From the Chair

Justin Tomlinson MP
Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work
Department for Work and Pensions

4 July 2019

PIP Mobility review

Many thanks for your letter confirming the publication of the PIP mobility statistics. I welcome the Department’s efforts, following the High Court’s ruling, to identify claimants with mental health problems who are not receiving their full PIP entitlement and to provide them with the vital support that they need. You will be aware, however, of Mind’s concerns about the significant disparity between the Department’s original estimate of the number of people affected and those who have had their awards increased to date.

In its February 2017 equality assessment, the Department estimated that 14% of all PIP claims would be entitled to higher payments if it did not introduce the PIP Amendment Regulations 2017, which set out that psychological distress should not be considered when assessing people for the higher level of mobility support through PIP. But the data published today shows that just 3,500 (0.08%) of the 440,000 claims reviewed to date were deemed eligible for the additional entitlement and received payments in arrears.

In your letter you explained that this disparity was because finalised guidance was not in place before the original estimates were produced. You said:

_The original estimates were done before the final guidance, which implemented the judgment, had been produced. There was therefore significant uncertainty around the estimates as set out at the time._

As I am sure you will understand, even allowing for some uncertainty, it remains difficult to comprehend why these estimates have proved to be so hugely out of line with reality.

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1. Equality Analysis PIP assessment criteria. February 2017
2. The Social Security (Personal Independence Payment) (Amendment) Regulations 2017
3. PIP administrative exercise: progress on cases cleared, at 14 June 2019
I appreciate your invitation to talk through the statistics in more detail with your staff. As a first step, however, I would be grateful if you could provide the Committee with the following:

1. A note setting out:

   a) The basis on which the original estimates were calculated;
   b) The changes in the final guidance which led to such fewer cases qualifying for the additional entitlement;
   c) Guidelines for staff reviewing cases; and
   d) Quality assurance processes the Department has in place to ensure decisions are consistent.

2. Might you also provide the Committee with an update of when you expect to complete the review of all PIP cases that may be entitled to additional support?

With best wishes and I look forward to hearing from you,

Rt Hon Frank Field MP
Chair