

# Touchbase

## June 2011

## Welcome to your monthly e-zine!

This month, in the run up to Carer's Week – 13 to 19 June, we are asking what your organisation is going to be doing to support the largest national awareness week in the UK. We also have a more in depth look at the work of the Outreach Manager for the Carer's Allowance Unit, Oliver Mawdsley, and what he will be doing during Carer's Week – see pages 3 and 4 for further details.

UK Older People's Day will be held 1 October 2011. If you or your organisation would like to get involved, or you could make use of tools and resources available to help with your event, see page 5 for details.


We have an update for partner organisation in Wales who order Attendance Allowance claim packs – see page 5 for details.

On page 6, the Office for Disability Issues' are looking for Volunteer Experts to offer their skills, knowledge and experience to help local organisations become even more successful. If you think you could help and want to find out more see page 6.

As always, we have a round up of other news in brief on pages 7 and 8.

Touchbase e-zine is available on the [DWP Adviser and Intermediaries website](#). We hope you find this e-zine useful, and value your feedback and suggestions for improvements. Email me at the address below if you have any suggestions for articles in future editions.



 To provide feedback on the e-zine email [paula.young@dwpgsi.gov.uk](mailto:paula.young@dwpgsi.gov.uk)

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# Government vows to get young people into work

The Government will invest £60 million over the next three years to support the most vulnerable young people in finding work

The Prime Minister, David Cameron, recently committed to:

- Increase the capacity of Jobcentre Plus to support the 5,000 most disadvantaged 16 to 17 year olds claiming Jobseeker's Allowance
- Give these customers access to the Work Experience and Work Clubs
- Provide early access Work Programme places to vulnerable 18 year olds who are likely to be struggling to make the transition from education to work

- A new £10 million per annum Innovation Fund to give delivery organisations, in particular the voluntary and community sector, a real chance to develop innovative solutions to help disadvantaged people, particularly young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

He also announced a range of other measures designed to ensure that young people have the opportunity to get work to support economic growth, to advance their career prospects and encourage social mobility and help fill some of the 500,000 vacancies currently in the job market.

This announcement comes as over 100 large companies and tens of thousands of small companies around the country have responded to the Government's call and pledge to offer Work Experience places. The Government's priorities in this area are set out in the paper "Supporting youth employment".



**For more information visit:**  
[Supporting youth employment \(Number 10 website\)](#)  
[Government vows to get the young into work \(Number 10 website – Press release\)](#)



## Incapacity Benefits (IB) Reassessment

### Trial evaluation report published

IFF Research, an independent research company, was commissioned by the Department for Work and Pensions to evaluate and produce a report on the Incapacity Benefits (Income Support) Reassessment trial, which began in October 2010. The report presents findings from qualitative research to explore customer and staff experiences of the IB Reassessment process which was trialled in Aberdeen and Burnley from October 2010 in advance of national reassessment in 2011.

Qualitative research was conducted in three phases over the re-assessment period as customers progressed from early notification of reassessment through to final notification and transition to other benefits.

“The report presents findings from qualitative research to explore customer and staff experiences of the IB Reassessment process which was trialled in Aberdeen and Burnley...”



[Read the Evaluation of the Incapacity Benefits \(Income Support\) Reassessment trial \(DWP website\)](#)

# Information for advisers

Work continues to improve our Advisers and Intermediaries site.



The [DWP Advisers & Intermediaries](#) site is our main portal for providing information about what DWP is doing, for advisers, intermediaries and other professionals that work with our customers.


We continue to develop the site to ensure that it meets the needs of both our readers and the Department in providing relevant and up-to-date information.

The site now includes:

- [updates](#) – latest information from the Department across the full range of its work
- [Touchbase](#) – latest editions and archive copies
- [DWP Forum Reports](#) – information about our forthcoming customer representative Forums, and reports of events that have taken place

- [Welfare Reform events](#) – includes the latest [slide show](#) that was used at the events, [Universal Credit](#) and [Personal Independence Payment](#) briefing notes
- links to [specialist guides and publications](#), the [Catalogue of Information Products](#), and [online claim forms](#)

We are currently working on a summary of all the Q&A from the Welfare reform events that took place between March and May, and hope to publish this early next month.

