

**Working Age
Benefits Division**

**EMPLOYMENT AND SUPPORT
ALLOWANCE: WORK CAPABILITY
ASSESSMENT BY HEALTH
CONDITION AND FUNCTIONAL
IMPAIRMENT:
Official Statistics**

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DWP Department for
Work and Pensions

Executive summary

This is the official statistics publication of Work Capability Assessment (WCA) figures relating to Employment and Support Allowance Claims (ESA). It contains figures on ESA claims to February 2010 and WCAs to August 2010.

Also included is an update to figures first published separately in August 2010, relating to the medical condition recorded for people assessed and the reason they qualify for ESA.

The headline figures are:

For all new ESA Claims from 27th October 2008 to 28th February 2010, the result of the initial WCA is as follows:

- Support Group - 6%
- Work Related Activity Group -15%
- Fit for Work - 39%
- Claim closed before assessment complete - 36%
- Assessment still in progress - 3%

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1 Work Capability Assessment

1.1 Summary

- 1.1.1 Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) replaced Incapacity Benefit and Income Support paid on the grounds of incapacity for new claims from 27th October 2008. The introduction of ESA for new claimants in October 2008 was accompanied by a new assessment, the Work Capability Assessment (WCA). The WCA is based on advice delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) assessment services contractor, Atos Healthcare.

1.2 Previous publications

- 1.2.1 This publication reports on latest available data on ESA claims in England, Scotland and Wales that are assessed by the WCA. This is an update to the previously published statistics released every quarter since October 2009. Also included is an update to figures first published in August 2010 relating to the medical condition recorded for people claiming ESA and the reason they qualify for ESA, if applicable.

1.3 Background

- 1.3.1 This report presents monthly data on ESA claims and their subsequent WCA outcomes. ESA claimants begin the functional assessment process shortly after starting their claim. Atos Healthcare undertakes an assessment and following the assessment, their recommendation is passed on to DWP to make a final decision on the claimant's ESA status. This will be one of the following:
- Support Group (for those with severe disabilities) – They receive a higher rate of benefit entitlement overall and exemption from mandatory involvement with Pathways to Work;
 - Work Related Activity Group – They receive a higher rate of benefit than those on JSA and are mandated to engage with Pathways to Work; and,
 - Fit for Work – The ESA claim is ceased but individuals can ask for a reconsideration or appeal if they disagree with the decision.

- 1.3.2 If someone is found Fit for Work by DWP they are no longer entitled to claim ESA. However, they may ask for a reconsideration and then may appeal against the DWP decision. A large proportion of people claiming ESA cease their claim before assessment is complete (for example, if they have a short term health condition) and this is reflected in the figures presented in this paper.
- 1.3.3 Around 3% of assessments are made clerically. These figures were not included prior to the July 2010 publication. However, with the availability of the final DWP decision, we can now determine the outcome of most clerical assessments and these are included in the figures. Note that there is still a very small number of clerical assessments which are unknown (0.1% of all ESA claims).
- 1.3.4 Further improvements have been made to the additional information we get about the Jobcentre Plus final decision on entitlement. In some cases the JCP Decision Maker's final decision may differ from the Atos recommendation or the case may be returned to Atos for reconsideration. This change makes a very small difference to the published figures. Numbers in the Work Related Activity Group have increased by around one percentage point (as a proportion of all ESA on-flows) and numbers found fit for work have decreased by around one percentage point – Section 7 gives further details.
- 1.3.5 The breakdown of the WCA result for people assessed (tables 3 and 4) have been restricted to assessments up to June 2010, although we have data to August 2010. This is due to a distorting effect from retrospection. The date of assessment given is the date of the JCP Decision Maker (DM) decision unless it is missing in which case the earlier date of the ATOS recommendation is used instead. Therefore, the most recent data are more likely to include the Atos recommendation rather than the JCP DM decision, so the most recent months' are excluded to ensure that the reported results remain consistent over time.

