

Ad-hoc analysis of recent ESA claimants who have previously claimed ESA

17 December 2010

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Introduction

ESA was introduced in October 2008. People who have claimed Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), whose claim subsequently ends are entitled to re-apply for and receive ESA, provided that they still fulfil the eligibility criteria. This analysis looks at the proportion of ESA claims received up to February 2010 that come from people who have previously claimed ESA.

The data presented here is consistent with the official statistics on the Work Capability Assessment published in October 2010. The WCA official statistics report can be found on the Departmental website, here:

http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/workingage/esa_wca/index.php?page=esa_wca_arc

The analysis presented below uses data from the following sources:

- Benefit claims data held by the DWP covering new ESA claims that started between October 2008 and February 2010; and
- Functional assessment data sourced from Atos Healthcare covering assessments completed up to June 2010.

Methodology

To identify the number of claims each individual has made, a dataset containing the start date of every ESA claim up to the end of February 2010 was used and analysed to record each claim start date recorded against individual claimants. By counting the unique claim start dates for each individual the total number of claims made was calculated.

Results

Overall this analysis shows that 4% of individuals who claim ESA have previously made a claim for ESA. The majority of individuals with multiple ESA claims closed their first claim prior to the assessment being complete.

The table below shows the number of ESA claims a person has made compared with the work capability assessment outcome of their first claim for ESA.

- Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100, as a result rows and columns may not sum to the totals shown.
- The table presents information on initial and repeat claims that started between October 2008 and February 2010.

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- People who close their claim before assessment and those found fit for work at assessment tend to have shorter claim durations. As a result they are likely to have had more opportunity to re-apply in the relatively short time since ESA was introduced in October 2008.
- These proportions may change when new data becomes available.
- Information on why people re-applied after their claim ended is not available.

Outcome at initial WCA for first ESA claim	Number of ESA claims per individual			Total number of Individuals	Total number of individuals with more than one claim	Proportion of Individuals with more than one claim
	1	2	3 or more			
Assessment still in progress	22,500	-	-	22,500	-	-
Support Group	49,500	300	0	49,900	300	1%
Work Related Activity Group	121,800	800	0	122,700	900	1%
Fit for Work	308,700	10,600	200	319,400	10,800	3%
Claim closed before assessment complete	272,100	20,400	800	293,300	21,200	7%
Total	774,700	32,100	1,000	807,900	33,200	4%

Department for Work and Pensions

17th December 2010