



Personal Independence Payment

How Personal Independence Payment is working – Second review

March 2017



Easy Read



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Important

Green writing

In this easy-read booklet we sometimes explain what words mean.

The first time we mention any of these words, it is in **bold green** writing. Then we write what the words mean in a blue box. If any of the words are used later in the booklet, we show them in **normal green** writing.

These words and what they mean are also in a Word list at the back of the booklet.

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About Personal Independence Payment

Personal Independence Payment began in April 2013.

Personal Independence Payment

This benefit helps disabled people live full, active and independent lives. Disabled people who get the benefit get money to pay some of the extra costs of being disabled.

Personal Independence Payment was made because the government wanted to make sure that disabled people and people with a health condition get help if they need it.

Personal Independence Payment took the place of **Disability Living Allowance** for people who are aged 16 to 64.

Disability Living Allowance

This is money that someone with a disability or a health condition may be able to get to help them pay for some of the help and support they need.

How Personal Independence Payment is working

The **Department for Work and Pensions** use an **assessment** to work out who can get **Personal Independence Payment**.

Department for Work and Pensions

This is the part of government that is in charge of welfare and pensions. Some of the benefits it pays are to disabled people and people with a health condition.

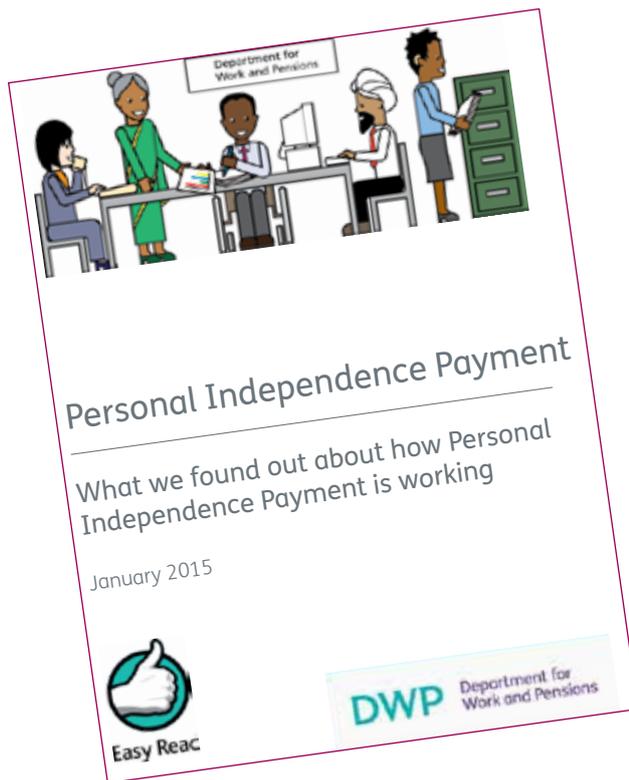


Assessment

This is the way the **Department for Work and Pensions** works out if a person can get **Personal Independence Payment**. It looks at 10 everyday activities and 2 activities on how a person can go outside. Points are given based on how well a person can or cannot do the activities.

What this booklet is about

In January 2015, an easy to read report was written, called What we found out about how **Personal Independence Payment** is working. This was written after the full report was written in December 2014.



In 2014, when Paul looked at how **Personal Independence Payment** was working, he found that it was taking a long time to deal with claims for **Personal Independence Payment**.

When Paul wrote his report, in December 2014, he gave the government 14 ideas about how he thought **Personal Independence Payment** could be made better.

How Personal Independence Payment is working

Work to include Paul's ideas in the **Personal Independence Payment** process has gone slower than Paul hoped.

But, it is no longer taking a long time to deal with claims to **Personal Independence Payment**.

The government asked Paul to write a new report that looks at whether **Personal Independence Payment** is fair to everyone and to find out what people think about it.

This new booklet shows what Paul Gray found out about these things.

- How people claim **Personal Independence Payment**.
- How extra details about disabilities or health conditions are collected.
- How people are told if they can get **Personal Independence Payment**.
- If people are being treated fairly and well.

What Paul Gray did

The law says that **Personal Independence Payment** has to be looked at twice. And reports have to be written to say what was found out about how **Personal Independence Payment** is working.

