

Dear Sir

The Association of Disabled Professionals is an organisation of disabled people supporting disabled people with employment and self employment issues. We respond to the proposed draft activities within PIP.

We are very concerned that the assessor will be told verbally what disabled people cannot do and this could mean omissions being made at a face to face interview. An online application for some disabled people will save a lot of anxiety and capture all the issues. The money from not assessing face to face can be used to spend on other disabled people such as the independent living fund.

Many disabled people have an impairment which does not change and need support for life. There is little point in re-assessing clients in this 'category' as they will be found to meet PIP regulations. Because of the nature of their impairment not everyone sees a medical practitioner as their impairment is permanent and will not improve and require support all their life. We would suggest clients with a score of say 24 points or more on activity 1-9 are not reassessed. It is also a waste of time and money to assess everyone if their impairment and needs for continuous support have not changed.

With the number of cases concerning incorrect assessments and subsequent successful appeals on ESA, we are extremely concerned that ATOS has been awarded the PIP contract as their performance on ESA is abysmal. We fear ATOS Doctors, nurses and occupational therapists will not have the training and competences to undertake the PIP assessments. As PIP is a tick box computer exercise ATOS will look at the activities listed literally and not take into account the complex needs of

many disabled people. There should be a clause in the contract saying that ATOS get a penalty for all incorrect assessments. Proper training should be given and by disabled people themselves.

It is essential that PIP is monitored from the beginning of the introduction of PIP in 2013. Statistics of who qualifies, who does not and why, appeals- success and failures are publically made available. How many of these are due to errors made by ATOS will be recorded.

The examples in the proposed assessments used are those from social services assessments. The assessment is a tick box exercise and does not allow for the complex nature of some impairments. Two descriptors may apply to the same person in an activity. Will the person qualify for one or two descriptors in an activity?.

As we advise disabled people in employment issues there is a fear that withdrawal of PIP may lead to a loss of their jobs as they will no longer have the support they need at home enabling them to go to work. This goes against the current government's campaign to get and support disabled people into work.

Our comments are as follows

Getting in and out of bed

Some disabled people have support or aids to help them in and out of bed This is not mentioned on the activities. If they cannot get out of bed they cannot do daily activities or go to work!!

Activity 1

What is a simple meal?

It seems you are expecting disabled people to live on unhealthy food or beans on toast every day even though you quote the words fresh ingredients, what are these, peeling and cutting up food, opening packaging, dealing with hot pans/liquids and dishes. Some people have allergies which means they have to have complex meals. This question could be interpreted differently by assessors.

Many disabled people need two course meals one course is simply not enough.

We would suggest extending the criteria to include getting a meal three times a day and hot drinks.

Who is to wash up?

Who and how is the shopping done. Shopping by the internet indicates the person cannot get to a supermarket.

Activity 2 Taking nutrition

Cannot Peel vegetables and fruit /cut up food

Cannot carry hot food/ hot drinks or any drinks cold/hot .

These are not clear as they are manual dexterity issues.

Activity 3 Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition

This should include exercise to stop the involuntary muscles seizing up/relaxing over a lifetime and for other reasons. It should not be a medical requirement as a life long impairment may dictate this necessity.

Activity 4 getting washed

Currently the wording suggests only washing the top half of our bodies.

Are you expecting us not to wash our bottoms., legs, feet- It is ludicrous

It has to be whole body not just the top half - Our feet are often the most used parts of our bodies and sometimes neglected and so need to be considered. Who will do this?.

If one cannot wash their feet then they cannot get dressed!!

Activity 5 Managing toilet needs

Activity 6 Getting dressed and undressed

This is in correlation with getting washed if they cannot wash their feet they cannot put on socks, shoes. Tying up shoes, putting on knickers, trousers and skirts need to be inserted.

Activity 7 Communication

Does not indicate whether or not the person wears one or two hearing aids. This should be included as 4 points.

Cannot hear speech from a distance or behind, even though the person is wearing a hearing aid

Difficulty hearing speech on a telephone with hearing aids.

Has to have support with this.

Cannot use a telephone or mobile phone or textphone because of dexterity issues

Uses a computer to communicate.

Someone else has to listen and speak for the disabled person because of speech impairment.

Activity 8 Engaging socially

Cannot hear speech from a distance or behind, even though the person is wearing a hearing aid

Someone else has to listen and speak for the disabled person because of speech impairment.
Disabled people may need physical support to go out socially.

Activity 9 making financial decisions

Other points relating to activity 1-9

Manual dexterity is not clear in any activity eg

Cannot write.

cannot type .

Time taken to do the activities

Cannot Peel vegetables and fruit /cut up food

Cannot carry hot food/ hot drinks or any drinks cold/hot .

Domestic chores are not accounted for

EG cannot iron

clean bath/Shower sink/toilets

Shopping for food

gardening. -

some disabled people have to pay someone to do this. Who does this!!

Using a stairlift or other aids and adaptations in the home are not identified in any activity where would this be posted

Activity 10-11 Mobility

This should include people that fall frequently due to impairments, and how long it takes for them to walk anywhere.

Where people cannot walk 50 metres without aids - car, scooter, sticks, wheelchair, support pusher etc should be 15 points as they cannot walk anyway.

Jane Hunt

Volunteer advisor member of ADP

Association of Disabled Professionals

Winners of the 2009 People of the Year Awards for "Doing Careers Differently"

Association of Disabled Professionals, BCM ADP, London,
WC1N 3XX

Tel: 01204 431638 (answerphone only)

Fax: 01204 431638

Email: info@adp.org.uk

Website: www.adp.org.uk