2 Work Capability Assessment - Headline Statistics

2.1 WCA results for all ESA Claims

2.1.1 For all new ESA claims from October 2008 to February 2010, the breakdown of the DWP decision at initial assessment (by the end of August 2010) is as follows:

- Support Group - 6%
- Work Related Activity Group -15%
- Fit for Work - 39%
- Claim closed before assessment complete - 36%
- Assessment still in progress - 3%

2.2 WCA results for all completed assessments

2.2.1 For all completed initial assessments (not including assessments still in progress or people who left ESA before completing assessment) to the end of June 2010 the breakdown of the DWP decision at initial assessment is as follows:

- Support Group – 10%
- Work Related Activity Group - 25%
- Fit for Work - 65%

2.3 WCA Appeals

2.3.1 Of people who made a claim for ESA between October 2008 and August 2009 and who were found Fit for Work at assessment, 33% have had an appeal heard by Tribunals Service to date. The original decision made by DWP has been confirmed for 60% of these appeals heard.

3 Work Capability Assessment tables

Table 1: Monthly ESA on-flows by month of claim start and result of initial functional assessment.

| Month of Claim Start | Support Group | Work Related Activity Group | Fit for Work | Claim closed before assessment complete | Assessment still in progress | Total |
|----------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|----------------|---|------------------------------|----------------|
| Oct-08 | 700 | 1,200 | 3,600 | 3,700 | 100 | 9,300 |
| Nov-08 | 2,900 | 5,900 | 17,500 | 18,200 | 400 | 44,800 |
| Dec-08 | 2,600 | 5,600 | 15,100 | 16,500 | 400 | 40,300 |
| Jan-09 | 3,200 | 7,600 | 20,900 | 20,900 | 600 | 53,300 |
| Feb-09 | 2,900 | 7,100 | 19,700 | 19,100 | 700 | 49,500 |
| Mar-09 | 3,300 | 8,300 | 23,300 | 20,900 | 800 | 56,700 |
| Apr-09 | 3,200 | 8,100 | 21,700 | 18,700 | 800 | 52,400 |
| May-09 | 3,200 | 8,100 | 21,900 | 19,000 | 900 | 53,100 |
| Jun-09 | 3,300 | 8,700 | 22,600 | 21,100 | 1,100 | 56,800 |
| Jul-09 | 3,700 | 9,000 | 22,700 | 21,100 | 1,200 | 57,700 |
| Aug-09 | 3,300 | 8,400 | 20,300 | 18,500 | 1,200 | 51,600 |
| Sep-09 | 3,600 | 9,100 | 21,700 | 19,300 | 1,500 | 55,300 |
| Oct-09 | 3,200 | 8,400 | 21,100 | 18,700 | 1,900 | 53,300 |
| Nov-09 | 3,200 | 8,000 | 20,400 | 18,300 | 2,400 | 52,300 |
| Dec-09 | 2,800 | 6,900 | 16,600 | 15,800 | 2,400 | 44,500 |
| Jan-10 | 3,100 | 8,800 | 21,500 | 19,500 | 3,900 | 56,700 |
| Feb-10 | 2,800 | 8,000 | 20,500 | 17,900 | 5,200 | 54,500 |
| Total | 51,000 | 127,300 | 331,100 | 307,200 | 25,500 | 842,100 |

- 3.1.1 Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 and totals may not sum due to rounding.
- 3.1.2 Table 1 and Table 2 (below) present initial assessment results by breaking down cohorts of ESA benefit claims. This is presented for claim starts to February 2010. Beyond this date the results are not reliable as many claims are still within the process. Note that monthly cohorts up to the end of November 2009 were included in the previous publication. These figures are updated in Table 1 and 2 with any assessments or claim closures that have since occurred, plus any changes due to improvements in the use of the DWP final decision variable rather than the Atos recommendation
- 3.1.3 National Statistics on ESA on-flows and caseload are published on the DWP Tabulation Tool. Latest data available shows there were 835,680 new ESA claims between 27th Oct 2008 and 28th February 2010. Note that rounding, retrospection and exclusion of the very small number of clerical claims with an unknown assessment result mean the total figures in Table 1 won't match the Tabulation Tool figures exactly.