Paul Gray wrote the first report in December 2014. This is the second report.

For this report the government asked Paul to look at these things.

- To look at further evidence. This is evidence that the person who is claiming **Personal Independence Payment** needs to give to the **Department for Work and Pensions**.

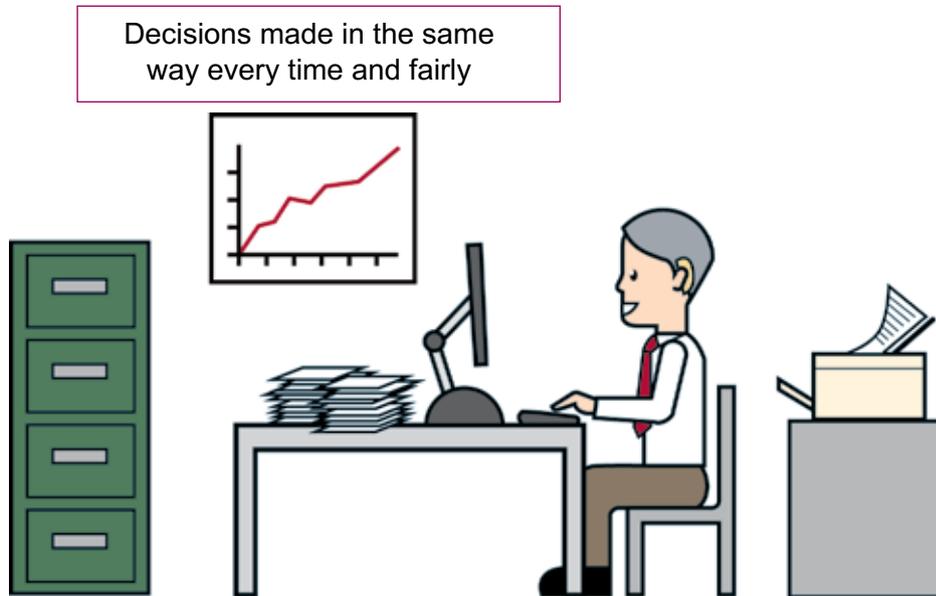
This is so the claim can be looked at and the **Department for Work and Pensions** can work out if the person can get **Personal Independence Payment**.

- To find out if people trusted the **Department for Work and Pensions** to make the right decisions.

Paul wanted to make sure that people can see what the **Department for Work and Pensions** have done and their reasons for making the decisions they made.

How Personal Independence Payment is working

- In the first report Paul found that the **Department for Work and Pensions** needed to make sure that decisions were made in the same way every time and that they were fair. The government asked Paul to look at this again.



- To find out what **Personal Independence Payment** will be like in the future.

Further evidence

When **Personal Independence Payment** was set up, the **Department for Work and Pensions** wanted to make sure that any decisions made about a claim to **Personal Independence Payment** were fair. And the decisions should be based on the evidence given to the **Department for Work and Pensions**.



The further evidence needed by the **Department for Work and Pensions** can come from the person making the claim for **Personal Independence Payment**. It can also come from the **assessment**. Or it can come from other people, like medical or social care workers.

The **Department for Work and Pensions** use this further evidence to work out if someone can get **Personal Independence Payment** and how much they can get.

How Personal Independence Payment is working

When a person fills in the claim form for **Personal Independence Payment** they tell the **Department for Work and Pensions** how their condition affects them. This is important. This information is taken into account when the **Department for Work and Pensions** make a decision about the claim.

If the **Department for Work and Pensions** get further evidence, they can sometimes work out if a person can get **Personal Independence Payment** without them having to have a face-to-face **assessment**. This is called a paper-based **assessment**.

Many people think that the **assessment** for **Personal Independence Payment** is medical based. This is wrong.

But this means that some people are not sure what evidence they should give to the **Department for Work and Pensions**.

Health workers can try to get further evidence, but they may only be able to get the evidence in a few cases.

If the **Department for Work and Pensions** think they can get the further evidence by making a few phone calls they may do a paper-based **assessment**.

If a person is having a face-to-face **assessment** and the **Department for Work and Pensions** find out that further evidence exists, the health worker should try to get it.

