

Carers in receipt of work focused support

Administrative Data Release

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Background

Carers Strategy

As part of the 2008 Carers Strategy¹, Jobcentre Plus has implemented six commitments to help support carers into employment. These are:

1. Ensure carers have access to appropriate employment programmes;
2. Fund replacement care for those who are participating in approved training;
3. Introduce Care Partnership Managers in every Jobcentre Plus district;
4. Introduce specialist training for Jobcentre Plus advisers who work with carers;
5. Improve the information about flexible job vacancies in Jobcentre Plus job banks;
6. Investigate the feasibility of providing return to work support through third sector organisations.

Definition of a carer

The Carers Strategy defined carers as people who spend a 'significant' proportion of their lives providing unpaid support to relatives, partners or friends who are ill, frail, disabled or have mental health or substance misuse problems.

JCP classify someone as having caring responsibilities if they themselves indicate they are a carer; they are in receipt of Carers Allowance (CA) or Income Support (IS) as a carer; or if they are regularly and substantially² engaged in caring for a person

¹

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_085345

² For CA purposes, 'regular & substantial' means 35 hours per week. For IS purposes this could be less than 35 hours.

who receives the middle/higher care component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Attendance Allowance (AA).

Work focused support available to carers

From 7th December 2009, all carers who:

- are aged 18 or over; *and*
- are not working or working less than 16 hours per week; *and*
- who spend a significant³ proportion of their lives caring; *and*
- are not eligible for any other JCP employment programme.

have had voluntary access to work focused support. Specifically, carers looking to combine paid work with their caring responsibilities, or those looking to prepare for work after their caring responsibility ends, are offered support via a series of caseload interviews. In addition, carers participating in JCP approved activities or pre-arranged interviews with employers, providers or advisers may be able to access funding for replacement care or reimbursement of costs for training, travel or childcare.

The Data

This report monitors how many carers are accessing the new carer provision. It draws upon DWP administrative data taken from the Labour Market System (LMS) and the Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS). It also uses payment data from the Resource Management (RM) system. This data enables us to track individuals, reporting their activity and associated outcomes. All figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

³ For WFSfC, “significant” is defined as any caring responsibilities that are a barrier to work and will impact on the type of paid work a carer can undertake.

Results

Carers accessing work focused support

Since support for carers was introduced in December 2009, 6,620 individual carers have received additional support, taking part in 6,960 spells⁴. 5% of individuals have participated more than once.

To the end of February 2011, 8,760 meetings have been attended. Of the 6,960 spells that have started to date, in 81% of cases the carer has attended at least one meeting. In the remainder of cases the carer has a meeting booked but has not yet attended this.

Demographics of carers who have received support

Characteristics

By the end of February 2011, 6,620 carers had received work focused support. Table 1 profiles the key characteristics of these individuals.

Table 1: Participant Characteristics

	Participants
Total	6,620
Gender	
Female	57%
Male	43%
Age	

⁴ A spell is defined as the period of time over which a carer attended an initial meeting followed by a series of caseload meetings. If an individual attends multiple *initial* meetings then they are counted as having had multiple starts to the programme.

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18-24	11%
25-34	18%
35-44	29%
45-54	30%
55-59	9%
60+	1%
Ethnicity	
White	80%
Black/Black British	3%
Asian/Asian British	4%
Mixed	1%
Other	1%
Unknown	12%
Disability⁵	
Disabled	24%
Not disabled	76%

Benefit Status

According to our latest benefits data (to October 2010), 92% of carers receiving this support were in receipt of benefit when they started and a further 1% started a benefit claim during the support period. Hence, 7% of participants are not in receipt of benefit or we could not find their benefit claim in our evaluation database⁶. The majority of those in receipt of benefit when they started receiving support were in receipt of carer-related benefits only.

Employment Status

To be eligible for work focused support a carer should either not be in work or be working less than 16 hours per week. According to our latest P45 employment data,

⁵ Disability status is based upon self-reported information recorded in the Labour Market System. It does not take into account any disability related benefits that the carer may be in receipt of.

⁶ This could be due to: a) time lags in our benefits information; b) mis-matches between the benefits data & LMS; c) uncertainties in benefit end dates.

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23% (1,500) of carers accessing support were in employment when they started the programme. Therefore, carers already in work are also engaging with work focused support.

To note: Often the P45 data doesn't capture people earning less than the lower earning level as employers aren't obliged to report that job to HMRC. However, some employers (particularly large employers) choose to send in returns for all staff. Hence, the carers in work we have identified may be working less than 16 hours per week or, due to inaccuracies in the recorded job end date, they may have recently moved out of employment. It is also possible that participants recorded as being in employment are actually working over 16 hours per week and are therefore ineligible for support.

Training

To the end of February 2011, around 300 carers are recorded as starting some form of training during the support period, of which 130 have started Jobcentre Plus Support Contract provision.

Funding

Data from the Resource Management (RM) System shows that to February 2011 spend for replacement care has been around £4,800. In addition, payments totalling around £57,500 have been made to carers to reimburse costs for training, travel or childcare.

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