Table 2: Monthly ESA on-flows by Claim Start and result of initial functional assessment – percentages.

| Month of Claim Start | Support Group | Work Related Activity Group | Fit for Work | Claim closed before assessment complete | Assessment still in progress |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| Oct-08 | 8% | 13% | 39% | 40% | 1% |
| Nov-08 | 6% | 13% | 39% | 41% | 1% |
| Dec-08 | 7% | 14% | 38% | 41% | 1% |
| Jan-09 | 6% | 14% | 39% | 39% | 1% |
| Feb-09 | 6% | 14% | 40% | 39% | 1% |
| Mar-09 | 6% | 15% | 41% | 37% | 1% |
| Apr-09 | 6% | 15% | 41% | 36% | 2% |
| May-09 | 6% | 15% | 41% | 36% | 2% |
| Jun-09 | 6% | 15% | 40% | 37% | 2% |
| Jul-09 | 6% | 16% | 39% | 37% | 2% |
| Aug-09 | 6% | 16% | 39% | 36% | 2% |
| Sep-09 | 7% | 16% | 39% | 35% | 3% |
| Oct-09 | 6% | 16% | 40% | 35% | 4% |
| Nov-09 | 6% | 15% | 39% | 35% | 5% |
| Dec-09 | 6% | 16% | 37% | 35% | 5% |
| Jan-10 | 5% | 15% | 38% | 34% | 7% |
| Feb-10 | 5% | 15% | 38% | 33% | 9% |
| Total | 6% | 15% | 39% | 36% | 3% |

3.1.4 Table 2 presents the same figures shown in Table 1 as percentages.

Table 3: Completed assessments by month of assessment and result – initial assessments only.

| Month of Assessment | Support Group | Work Related Activity Group | Fit for Work | Total |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------|---------|
| Oct-08 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Nov-08 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 100 |
| Dec-08 | 300 | 100 | 600 | 1,000 |
| Jan-09 | 800 | 500 | 2,000 | 3,300 |
| Feb-09 | 1,400 | 1,200 | 4,100 | 6,600 |
| Mar-09 | 2,000 | 3,000 | 9,900 | 14,900 |
| Apr-09 | 2,000 | 3,500 | 10,800 | 16,300 |
| May-09 | 2,300 | 4,800 | 14,200 | 21,300 |
| Jun-09 | 3,000 | 8,000 | 22,000 | 33,000 |
| Jul-09 | 3,300 | 8,600 | 23,100 | 35,000 |
| Aug-09 | 3,100 | 8,700 | 21,200 | 33,100 |
| Sep-09 | 3,100 | 8,400 | 21,100 | 32,500 |
| Oct-09 | 3,600 | 8,600 | 23,000 | 35,200 |
| Nov-09 | 3,800 | 9,300 | 24,000 | 37,100 |
| Dec-09 | 3,300 | 8,100 | 19,000 | 30,400 |
| Jan-10 | 3,300 | 8,600 | 22,500 | 34,400 |
| Feb-10 | 3,600 | 9,300 | 23,700 | 36,600 |
| Mar-10 | 4,100 | 10,400 | 26,400 | 40,900 |
| Apr-10 | 3,300 | 9,100 | 22,000 | 34,300 |
| May-10 | 3,400 | 9,700 | 23,700 | 36,800 |
| Jun-10 | 4,000 | 10,500 | 27,400 | 41,900 |
| Total | 53,600 | 130,500 | 340,700 | 524,700 |

- 3.1.5 Table 3 presents the DWP decision at initial assessment by the month assessment was completed up to the end of June 2010 (see paragraph 1.3.5 in the introduction for more information on this). Repeat assessments and clerical assessments where the result cannot be determined from DWP benefits data are excluded from these figures. Note that these figures are not intended to match the figures in Tables 1 and 2 above. Tables 3 and 4 only cover completed assessments and are likely to include some assessments relating to claims that started after February 2010.
- 3.1.6 This publication includes all initial WCA assessments to date. Figures may differ slightly to the figures in previous publications due to retrospection and the improvements in the use of DWP benefits data as detailed in the introduction.