Sometimes further evidence does not exist. The **Department for Work and Pensions** need to be able to carry out a full **assessment** without any further evidence if it does not exist.

What Paul Gray found out in this review

The person making the claim for **Personal Independence Payment** should get the further evidence if possible. This is because they can get the evidence more easily than someone else.

Also, if the person who carries out the **assessment** asks for the further evidence they may not be able to get it.

Paul Gray said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to make it clear to people why the further evidence is needed. They also need to make it clear what further evidence is needed, and what people need to do.

Some types of evidence, especially evidence from carers or family members, are not treated in the same way as evidence from a health worker.

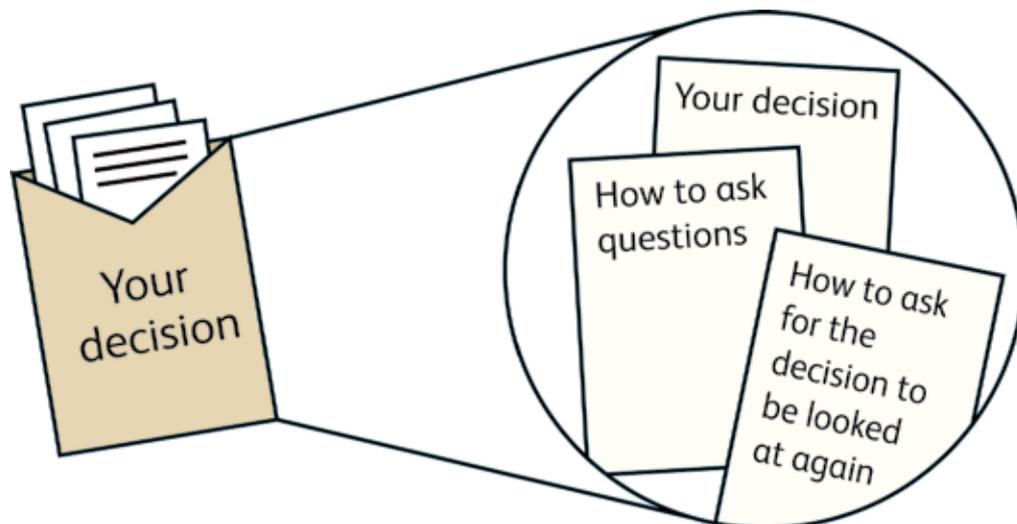
The **Department for Work and Pensions** treat evidence from a health worker or other professional as being more important.

Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to make sure that evidence from carers and family members is treated in the same way as any other evidence. It is all important.

Getting more people to trust the Department for Work and Pensions and making their ways of working clear to everyone

When **Personal Independence Payment** started in April 2013 a lot of people did not like it.

Many people think that the decisions about whether someone can get **Personal Independence Payment** are not fair.



It needs to be made clear to everyone how a decision is made. That way, even if people do not agree with the decision they can see how, and why, the decision was made.

When people get in touch with the **Department for Work and Pensions** and providers, they expect a good standard of customer service.

Personal Independence Payment

Paul Gray said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to change the way they work. Paul wants people to like the way the **Department for Work and Pensions** work and agree that the decisions they make are fair.

Some people do not think that health experts can remember and write down word-for-word what is said during the face-to-face **assessments**.



In the future, face-to-face **assessments** could be recorded. Having a voice recording of the interview can help both the person being assessed and the health expert prove what was said during the **assessment**.

It is important that the health expert offers to record the **assessments** for people. But if someone does not want their **assessment** to be recorded, then it will not be recorded.

Some people do not think the health experts can work out how a person's condition affects them. This happens more often when the health expert is not an expert in the person's health condition.

How Personal Independence Payment is working

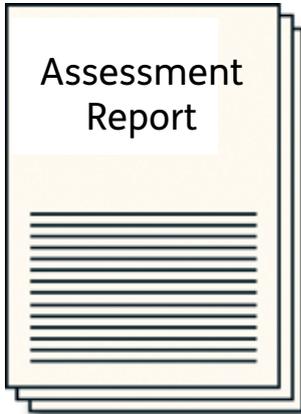
Even if the health expert is not an expert in the person's health condition, it should not stop an **assessment** being carried out properly. But the health expert may need training to do this.