 We want to ensure that the site meets your needs and we would value your input on its content. If you have any comments, questions or suggestions, please email us at the [Corporate Stakeholder Team](#).

# Reaching out to carers

Carers Week will be like any other for Oliver Mawdsley, as he travels the country to try and identify ‘hidden carers’

As the Outreach Manager for the Carer’s Allowance Unit, Oliver works with community groups and voluntary organisations to recognise ‘hard-to-reach’ customers. More recently, Oliver has dedicated a lot of his time working with ethnic minority groups at a local level, such as the Asian Dementia group in Wolverhampton.

It was this targeted approach which earned Oliver recognition at the recent Excellence and Diversity awards. Named as runner up in the Looking Outwards Individual Award, the Outreach service was regarded as “vitaly important” by the judging panel. They praised the Unit saying, “The Carer’s Allowance Unit takes pride in how efficiently it has responded to our changing and evolving society, and improved customers’ lives through outreach visits and events”.

**“Many carers do not recognise themselves as carers and don’t think about claiming Carer’s Allowance as it is something they do naturally...”**



Oliver is extremely proud that the Outreach role, which includes offering benefits advice at many carers and disability events, was recognised at the awards ceremony.

Oliver is never surprised to hear that people do not realise they may be entitled to Carer’s Allowance. He says “Many carers do not recognise themselves as carers and don’t think about claiming Carer’s Allowance as it is something they do naturally. That’s why I am always looking for hidden carers through diverse groups, as well as the more recognised groups such as the Princess Royal Trust for Carers.”

During Carers Week, Oliver will be attending Princess Royal Trust events in Oldham and London, before finishing in Wales to deliver a talk to the Pembrokeshire Carers Voluntary Action group.

 For more information or to see if your event would benefit from an Outreach visit, please email: [oliver.mawdsley@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:oliver.mawdsley@dwp.gsi.gov.uk)



# Carers Week - 13 to 19 June 2011



## DWP is supporting this year's Carers Week – what is your organisation going to be doing?

Carers Week [carersweek.org](http://carersweek.org) is a partnership of nine national charities who come together to fund and organise the largest national awareness week in the UK. These are supported by over 700 local organisations including private care and voluntary sectors, local councils, GP surgeries, hospitals, and MPs.

The theme this year is 'The True Face of Carers', and Carers Week 2011 will campaign for greater support and recognition for all unpaid carers as well as celebrating the incredible contribution they make.

There are six million or so carers in the UK, who come from every walk of life.

Here's what some celebrity carers have to say:

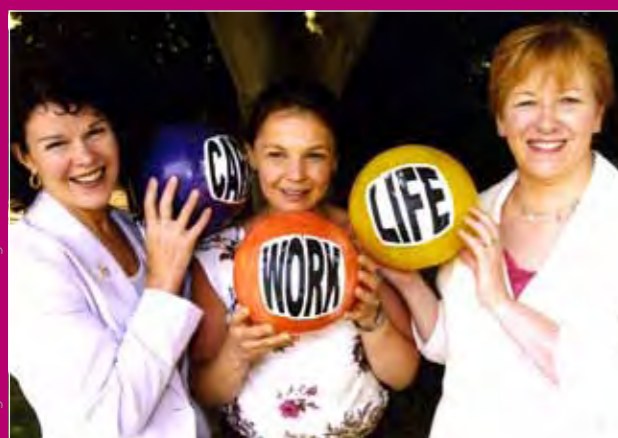
### Fiona Phillips

"I helped to care for my mother for almost 10 years during her long and painful battle with Alzheimer's. After she died, my father was also diagnosed with the disease, and I am now looking after him every weekend. One of the hardest things to cope with is the sense of isolation and lack of support, despite the fact that there are over six million people in the UK in the same situation. I'm supporting Carers Week because I passionately believe that carers deserve greater recognition for the incredible work they do."

### Pierce Brosnan cared for his wife.

#### He said:

"Carers are incredibly courageous people who often give up a lot to look after someone else. They need all the support we can give them. I wholeheartedly support Carers Week".