Table 4: Completed assessments by month of assessment and result – initial assessments only – percentages.

| Month of Assessment | Support Group | Work Related Activity Group | Fit for Work |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Oct-08 | - | - | - |
| Nov-08 | 67% | 14% | 20% |
| Dec-08 | 31% | 14% | 54% |
| Jan-09 | 23% | 16% | 60% |
| Feb-09 | 21% | 18% | 61% |
| Mar-09 | 13% | 20% | 67% |
| Apr-09 | 12% | 21% | 66% |
| May-09 | 11% | 23% | 67% |
| Jun-09 | 9% | 24% | 67% |
| Jul-09 | 9% | 25% | 66% |
| Aug-09 | 10% | 26% | 64% |
| Sep-09 | 9% | 26% | 65% |
| Oct-09 | 10% | 24% | 65% |
| Nov-09 | 10% | 25% | 65% |
| Dec-09 | 11% | 27% | 63% |
| Jan-10 | 10% | 25% | 65% |
| Feb-10 | 10% | 25% | 65% |
| Mar-10 | 10% | 26% | 65% |
| Apr-10 | 9% | 27% | 64% |
| May-10 | 9% | 26% | 64% |
| Jun-10 | 10% | 25% | 65% |
| Total | 10% | 25% | 65% |

3.1.7 Table 4 presents the same figures shown in Table 3 as percentages.

Table 5: WCA Appeals heard on 'Fit for Work' Decision –ESA claims to August 2009/Appeals heard by end of June 2010.

| Month ESA claim started | Fit for Work | Appeals heard (to date) | % Fit for Work with an appeal heard (to date) | Decision in favour of appellant | DWP decision upheld | % Decision in favour of appellant | % DWP decision upheld |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Oct-08 | 3,600 | 1,400 | 39% | 600 | 900 | 40% | 60% |
| Nov-08 | 17,500 | 7,000 | 40% | 2,700 | 4,200 | 39% | 61% |
| Dec-08 | 15,100 | 6,200 | 41% | 2,500 | 3,700 | 40% | 60% |
| Jan-09 | 20,900 | 8,500 | 40% | 3,400 | 5,100 | 40% | 60% |
| Feb-09 | 19,700 | 7,600 | 38% | 3,100 | 4,500 | 40% | 60% |
| Mar-09 | 23,300 | 8,700 | 37% | 3,500 | 5,200 | 40% | 60% |
| Apr-09 | 21,700 | 7,500 | 35% | 3,100 | 4,400 | 41% | 59% |
| May-09 | 21,900 | 6,900 | 32% | 2,700 | 4,200 | 40% | 60% |
| Jun-09 | 22,600 | 6,300 | 28% | 2,500 | 3,800 | 40% | 60% |
| Jul-09 | 22,700 | 5,500 | 24% | 2,100 | 3,400 | 37% | 63% |
| Aug-09 | 20,300 | 4,100 | 20% | 1,500 | 2,600 | 37% | 63% |
| Total | 209,200 | 69,500 | 33% | 27,500 | 42,000 | 40% | 60% |

3.1.8 Table 5 presents data on ESA claims up to the end of August 2009 where the person claiming has been found Fit for Work, they subsequently appeal the Department's decision and the appeal has been heard by Tribunals Service by the end of July 2010 (the latest data we have from Tribunals Service). The number of Appeals heard after Aug-09 are too low for inclusion at this stage but will be included in future updates to the publication as more appeals are heard.