A lot of people are worried about this. Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** and the providers need to show people that the health experts are fully trained.

Health experts also need to make it clear to people when they have asked other experts, like mental health experts, for help.

If the **assessment** process is made clear to people they will be confident that the process is fair and open.

When people are given a decision about their **Personal Independence Payment** claim, they should be able to see their **assessment** report if they want to.



This will help people understand how the decision about their claim was reached. It will also help people to decide if they want to appeal against the decision or ask for the claim to be looked at again.

Personal Independence Payment

People can ask the **Department for Work and Pensions** to look at their claim to **Personal Independence Payment** again if they are not happy with the benefit they get.

Some people do not trust the **Department for Work and Pensions** to look at their claim again when they ask them to.

Also, some people do not trust the **Department for Work and Pensions** at the appeals stage of the process.

Some people who appealed against the decision did not think their decision was fully looked at again.

Some tribunal judges are not happy with the process for looking at decisions again.

At the moment, in 65 out of every 100 appeals the decision that was first made is changed. This stops people having trust in the **Personal Independence Payment** system.

Paul said that the whole **assessment** process needs to be clear and easy to follow, so that people can see what is happening. It must also give high quality decisions that are fair and work in a **consistent** way for everyone. This will help people to trust the **Department for Work and Pensions** more.

Consistent or consistency

This is when something is done in the same way all the time so it is fair and accurate.

Quality and consistency

It is hard to make sure that all **Personal Independence Payment** claims are dealt with in a high quality and **consistent** way.

This is because **Personal Independence Payment** is a hard benefit to work on. It has a wide range of health conditions to deal with.

During an **assessment**, when the health expert is looking at a person's needs they should use questions that are made just for the person being assessed and their situation.



Paul Gray said that when the **Department for Work and Pensions** are checking the way the **Personal Independence Payment** process works, they must make the way the checks are done better. Also, the whole process must be checked, not just parts of it.

Personal Independence Payment

Paul found 4 areas where the **Personal Independence Payment** process is not **consistent**.

- The amount of help and support people get when they make their claim and when they have an **assessment**.
- The amount of further evidence that is looked at in a case.
- There are 2 service providers and each provider works in a different way.
- The health experts who carry out the **assessments** all work in a different way.

There is no single action that would sort out these 4 problems. But the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to understand and deal with all the problems.

Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** must deliver a service that is fair, clear to everyone, **consistent** and aimed at those people in the greatest need.

What the Department for Work and Pensions need to do

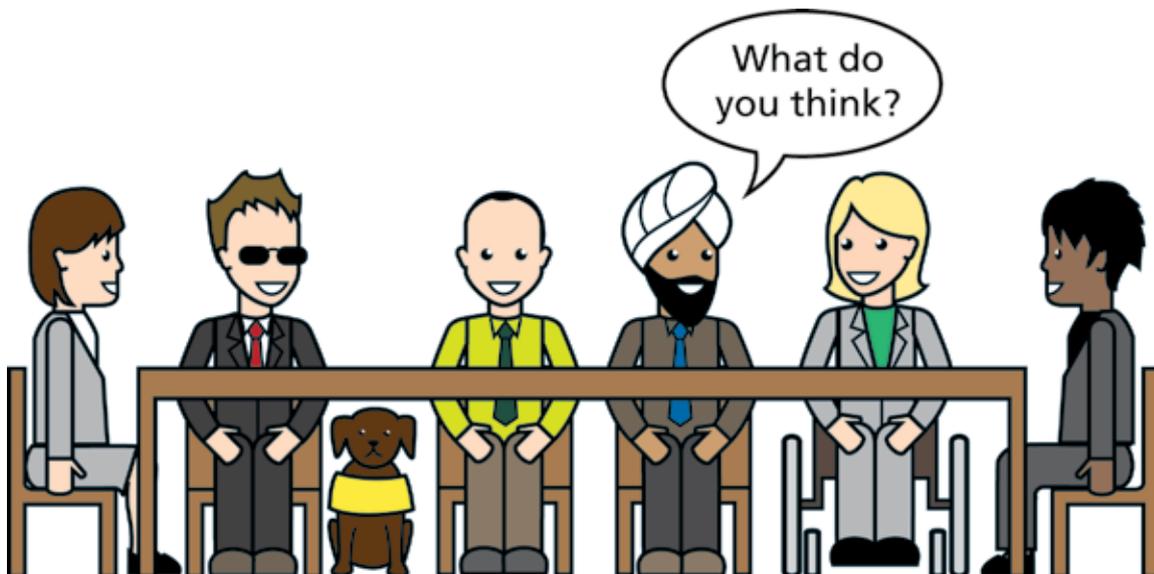
Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to do these things.

