



Work and Pensions Committee

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From the Chair

14 May 2018

Dr Paul Williams
Programme Director
Centre for Health and Disability Assessments, Maximus

Dear Dr Paul Williams,

As you are aware, the Committee has an ongoing interest in the ESA assessment process. During our inquiry on PIP and ESA, we received thousands of responses from claimants raising concerns about the assessment process for PIP and ESA. Among these, were factual inaccuracies and a “copy and paste” feel to reports.¹ In previous correspondence you confirmed that Maximus CHDA assessors carry out an average of five assessments per day.²

The Department attempted to reassure us that assessors are “encouraged to take as much time as they need during an assessment to fully understand the impact of a claimants’ condition on their everyday life”.³ In your evidence, you too told us there is no time limits on assessments.⁴ However, the below letter, purported to be written by Atos Independent Assessment Services, was recently brought to my attention.

I am concerned financial incentives to complete assessments quickly may compromise the accuracy and quality of assessment reports—causing further distress to claimants when their assessment outcome is inaccurate. I am writing to each PIP and ESA assessment provider to see if this is common practice. Might you please:

1. Confirm whether you offer, or have ever offered, financial incentives for assessors to complete more assessments—for example to counter peak demands in applications?
2. Outline the steps taken to ensure assessors do not feel rushed to complete assessments.

Thank you for your help, and I look forward to hearing from you.

¹ Work and Pensions Committee, PIP and ESA assessments: claimant experiences, Fourth Report of Session 2017-19, HC 355, February 2018

² PEA0446

³ Written Question 133847, 22 March 2018

⁴ PEA0446



Rt Hon Frank Field MP
Chair

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16th May 2017

Thank you, you've been marvellous!

Dear [redacted]

Over the last few months we've been focusing on delivering an outstanding claimant experience by processing cases efficiently, and when we can, seeing more claimants during the day or at weekends. For many of you this has meant time away from your family and friends, which isn't easy.

With this in mind I wanted to tell you how we've done and share the great news that so far we've set out what we planned to do. We've seen an extra 3054 claimants in March, and a whopping 4454 claimants in April. This is all down to you. Thanks so much for your support during the last few months, you've really come through, proving what it means to be a team player.

So that we don't undo all of your good work, we're extending incentives into May and June. If you're interested in working overtime please get in touch with your Service Delivery Manager. Here's a reminder of what's on offer:

If you're a Health Professional

The additional £75 Fee per Case (FPC) will remain for every assessment completed. Plus you'll receive an additional £50 for any assessment you do above four, within an Assessment Centre session, and three within a Home Consultation session.

If you're a Site Coordinator

Overtime will be paid at double time in May and June. You'll also receive a £50 bonus if your Assessment Centre team achieves its expected outputs on the days that they worked overtime. Your Service Delivery Manager will share your targets with you.

I really appreciate everything you're doing to help us succeed and the extra effort you've put in.

Thank you,

[redacted]
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