3.1.9 Due to the time it takes for appeals to be submitted to the Tribunals Service and heard, it is likely that there are more appeals that have not yet been heard, particularly for the most recent cohorts of ESA claims, as can be observed from the declining percentage of people found fit for work who appeal in table 5. These figures should continue to be treated as emerging findings and not final at this stage.

3.1.10 This data shows that:

- For the cohorts of ESA claims to August 2009 (where we expect there are a smaller number of appeals not yet heard) around 33% of people found fit for work have had an appeal heard.
- For the earlier cohorts of ESA claims (October 2008 to January 2009), this proportion is around 40% and we would expect the later cohorts to rise to at least a similar level. Additionally these earlier cohorts may continue to increase beyond 40%.
- To date, 60% of DWP decisions have been upheld.

4 Health Condition and Functional Impairment

4.1 Summary

- 4.1.1 This section presents information relating specifically to the health condition of the people making a claim for ESA and the reason Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) or Support Group (SG) status was awarded (where applicable).
- 4.1.2 In principle, the functional impairment is the reason ESA entitlement is granted after assessment and the health condition is the main health condition recorded at the start of the ESA claim.
- 4.1.3 Health Condition breakdowns are based on ICD 10 codes (International Classification of Diseases)¹.

¹ <http://www.who.int/classifications/icd/en/>

4.2 Reasons for placement in the Support Group

4.2.1 People who are placed in the Support Group after assessment will usually have the reason they have been put in the Support Group recorded which will be either:

- Support Group - Chemotherapy
- Support Group - Physical or Mental Health Risk
- Support Group - Pregnancy Risk
- Support Group - Severe Functional Disability
- Support Group - Terminally Ill

4.2.2 Section 6.2 provides more detail on what these reasons mean.

4.2.3 For some people the reason they have been placed in the Support Group is not recorded in the database. They are categorised as Support Group – other category. This group includes:

- **Clerical assessments** - For clerical assessments we can determine Support Group, WRAG or Fit for Work (FfW) Status from the Jobcentre Plus Decision Maker (JCP DM) Decision but no more detail than that;
- **Based on JCP DM Decision and reconsiderations** - In a very small number of cases the JCP DM Decision may differ from the Atos recommendation and move people from Fit for Work or WRAG to the Support Group or the case may have been returned to Atos for reconsideration and subsequently changed;
- **After appeal** – again, in a small number of cases, people who move to the Support Group from Fit for Work or WRAG after a successful appeal.

4.2.4 Section 5.1 presents the breakdown of people in the Support Group and the reason they have been placed in the Support Group.

4.2.5 The source data used for these functional impairment and health condition statistics is consistent with the WCA Statistics above. However, some totals may differ slightly due to the inclusion of people in the Support Group after appeal.

4.3 Reasons for Placement in the Work Related Activity Group (WRAG)

4.3.1 People are typically assessed as in the WRAG because they score 15 points or more at the face-to-face WCA. However, the full list of determinants includes:

- **WRAG – 15 points or more at the face-to-face WCA:** applies where someone attends the face-to-face assessment, scores 15 points or more and qualifies for the WRAG;
- **WRAG - clerical assessment:** for clerical assessments we can determine that the result was either: Support Group; WRAG; or, Fit for Work, from the JCP DM decision but no more detail than that;
- **WRAG – medical reasons:** this combines people who are placed in the WRAG due to falling into the Non-Functional Descriptor or the WCA Treat as Limited Capability to Work category (see section 6 for details);
- **WRAG - based on JCP DM decision and reconsiderations:** in a small number of cases the JCP DM final decision may not be the same as the Atos recommendation and people may, for example, qualify for the WRAG when the Atos recommendation was fit for work or the case may have been returned to Atos for reconsideration and subsequently changed – note that as reconsiderations are only recorded clerically we can only infer this has occurred via the JCP DM decision;
- **WRAG - after appeal:** people who move to the WRAG from Fit for Work after a successful appeal. Note that people found fit for work who are in the process of appealing remain in the fit for work category (for the purpose of this breakdown) until their appeal is heard.