### Russell Grant

"I am thrilled to be supporting Carers Week. Taking on the role of a carer can have a huge impact on everyday life, as I know from personal experience. Whether it's a drop in earnings or a lack of 'me' time, life can be affected in many ways and quite often will never be the same again.

"It is vital that all carers throughout the UK are made aware of the services and support that is available to them and, most importantly, know that they are not alone."

- Carer's Allowance Unit staff will be attending Harrow Princess Royal Trust on Monday 13 June, Oldham Princes Royal Trust Wednesday 15 June, Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services and in Brecon library with Powys Carers Service in Friday 17 June.
- The Jobcentre Plus' mobile unit will be promoting Carers Week in Thames Valley;
- supporting local carer organisations' events (East Anglia, East and South London, South West Wales).

Look out for the many activities that will be taking place around the UK in support of Carers Week. Here's just a sample of what DWP will be undertaking:

- promotions and information days in Jobcentres and other sites (Durham Tees Valley; West London);

Getting the right information and help when you're caring for someone who is ill or severely disabled is essential. This short DWP leaflet tells you about the benefits and support a person might get if they are caring for someone who is ill or severely disabled: [Support for carers](#)



For further information see: [www.direct.gov.uk/carers](http://www.direct.gov.uk/carers)

# UK Older People's Day 1 October 2011



Following up on the success of last year's celebrations, 2011's UK Older People's Day will take place again this year on 1 October.

The day highlights older people's contribution to society and our economy, and aims to overturn negative attitudes and outdated stereotypes by celebrating the opportunities, achievements and aspirations that later life can bring.

Last year, around 700,000 people across the country took part in local events – ranging from gardening projects to tea dances, and exercise classes to achievement awards. To build on last year's success, we have decided to continue with the theme of 'Getting and Staying Active in Later Life' for this year's celebrations. The purpose of this theme is to encourage people to take up and maintain a physical activity and to raise awareness of the benefits that activity in later life brings.



**If you or your organisation would like to get involved, please contact [dwp.fulloflife@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dwp.fulloflife@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) or visit the [Full of Life homepage](#) for more information. You can also find lots of [tools and resources](#) to help set up your event.**

**FULL  
OF LIFE**

# Changes to Attendance Allowance (AA) claim packs

The AA claim packs are being updated in June 2011.

## The update will:

- remove the tear-off front page
- add new questions 33, 36, 38 and 40
- transfer information about exporting benefits to EEA countries from a flyer to the notes booklet, and
- make minor changes to the wording.

As there are no legislative changes to the June 2011 versions, we will use up 2010 stock before supplying the new June 2011 claim packs.

## The following claim packs are being updated:

- AA1A, AA1ALP (large print)
- AA1AW (Welsh)
- AA1AWLP (Welsh large print)
- AA1, AA1LP (large print)
- AA1W (Welsh)
- AA1WLP (Welsh large print)



## A message for partner organisations in Wales

We told you in [April 2011 Touchbase e-zine](#), about changes to Welsh Disability Living Allowance claim packs. We have now made changes to the Welsh Attendance Allowance claim packs. Currently when you, as a partner organisation in Wales, order AA claim packs, you have to order dual language, that is, Welsh and English versions.

From June 2011, there will be separate Welsh and English versions of AA claim packs.

# Promoting wider employer support for recruiting and retaining disabled workers

DWP is pleased to announce it is supporting an employer led campaign to promote wider employer support for recruiting and retaining disabled workers.

The campaign, which encourages employers to take a positive approach towards employing disabled people, seeks to empower and encourage employers to inspire other employers.

Under the remit of the Minister for Disabled People, a Disability Employer Engagement Steering Group (DEESG) has been established. The group consists of employers who are at the forefront of developing good ideas and excellent practice in supporting disabled people in employment.

As part of this group, the Department has agreed to build awareness and embed the 'Clarkit' package as part of the activity. The 'Clarkit' is the result of 3 years in-depth research with 220 leading employers. It has been developed in association with DWP to address employer barriers when recruiting disabled skills, by educating and empowering organisations to adopt best practice principles when recruiting.



