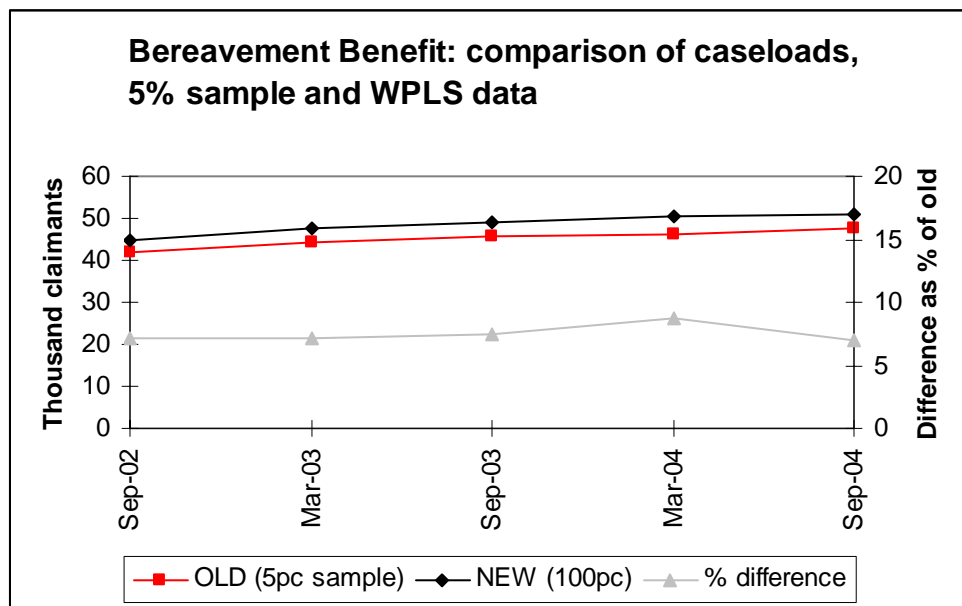


Bereavement Benefit (BB)

Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study (WPLS) data compared to currently published 5% sample data

The Bereavement Benefit data series extends back to September 2002. On average, the WPLS caseload is 7.5 percent greater than that indicated by the 5% sample data, equivalent to 3,400 cases.



The 100% data indicates the caseload more accurately than the 5% sample data. Investigation of the caseloads at September 2004 obtained from the two datasets revealed most of the difference could be explained by the inclusion of over 3,000 new claims in the 100% data (information relating to which was received too late to include in the 5% data). This is explained in more detail in the 'retrospection' section in the glossary. In addition, 800 recently-closed cases are excluded from the 100% data which are nevertheless still included in the 5% data. This is explained in the 'late terminations' section in the glossary.

There remains a net difference of 800 more cases in the 100% total which is unexplained. This is equivalent to 1.6% of the caseload.

Glossary

Retrospection arises from the delays which occur in practice between some new claims becoming eligible and their entry onto the computer system. If a case has not been added to the computer system by the time the 5% sample data is extracted (the reference date), it will not be counted (although benefit will be paid). The WPLS, however, incorporates information added to the computer system after the reference date.

The addition of such 'late' information is an important source of difference between the caseloads obtained from 5% sample and WPLS data, and generally results in the WPLS including more cases than the 5% sample data.

Late terminations

Delays can exist between a claim terminating and its removal from the computer system. Such cases will be included in the caseload obtained from the 5% sample data. When information is subsequently received that the claim has ended through claimant death, these cases are removed from the 100% data with respect to a point in time. However, any other form of late termination is not accounted for in the WPLS.

Sampling error

By definition, WPLS data yields the true population value. By contrast statistics published from 5% sample data (obtained by rating up by a factor of 20) are subject to sampling error and are actually estimates of the true population value. By chance, an estimate of the population value, obtained from the 5% sample data, may be slightly lower or slightly higher than the true population value.