4.3.2 Section 5.2 presents the breakdown of people in the WRAG and the reason they have been placed in the WRAG.

4.3.3 The source data used for these functional impairment and health condition statistics is consistent with the WCA Statistics above. However, some totals may differ due to the inclusion of people in the WRAG after appeal.

4.4 Functional Impairment breakdowns

- 4.4.1 Functional Impairment information is taken from points scored at the face-to-face work capability assessment. For people scoring 15 points or more at the face-to-face WCA and who are placed in the WRAG the functional impairment is the basis for entitlement to ESA.
- 4.4.2 For people placed in the Work Related Activity Group, sections 5.4 and 5.5 provide detail on where people scored points against the different functional descriptors. Section 6 provides further information on what activities the functional descriptors relate to.

4.5 Health Condition breakdowns

- 4.5.1 Medical information is predominantly taken from the information recorded on the medical certificate provided by the GP when someone first makes a claim for ESA. It is based on the primary condition of the person claiming and represents what their GP considers to be the main reason the person cannot work at that time.
- 4.5.2 In 2010, this information was transferred to central administrative databases for all claims still live in November 2009 and new claims thereafter. For some claims that closed before November 2009 we have used other sources to determine medical condition such as that recorded at the WCA or that recorded by Jobcentre Plus at first contact. However, in some cases the information is missing, particularly for ESA claims that closed before November 2009.
- 4.5.3 Note that a decision on entitlement to ESA is not normally based on looking at what condition, or conditions, a person has. Instead, the department assesses the functional effects on each individual. So the Work Capability Assessment looks at someone's functional ability to carry out activities which are important for work, like getting around, picking things up, learning new tasks and understanding things. For example, an individual will not qualify for ESA on the basis that they have arthritis, but they might qualify because they cannot hold a pen or use a keyboard and mouse.
- 4.5.4 Sections 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 present figures by health condition and are combined with functional impairment information.

5 Health Condition and Functional Impairment Tables

5.1 Support Group Tables

Table 6: Support Group by reason in Support Group (including effect of appeals) – volumes

| Month of Claim Start | Support Group - chemotherapy | Support Group - physical or mental health risk | Support Group - pregnancy risk | Support Group - severe functional disability | Support Group - terminally ill | Support Group - other | Support Group total |
|----------------------|------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Oct-08 | 100 | 200 | 0 | 300 | 100 | 100 | 800 |
| Nov-08 | 500 | 600 | 0 | 1,200 | 300 | 600 | 3,200 |
| Dec-08 | 500 | 500 | 0 | 1,000 | 300 | 500 | 2,900 |
| Jan-09 | 600 | 600 | 0 | 1,300 | 400 | 700 | 3,600 |
| Feb-09 | 500 | 600 | 0 | 1,100 | 300 | 700 | 3,200 |
| Mar-09 | 600 | 700 | 0 | 1,300 | 300 | 700 | 3,600 |
| Apr-09 | 600 | 600 | 0 | 1,200 | 400 | 600 | 3,400 |
| May-09 | 600 | 700 | 0 | 1,200 | 400 | 600 | 3,400 |
| Jun-09 | 600 | 700 | 0 | 1,300 | 400 | 600 | 3,500 |
| Jul-09 | 600 | 800 | 0 | 1,600 | 400 | 500 | 3,900 |
| Aug-09 | 600 | 600 | 0 | 1,300 | 400 | 400 | 3,400 |
| Sep-09 | 600 | 800 | 100 | 1,600 | 300 | 400 | 3,700 |
| Oct-09 | 600 | 700 | 0 | 1,200 | 400 | 400 | 3,200 |
| Nov-09 | 500 | 800 | 100 | 1,200 | 400 | 300 | 3,200 |
| Dec-09 | 500 | 600 | 0 | 1,000 | 400 | 200 | 2,800 |
| Jan-10 | 600 | 800 | 0 | 1,100 | 400 | 200 | 3,100 |
| Feb-10 | 500 | 700 | 0 | 1,100 | 300 | 200 | 2,800 |
| Total | 8,900 | 10,800 | 700 | 19,800 | 5,700 | 7,800 | 53,700 |

