



Consultation Document to the Department for Work and Pensions

## "Timms Review"

# Call to action - "Personal Independence Payment" review General Public edition

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Please note this document is a version for the general public.

There is a personal version which includes the project director's experiences against the points mentioned.

This is only available to members of parliament, ministers, government departments and staff associated with the DWP.

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#### **Question 1. Does PIP support people to do things they want to do?**

**Each person's circumstances are different, so it would be inappropriate to make generalised judgements.**

**However, I feel that PIP can help people in many ways, including with cooking, shopping, travelling, and getting around. It can also support access to hobbies and activities, such as music, which may improve wellbeing and social inclusion.**

#### **Question 2: How does PIP help people to be more independent in their day-to-day life?**

**I believe Personal Independence Payment helps people in a variety of ways. It is not only about the cost of groceries, cooking, and travelling.**

**Depending on the level of care or support a person receives at home, PIP can also help someone maintain their tenancy and manage their home environment.**

**For example, a person may have a garden but be unable to manage very high or large hedges themselves. PIP can help cover the costs of accessing gardening or hedge-trimming services.**

**Managing excessive waste and rubbish can also be challenging, depending on where a person lives and what restrictions apply to householders and tenants accessing local waste sites. For example, in Birmingham, residents can only access local waste disposal sites if they drive and have their vehicle registration number registered with the site. If you do not drive, you are not permitted to access this service independently.**

**Unless a person is fortunate enough to have local contacts or support from others who can help, they may have no choice but to pay for additional waste collection services. This goes beyond standard bulky waste collections provided by local authorities and includes excessive recycling that cannot fit within normal household waste collection limits.**

**As a result, people may need to pay for private waste collection services. This can also apply to disposing of old clothes or certain household items that regular collection services cannot accept due to regulations or safety guidelines.**

**Different people may need to use PIP to support different aspects of their daily lives. This often depends on the support available to them through family, friendships, and their local community.**

#### **Wider Challenges That May Affect People Receiving PIP**

**In some areas, ongoing issues such as bin strikes or reductions in local authority services can create additional challenges for disabled people and people with health conditions. For example, where recycling collections are disrupted, people who do not drive may have limited options for disposing of recycling or household waste.**

**Some local household waste sites are only accessible to residents who drive and have registered vehicle number plates. This can create barriers for people who are unable to drive, especially if they do not have family members, friends, or local support networks available to assist them.**

**In areas where local recycling banks or community disposal facilities have been removed, people may have no alternative but to pay for private waste collection services, which can be expensive. These costs may place additional financial pressure on people already managing health conditions or disabilities.**

**Access to support services can also vary significantly between areas. In some locations, support beyond short-term mental health services may be limited, with long waiting periods and restrictions on repeat access. As a result, some people may need to pay privately for additional support, such as counselling, coaching, or wellbeing services, in order to improve confidence, social skills, emotional resilience, or daily functioning.**

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#### **Question 2: How does PIP help people to be more independent in their day-to-day life?**

**Some individuals may also need to purchase books, learning materials, or self-help resources to help them better manage interpersonal difficulties, anxiety, confidence issues, or experiences involving controlling or abusive behaviour.**

**Since the pandemic, some people have increasingly relied on health supplements or alternative wellbeing products that are not routinely available through GP services or the NHS. These may help individuals manage ongoing pain, soreness, fatigue, mobility difficulties, stress, or other long-term symptoms that affect daily living.**

**People experiencing anxiety, sensory difficulties, stress-related conditions, or sleep problems may also need to purchase additional items such as calming remedies, sensory aids, specialist lighting, or ear protection. These aids can help individuals manage sensory overload, improve sleep quality, reduce distress in noisy environments, and support emotional wellbeing.**

**For example, some people may struggle in busy public environments such as shops, restaurants, public transport, or family gatherings where there is loud background noise. This may affect their ability to communicate, concentrate, manage anxiety, or participate socially.**

**Others may require specialist earplugs or sensory equipment to reduce disturbances from environmental noise, including neighbours, traffic, or aircraft, particularly when trying to sleep or recover from stress and exhaustion.**

**Busy supermarkets and crowded public spaces can also be overwhelming for some disabled people or people with mental health conditions, particularly if they have previously experienced distressing interactions, hostility, or high-pressure situations. In these circumstances, some individuals may need to rely on online grocery delivery services to reduce anxiety and maintain access to food and essential items independently.**

**Overall, PIP can help people manage a wide range of additional costs linked to disability, health conditions, sensory difficulties, mental wellbeing, independence, and participation in everyday life.**

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#### Question 3

**Do you think pip looks at the right activities**

**Because people's disabilities, difficulties, barriers, and circumstances are not the same, and these differences vary from person to person, it would be overly simplistic to restrict the examples mentioned in the question to only:**

**Washing and dressing**

**Cooking and cleaning**

**Getting out and about**

**Communicating with other people**

**As mentioned in question one, there are additional factors which help when receiving PIP payments, including essential tasks and responsibilities required to maintain a home and tenancy. Remedies, support, and aids can enable a person to maintain their ability to cope, manage, and navigate situations which would otherwise cause them to struggle.**

**As mentioned elsewhere, depending on where you live, the free support options available may not be relevant to a person's particular difficulties. This means people may need to pay for specific services such as life coaching, mentoring, and similar forms of support. This is because conventional education and support services do not cover these areas.**

#### **Experiences of People with Neurological Difficulties**

**Many people with neurological difficulties experience restrictions in the type of support they are able to access. In some cases, support services limit the areas in which individuals can seek help, particularly regarding relationship matters, issues affecting inclusive living, safeguarding concerns, abuse, discrimination, and hate crime.**

**Support organisations can also impose barriers where support workers are unable to assist with practical tasks, even when the individual would struggle to undertake those tasks independently. As a result, support may fail to address the wider impact neurological difficulties can have on daily living, interpersonal abilities, decision-making, confidence, and personal circumstances. This is why additional forms of support and external services can be essential.**

**Counselling and mental health services do not always cover these areas of need, which can place additional strain on both individuals and existing services. Where suitable support is unavailable through free or conventional services, many people are left needing to pay for alternative forms of assistance, such as mentoring, advocacy, life coaching, or specialist guidance.**

**Without access to appropriate support, people may experience reduced social confidence, difficulties with interpersonal communication, barriers to employment and education, and challenges in maintaining social inclusion. Over time, this can increase the risk of isolation and loneliness, which may negatively affect both physical and mental health.**

#### Question 4 & 5

**The answers are not available for this edition of the document**

#### Question 6

**Is applying for PIP the same for everyone? Do you think it is easier for some people and harder for others?**

**Personal Independence Payment is not the same for everyone. Because of the different life challenges people experience, whether physical, visible, invisible, or neurological, each person's needs and circumstances will be different.**

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#### **Question 7**

**Can you tell us how other changes have affected PIP?**

**I feel that this issue must be addressed from a wider perspective. Even though more people are applying for PIP, I have observed through my experiences with other people who have neurological difficulties that support mechanisms have dramatically reduced. Unfortunately, this has led to some people not receiving support at all.**

**For example, for people living with ADHD and Dyspraxia, both national support charities have closed down. The bigger issue is that support mechanisms are not necessarily available for certain people with neurological difficulties. This can affect not only their ability to function, but also their ability to access and maintain employment, education, and other ambitions, including starting and maintaining a business.**

#### **Question 8**

**The answers are not available for this edition of the document**



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