

DWP Stakeholder Bulletin – January 2015

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Fit For Work Goes Live

Fit for Work is designed to support people in work and help with sickness absence and provide an occupational health assessment and health and work advice to employees, employers and GPs.

The telephone advice service of Fit for Work was launched at the end of last year - visit www.fitforwork.org to find out what's available and how to get in touch. This month, a referral service was launched in the Sheffield area, GPs can now refer eligible patients to an occupational health assessment, when they reach or are expected to reach four weeks of sickness absence. The service will be expanded across the county from spring 2015, drawing on lessons from the experiences and learning of the current Sheffield pilot.

Fit for Work is intended to complement, not replace, existing occupational health provision. It should be particularly beneficial to smaller businesses that have not previously had access to occupational health advice. As Fit for Work rolls out, employers will also start to see Return to Work Plans which can act as fit notes. [Sign up](#) to receive updates and get prepared by reading the [guidance](#).

New Work Pilots for 18-21 Year Olds

In the 2013 Autumn Statement the Chancellor announced two pilots to help young people aged 18-21 on Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) enhance their employment prospects.

Training Pilot

As part of the first pilot, from the 25 November 2014 up to 15,000 new JSA claimants aged 18-21 who do not have level 2 English or Maths qualifications will be mandated to undertake training to improve their skills. Training will be delivered in partnership with further education providers and will run for a maximum period of six months. The training will be for up to 16 hours per week and delivered primarily on-line. Face to face support from tutors will be available for some learners, and those who are part of the scheme will continue to receive JSA while they continue with their job search.

The pilot has been running in 3 Jobcentre districts Devon, Cornwall and Somerset, Mercia and Kent from 25 November 2014. Black Country will go-live on 2 March 2015.

Work Related Activity Pilot

The second pilot which also started on 25 November in Kent only targets 18 -21 year olds who have been claiming JSA for six months. This group will be required to participate in a work related activity that is most appropriate to them. The activity will focus on improving skills, or it could take the shape of a more work focused activity such as a traineeship, sector-based work academy, or work experience. There will be a mixture of both voluntary and mandatory interventions which in the long run will both develop skills and further improve the prospect of finding suitable employment.

Personalisation Pathfinder

As part of the Disability Confident campaign, DWP is launching the Personalisation Pathfinders to trial. The Pathfinders will run in three districts: Greater Wessex;

Surrey & Sussex and South West Wales and will provide additional support to people with a disability or health condition. Both ESA and JSA claimants will be included in the trial which will run for two years.

Pathfinder districts will develop much closer links with local strategic delivery partners including local authorities, Health, Education and Mental Health Services.

The pathfinder will provide funding to Disabled People's User Led Organisations (DPULO's) and Voluntary Sector Organisations in the pilot districts to offer peer support and role models.

There will be increased engagement with specialist local service providers, better mapping of local provision and easier access to bespoke support where needed. There will also be stronger links with local employers to support them employing and retaining more sick and disabled people.

For more information about the disability and health employment strategy please visit <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-disability-and-health-employment-strategy-1-year-on>