5.1.1 Table 6 (above) presents figures for people in the Support Group (SG) using the detailed reasons described in the introduction. The 'Support Group – other' category includes people identified as SG from JCP DM data or Tribunal Service data or where the Atos recommendation was recorded clerically, Section 6.2, gives more detail on SG reasons. Figures are rounded to the nearest 100 and totals may not sum due to rounding.

Table 7: Support Group by reason in Support Group (including effect of appeals) – percentages

| Month of Claim Start | Support Group - chemotherapy | Support Group - physical or mental health risk | Support Group - pregnancy risk | Support Group - severe functional disability | Support Group - terminally ill | Support Group - other | Support Group total |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Oct-08 | 13% | 21% | 2% | 41% | 9% | 14% | 100% |
| Nov-08 | 15% | 18% | 1% | 37% | 11% | 18% | 100% |
| Dec-08 | 17% | 18% | 1% | 35% | 11% | 19% | 100% |
| Jan-09 | 16% | 17% | 1% | 35% | 10% | 20% | 100% |
| Feb-09 | 16% | 17% | 1% | 35% | 10% | 20% | 100% |
| Mar-09 | 16% | 18% | 1% | 36% | 10% | 19% | 100% |
| Apr-09 | 17% | 19% | 1% | 35% | 10% | 18% | 100% |
| May-09 | 17% | 19% | 1% | 35% | 11% | 17% | 100% |
| Jun-09 | 16% | 19% | 1% | 37% | 10% | 16% | 100% |
| Jul-09 | 16% | 20% | 1% | 40% | 10% | 13% | 100% |
| Aug-09 | 18% | 18% | 1% | 39% | 11% | 13% | 100% |
| Sep-09 | 16% | 21% | 2% | 43% | 8% | 11% | 100% |
| Oct-09 | 18% | 22% | 1% | 36% | 11% | 12% | 100% |
| Nov-09 | 16% | 24% | 2% | 38% | 11% | 10% | 100% |
| Dec-09 | 19% | 22% | 1% | 36% | 13% | 9% | 100% |
| Jan-10 | 18% | 25% | 1% | 35% | 12% | 8% | 100% |
| Feb-10 | 18% | 26% | 1% | 38% | 10% | 8% | 100% |
| Total | 17% | 20% | 1% | 37% | 11% | 15% | 100% |

5.1.2 Table 7 presents the same figures shown in Table 6 as percentages.

5.2 Work Related Activity Group Tables

Table 8 - Work Related Activity Group by reason (including effect of appeals) – volumes

| Month of Claim Start | WRAG - 15 Points or more at WCA | WRAG - for medical reasons | WRAG - Clerical WCA | WRAG - after appeal | WRAG - based on JCP DM Decision and reconsiderations | WRAG - Total |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Oct-08 | 1,000 | 100 | 100 | 600 | 100 | 1,700 |
| Nov-08 | 4,700 | 400 | 300 | 2,700 | 300 | 8,400 |
| Dec-08 | 4,500 | 400 | 200 | 2,500 | 300 | 7,900 |
| Jan-09 | 6,200 | 600 | 400 | 3,400 | 300 | 10,800 |
| Feb-09 | 5,800 | 400 | 300 | 3,100 | 300 | 10,000 |
| Mar-09 | 6,800 | 500 | 400 | 3,500 | 400 | 11,600 |
| Apr-09 | 6,600 | 500 | 300 | 3,100 | 400 | 10,900 |
| May-09 | 6,700 | 500 | 300 | 2,800 | 300 | 10,500 |
| