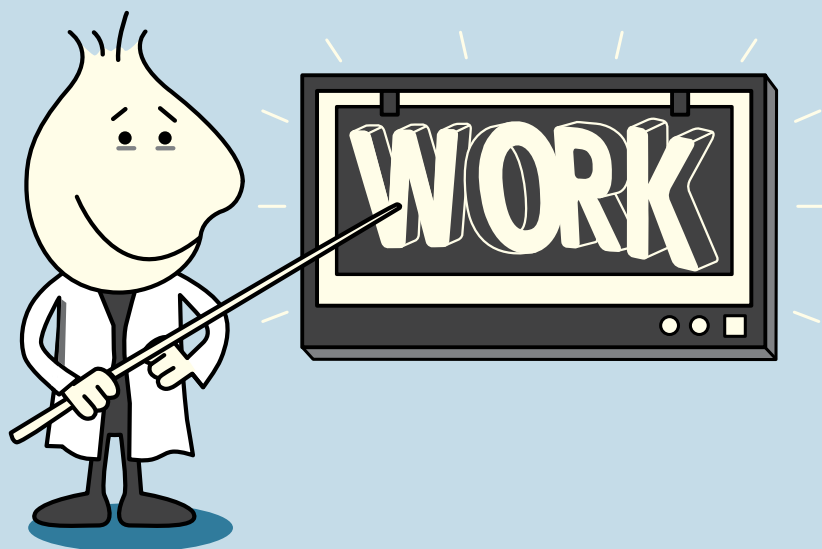
Some patients in the Support Group may not necessarily need to attend a full Work Capability Assessment to receive Employment and Support Allowance. In these cases, we will work together with these patients and healthcare professionals like yourself to gather the necessary information about their condition.

Any terminally ill patient or individual not expected to live longer than six months will be fast-tracked into the Support Group so that we can ensure they receive everything that they are entitled to as quickly as possible.

## **Patients unable to work**

---

# What am I looking at?



**Most customers will be assessed through a new Work Capability Assessment, which is a face-to-face meeting lasting up to 75 minutes. Provided by Atos Healthcare, it's carried out at a Medical Examination Centre by specially trained healthcare professionals approved by the Secretary of State.**

The assessment is made up of three parts:

**1/ Assessment of limited capability for work** – this is to understand the effect on the customer of both mental and physical disabilities, and determines their entitlement to Employment and Support Allowance. It is based on the same principles as the current Personal Capability Assessment (used for Incapacity Benefit), but the descriptors and scores have been extensively reviewed and revised.

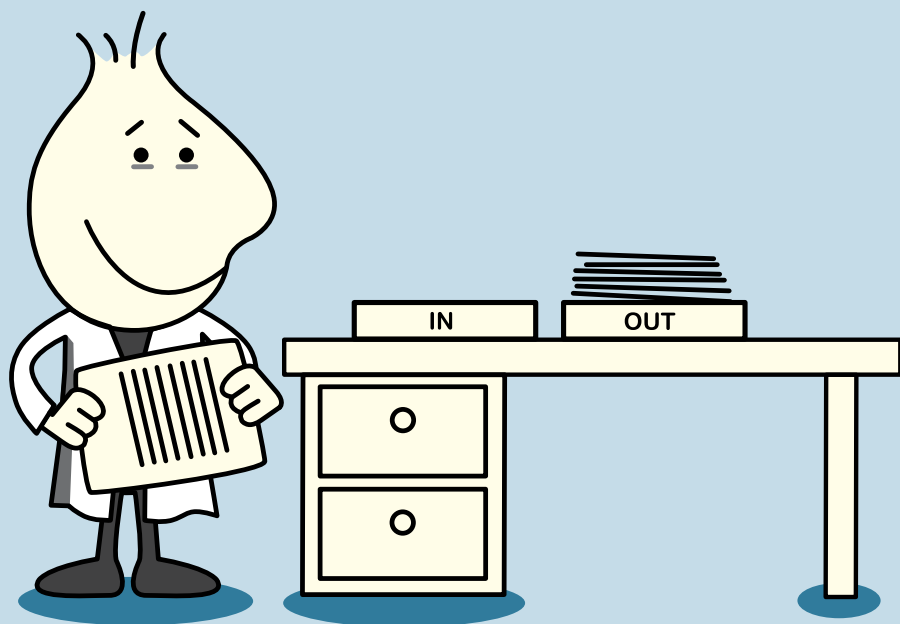
**2/ Assessment of limited capability for work-related activity** – this identifies those customers with the most severe limitations as a result of their illness or disability. These customers will join the Support Group and are not expected to prepare for work.

**3/ The new work-focused health-related assessment** – this enables the customer to discuss their views about moving into work with a healthcare professional and to identify any health-related support that may help them.

**The patient will receive a copy of the work-focused health-related assessment report and may want to share this with you.**

## The Work Capability Assessment

**I'm fully  
up-to-date.**



**We already ask you to provide information on your patients, so Employment and Support Allowance will mean only a few changes to some of the forms you complete.**

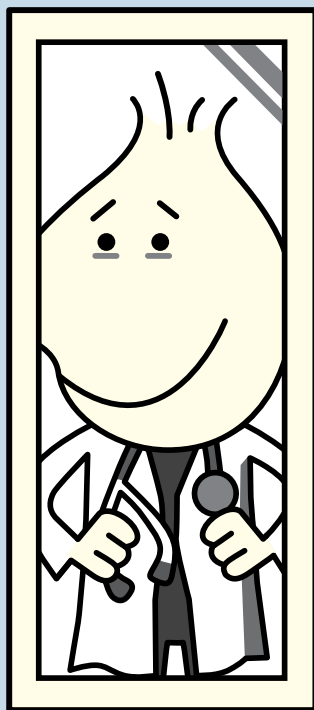
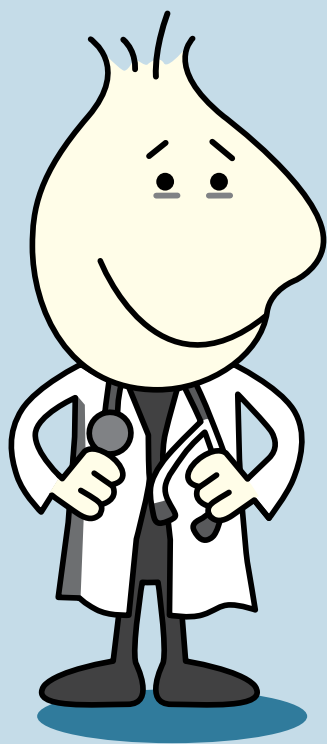
**Statements of incapacity for work** (on form Med 3) will still be used until the Work Capability Assessment is carried out.

We may ask you to complete form **ESA113**. This is similar to form IB113 and will be used for patients with a severe disability who might be entitled to benefits without the need for a face-to-face assessment. A separate examination of your patient will not be required as the form can be completed using your medical records.

For any terminally ill patients or individuals not expected to live longer than six months, you may need to complete a **DS1500**. This is a factual report in which you give us details about their condition and any current, planned or future treatment. We do not ask you to give an opinion on prognosis or life expectancy.

Your patients will not be denied benefits solely on the information you give us. These decisions will be made by expert decision makers, based on a range of information, evidence and independent medical advice.

**I need a  
second opinion.**



If you have any unanswered questions about Employment and Support Allowance, visit [www.dwp.gov.uk/esa](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/esa)

Guidance for completing forms relating to the allowance has been sent to Practice Managers. This can also be found at the Department for Work and Pensions' online resource for healthcare professionals [www.dwp.gov.uk/healthandwork](http://www.dwp.gov.uk/healthandwork)

Evidence on the links between health and work is available at [www.workingforhealth.gov.uk](http://www.workingforhealth.gov.uk)

Thank you for taking time to read this information.

To give you an overview of Employment and Support Allowance, below is a summary of the journey your patients will take.

1. The patient will need a medical certificate from you.



Some customers will join the Support Group, either at the start of their claim, or after the Work Capability Assessment.

2. To start a claim, they first need to call Jobcentre Plus.



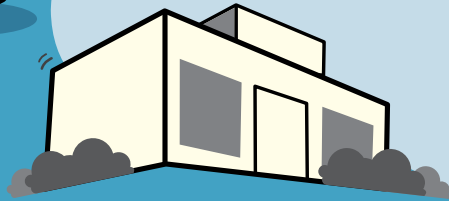
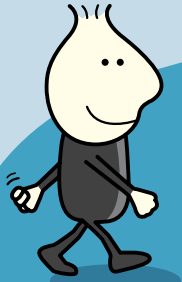
3. The customer will be asked to complete a medical questionnaire.

4. Most customers will attend a Work Capability Assessment and may share their report with you.





5. Most customers will need to attend work-focused interviews with their personal adviser.



6. Ongoing support such as mentoring and coaching is offered once customers are in work.

# WORK

