

# Press release: Ministers take action to bolster PIP services

As part of its ongoing commitment to strengthen its services for disabled people, the government has accepted the recommendations of the second independent review of Personal Independence Payment (PIP).

The review, commissioned by the government and led by Paul Gray, was published in March 2017. Action will be taken on the recommendations including simplifying communications for people claiming PIP, and exploring how to ensure evidence is collected and reviewed as effectively as possible to support people's claims.

Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Sarah Newton, said:

We're determined to make the PIP application process as simple as possible both for the independent assessors and the people applying for it. That's why we commissioned the second review on top of the strong steps we've already taken, so we can fully understand what works best, and what we need to improve on.

Working closely with disabled people and their representatives, we'll continue to explore how to help meet the needs of some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

PIP was introduced to replace the outdated Disability Living Allowance (DLA) system. At the core of PIP's design is the principle that awards should be made according to someone's overall level of need – taking into account both physical and non-physical conditions. Under PIP 29% of claimants are now receiving the highest rate of support, compared to 15% under DLA.

The first independent review was published in December 2014. Since then, significant improvements have been made to the PIP assessment process including:

- restructuring decision letters to make them easier to understand
- working with the Money Advice Service (MAS) to ensure PIP claimants can get bespoke budgeting advice if they need it
- introducing SMS messaging to keep a claimant informed throughout the journey of their claim
- introducing the Video Relay Service for claimants who use British Sign Language (BSL) so they are able to communicate with the department more easily
- introducing the Next Generation Text (NGT) for deaf or hard of hearing claimants unable to use BSL or those unable to speak
- amending the PIP (Transitional Provisions) Regulations 2013 by removing the requirement for DLA claimants to wait a minimum of 28 days when they transfer to PIP if they became terminally ill

Assessment providers have also introduced Mental Health Champions, who are experienced professionals with direct and relevant work experience of helping people with mental health problems.

[PIP](#) is designed to help with the extra costs associated with a disability or health condition. It is not means tested and not linked to someone's ability to work.

Read the [government's response to the second independent review](#).

Read Paul Gray's [second independent review](#).

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