Designed by employers for employers, the 'Clarkit' combines the latest thinking and employer case studies with relevant and helpful tips and 'must do' check lists which help dispel the myths that prevent many employers from giving disabled people an opportunity to join their teams. It also provides free advice and information and will underpin this campaign.



For further information, please visit [www.clarkit.co.uk](http://www.clarkit.co.uk)

# New initiative to support Disabled People's User-led Organisations



Last month the Government announced an extra £3million for disabled people's grassroots organisations in an initiative aiming to better deliver services disabled people really need.

From July, User-led Organisations will be able to bid for a share of money for specific projects that will make a significant difference to their development and sustainability.

As part of the initiative, the Office for Disability Issues' are also recruiting for various roles. They are looking for **Volunteer Experts** to offer their skills, knowledge and experience to help local organisations to become even more successful. This could be in areas such as HR, business planning, financial

management and IT, or other fields.

If you're interested in supporting the scheme by becoming an Expert, please email [ODI.businessperformance@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ODI.businessperformance@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) to register your interest. If you have a specific skill to offer, please let us know.

Minister for Disabled People, Maria Miller said, "Disabled people should have choice and independence in how they live their lives. Organisations run by, and for, disabled people play a vital role in making sure they have their voices heard at every level."



To find out more about the **Office for Disability Issues'** visit the website.

# Turn2us for further advice



Turn2us, part of the charity Elizabeth Finn Care, has recently introduced new tools and resources to its free, accessible website [www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk) to enhance the support you can offer clients.

Turn2us enables people in financial need, and those intermediaries that support them – including advisers, support workers and welfare officers – to access the money available to them through welfare benefits, charitable grants and other financial help.

Every month, Turn2us is giving website users the chance to ask a panel of experts their specific questions relating to benefits, grants and managing money. Topics covered to date include redundancy, benefit changes and disability benefits.

The Turn2us website provides a simple Benefits Checker to help people

check that they are receiving all the welfare benefits they are entitled to. Intermediaries with a deeper understanding of benefits who have logged in with their MyTurn2us account can also use the Advanced Benefits Checker, which provides quicker calculations and allows calculations to be edited and saved to easily see how different circumstances affect entitlement to benefits. There is also a 'what if' function to quickly check what effect a change in income would have on the benefits an individual could claim.

In addition, the website provides a Grants Search database containing the details of over 3,500 charitable funds (national, regional and local) that may be able to provide financial support.



Visit the website for further details  
[www.turn2us.org.uk](http://www.turn2us.org.uk)

## Other news in brief...

### Changes to DWP leaflets

The following DWP leaflets have recently been amended:

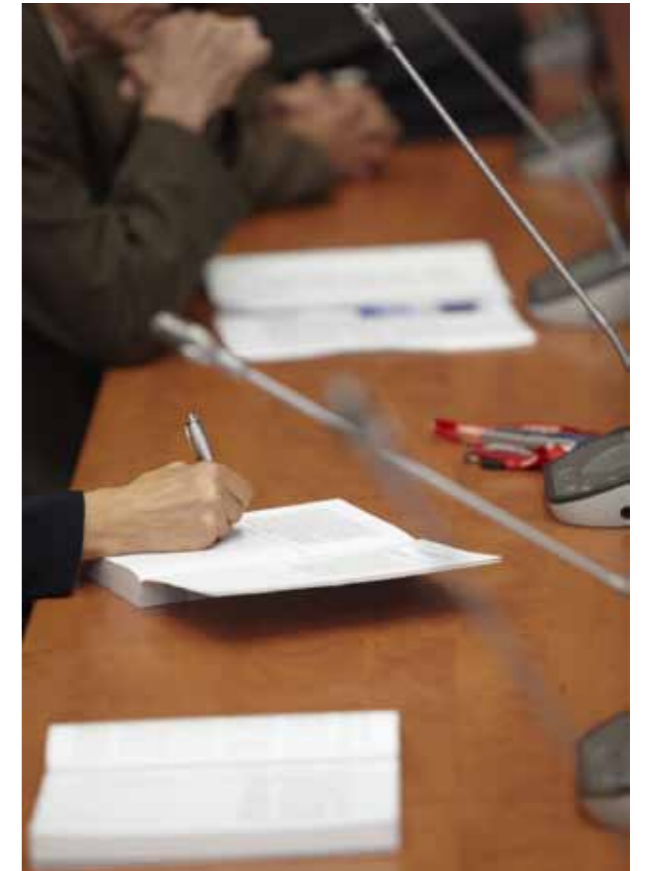
- PM2 State pensions - your guide - September 2010
- DWPO35 (formally BRA5) Benefit and pension rates - April 2011
- PC1L – Pension Credit - Do I qualify and how much could I get? - April 2011

You can see copies of all our leaflets at [A – Z of leaflets \(DWP website\)](#). This page also includes details on how you can order copies.