- During the **assessment**, the health expert needs to make sure they look at how a person's condition affects them.

How Personal Independence Payment is working

- The **Department for Work and Pensions** need to make sure there is enough time to look at the evidence before the **assessment** takes place. There must be enough time to ask any follow-up questions after the **assessment**. A record of the **assessment** must be written as soon as possible after the **assessment** takes place.
- The **Department for Work and Pensions** need to make sure that their checks include looking at the claim process the person has gone through when claiming **Personal Independence Payment**.
- The **Department for Work and Pensions** need to check and make sure that the decisions made on claims to **Personal Independence Payment** are **consistent** and of a high quality.

Paul wants the **Department for Work and Pensions** and service providers to work together to make **Personal Independence Payment** the best it can be.



What Personal Independence Payment will be like in the future

Paul Gray said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to look at these things.

- Check the quality of **Personal Independence Payment** and make it better.
- Make changes to the way **Personal Independence Payment** is delivered to people.

The **Department for Work and Pensions** will keep checking **Personal Independence Payment** to make sure it is working properly.

Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** must tell people what they find. This will make the way they work clear to everyone. It will also show people that they can trust the **Department for Work and Pensions** to run **Personal Independence Payment** properly.

How Personal Independence Payment is working

Paul thinks the **Department for Work and Pensions** should see if more can be done to put people in touch with advice and support services.



This should be done when people claim **Personal Independence Payment** and they are either in work or they want to get a job.

Paul wants the **Department for Work and Pensions** to let people know that being in work will not affect their chances of getting **Personal Independence Payment**.

Finally, the **Department for Work and Pensions** think that people should be able to claim **Personal Independence Payment** online using a computer. But, people who want to use a paper claim form will still be able to do so.

Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to carry on with the work they are doing to make **Personal Independence Payment** better and also do the things Paul has suggested.

By doing this, people will agree that **Personal Independence Payment** is fair and that the decisions are **consistent**.

Paul Gray's ideas for making Personal Independence Payment better

Paul Gray has come up with some ideas to make **Personal Independence Payment** better. The 4 main ideas are shown below.

- Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to make their information easier to understand. This includes the claim form, the booklet that comes with the form, videos telling people what to do and any online forms.
- Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** must make sure the person claiming **Personal Independence Payment** knows that they must get the further evidence if it is possible. It is important that the person does not think the **Department for Work and Pensions** will get the evidence for them or get in touch with health workers.
- Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** must make sure that if they get evidence from a carer, then that evidence is taken into account during the **assessment**.
- Paul said that when a decision is made about a claim to **Personal Independence Payment**, the person who made the claim should be sent a copy of the **assessment** report with the letter about the decision. In future, the **assessments** should be recorded, but people can choose not to be recorded.

Other ideas that Paul came up with have been talked about in this report.

How Personal Independence Payment is working

They are things like giving health experts more time to look at evidence before carrying out an **assessment**. Also, when possible, health experts should write reports as soon as the **assessment** ends.

Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to carry out checks on **Personal Independence Payment** on their own and also with health experts.

Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to carry out more research and then write about what they find out.

People and health experts should be able to go online and upload evidence safely, to help with a **Personal Independence Payment** claim.

Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to make sure that people know that being in work does not mean they cannot get **Personal Independence Payment**.

Finally, Paul said that the **Department for Work and Pensions** need to look for ways that **Personal Independence Payment** can help people to stay in work.



Word list

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Consistent or consistency

This is when something is done in the same way all the time so it is fair and accurate.16

Department for Work and Pensions

This is the part of government that is in charge of welfare and pensions. Some of the benefits it pays are to disabled people and people with a health condition5

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This is money that someone with a disability or a health condition may be able to get to help them pay for some of the help and support they need.....4

Personal Independence Payment

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