Evening Seminar

Offenders and Welfare Reform

Kirsty Scholefield
DWP Social Justice

0114 294 8471, kirsty.scholefield@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

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Department for Work & Pensions
Welfare Reform

- Provide value for money and place greater emphasis on personal responsibility – whilst protecting the most vulnerable.
- Employment must be an aspiration for everyone who is able to work.
- Our welfare reforms will make sure that the system promotes work and helps people lift themselves out of poverty.

“A system that was originally designed to support the poorest in society is now trapping them in the very condition it was supposed to alleviate”

Iain Duncan-Smith, Secretary of State for Work and Pensions
Welfare Reform

- Employment Offer
- Housing Support
- Appeals Reform
- Social Fund
- Benefit Cap
- Pensions and Ageing
- Support for pensioners
- Disability
- Fraud and Error
- Universal Credit
Social Justice

- Social Justice principles underpin and link all aspects of our work and reforms - influencing our overall direction, our policies, and the delivery of DWP services.


- In October 2012, we published the *Social Justice Outcomes Framework*.

- On 24 April 2013, the Government published *Social Justice: transforming lives – one year on*. 
What is Social Justice?

• Social Justice is about giving the individuals and families facing multiple disadvantages the support and tools they need to turn their lives around.

• A number of principles set out this approach:
  – A focus on prevention and early intervention;
  – Where problems arise, concentrating on recovery and independence, not maintenance;
  – Promoting work for those who can as the most sustainable route out of poverty, while offering unconditional support to those who are severely disabled and cannot work;
  – Recognising that the most effective solutions will often be designed and delivered at a local level; and
  – Ensuring that interventions provide a fair deal for the taxpayer
What’s changed - Housing

• The introduction of a cap on Local Housing Allowance rates and the extension of the shared accommodation rate to people under 35.

• Localised support for Council Tax has been introduced to replace Council Tax Benefit.

• Since April 2013 all tenants renting from a local authority, housing association or other registered social landlord have received housing support based on household size.
What’s changed - Housing

• In 2014/15 we will continue to support those affected by the welfare reforms with a total government contribution to Discretionary Housing Payments of £165 million.

• Local Authorities have discretion in determining Discretionary Housing Payments at a local level, based on the circumstance of each individual case.
What’s changed – Benefit Cap

• In April 2013 a cap was introduced on the total amount of benefit that working-age claimants can receive.

• The benefit cap applies to the combined income from;
  • Out-of-work benefits;
  • Housing Benefit;
  • Child Tax Credit;
  • Child Benefit;
  • and Carer’s Allowance.

• Some households are exempt from the benefit cap.
What’s changed – Social Fund

• Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans were abolished on 1 April 2013.

• From April 2013, local authorities in England, and the Scottish and Welsh Governments have been free to deliver their own local arrangements for assistance for people facing a crisis or short term unavoidable need;
  – Local welfare provision in England
  – Scottish Welfare Fund
  – Discretionary Assistance Fund in Wales

• Other elements of social fund, such as Budgeting Loans, Sure Start Maternity Grants, Funeral Payments, Cold Weather Payments and Winter Fuel payments remain within DWP
What’s changed – Employment Support

- **Universal Jobmatch** - is an online job posting and matching service available to all jobseekers, not just those claiming benefits.

- **Youth Contract**, (including the Wage Incentive), is a £1 billion programme designed to get more young people into meaningful employment, training or work experience.

- **The Work Programme** offers greater freedom to tailor support to the needs of individual claimants.

- **New Enterprise Allowance (NEA)**, launched in 2011 to help unemployed people who want to start their own business.

- **Work Choice**, launched in October 2010 is a specialist disability employment programme.
What’s changed – Employment Support

• **Help to Work**, from April 2014, Jobseeker’s Allowance claimants returning from the Work Programme will go onto one of three intensive modes of support, determined by a Jobcentre Plus Work Coach and according to need.

• From April 2014, **pre-Work Programme Jobseeker’s Allowance claimants** and certain lone parents and responsible carers will be subject to a number of measures which increase conditionality and support.

• In addition as part of these changes all new claimants have to complete a **Claimant Commitment**.
What’s already changed for offenders?

In March 2012 we introduced:

“Day One” mandation to the Work Programme for prison leavers if they make a claim to JSA prior to or within 13 weeks of release.

• To enable participation at the point of release, Jobcentre Plus staff in prisons facilitate advance claims to JSA which are activated on release

• Aim – to provide immediate employment support through Work Programme to this vulnerable group at the time that they most need it; when they are leaving prison

• Evidence shows that having a job reduces re-offending by between a third and a half
What’s coming…. Universal Credit

- Replaces six in work and out of work benefits
  - *Income related elements of JSA and ESA*
  - Income Support
  - Housing Benefit
  - Working Tax Credit
  - Child Tax Credit

- Designed to make work pay. As claimants earn more money, financial support will be withdrawn at a slower rate than is the case under the current system.

- A single monthly payment, into a bank account, will be made to a household rather than an individual

- Local support will be available to help claimants where appropriate
And there’s more……

**Work Programme**
- Work programme contracts currently run to 2016
- Work is under way at what will be delivered from 2017

**Universal Credit**
- Currently being delivered in some areas of the country and is being rolled out in a phased approach both by location and client group

**Social Impact Bonds**
- measuring a given social outcome, putting a financial value on it and the underwriting the return.
Support for ex-offenders

- Day One mandation to Work Programme for JSA claimants continues as does early access for those with community sentence.

- Universal Credit
  - Housing benefit run on extended for those entering prison
  - Advance claims up to a month before release
  - Possible to get UC advance of up to 50% in first month.
Support for ex-offenders

- Working with NOMS re ESF Co financing
- Opportunities to work closely with local colleagues to tailor route ways
- Working to understand how ex offenders will be supported by Community Rehabilitation Companies and how this fits with any customer journey of a benefit recipient
Transforming Rehabilitation (TR)

- Ministry of Justice (MoJ) are responsible for the introduction of TR
- DWP ensuring we have Employment Benefit Adviser presence in all Resettlement Prisons.
- DWP are working with MoJ to ensure they understand the learning experience from our contracting out of provision.
- Working on communication events at National and Local level
- Data sharing – will be key to success.
Other areas of work

- Working with Transforming Youth Custody
- Working with MoJ on female offenders and debt
- MoJ and DWP now have agreement for annual data share of all criminal records and benefits/employment data
- Used in future to highlight changes in benefit and offending behaviour
Questions ?
Contacts

Kirsty Scholefield
0114 294 8471
kirsty.scholefield@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Alison Foster
0207 829 3562
alison.foster2@dwp.gsi.gov.uk
Welfare that works

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