### Spring Online campaign

This year's Spring Online campaign was held between 16 & 20 May. Spring Online is a week-long celebration that aims to encourage older people to learn the basics of using the internet. The campaign has built on the success of Silver Surfers' Day which is now in its tenth year. During the week hundreds of people and organisations across the UK opened their doors to invite older people to come along for a digital taster session. This included staff from DWP who volunteered their time to run free IT taster sessions at Nottingham and Newcastle public libraries. These were run on a drop-in basis with the aim of showing older people how having access to the web can prevent social isolation, improve standards of living, save money, and of course have fun. For further information about schemes to help an older person get online visit:

[Spring Online \(Spring Online website\)](#)  
[First Click Friends \(BBC website\)](#)



### DWP Annual Forum

The DWP Annual Forum will take place in London Wednesday 6 July. The Forum is aimed at all advisers, intermediaries and other professionals that work with our customers. It aims to provide information about DWP and its Agencies, to consult on new initiatives, and to hear your feedback about how we are doing. If you have attended previously, you will automatically receive an invitation. If you have not attended before, and would like to attend please let us know at [corporate.stakeholders@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:corporate.stakeholders@dwp.gsi.gov.uk). If you would like to view reports of previous forums please visit [DWP Adviser and Intermediaries website – Forum Reports](#).

# Other news in brief...

## Progress2work and progress2workLinkUP...

...are ending on 30 June 2011 and will not be replaced by a similar programmes. Jobcentre Plus will be able to advise what steps customers might take towards building on the experience of being on the programme and customers who were previously supported by these programmes should contact Jobcentre Plus to see what support can be offered. Customers will be offered tailored support based on their individual needs. This support will be via the Jobcentre Plus Offer and/or the new Work Programme.



## New Enterprise Allowance update roll out in Scotland and Wales

The New Enterprise Allowance will help unemployed people who want to start and grow their own business. It will provide access to business mentoring, and offering financial support of around £2,000. Roll out continues in Scotland and Wales from late June with the initiative due to be available throughout the UK from August. The initiative aims to help establish 40,000 new small businesses by 2013. For further information and regular updates visit the [DWP Adviser and Intermediaries website – update pages.](#)



## Final reminder – 23 June 2011, the IIAC Public Meeting

On Thursday 23 June, the Industrial Injuries Advisory Council (IIAC) will be holding its 10th Public Meeting in Westminster, London, between 1.00pm and 4.45pm. If you would like to attend, please contact: Zarina Hajee, IIAC Secretariat, on 020 7449 5619 or by e-mail: [iiac@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:iiac@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) The Council's work can be found on the IIAC website [www.iiac.org.uk](http://www.iiac.org.uk)

## Are you interested in an e-alert when Touchbase e-zine is published on the website?

If so, send your details, including name, organisation and email address to [corporate.stakeholders@dwp.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:corporate.stakeholders@dwp.gsi.gov.uk) You will then receive an email, with a weblink, when each edition is published on the [DWP Adviser and Intermediaries website.](#)

## Closure of Jobcentre Plus's benefit and contact centres

You may have seen coverage in the media about the decision to close 22 of Jobcentre Plus's benefit and contact centres. These closure will not affect customers, work will be relocated. Contact centres and benefit centres are essentially back office functions which serve customers over the phone and online. The intention is to redeploy as many staff as possible into other roles in Jobcentre Plus.



Thank you for reading. If you have any questions or comments about this publication, or would like to suggest content for future issues, please click on the email icon below. If you have comments on any particular feature, click on the email icon below that feature."

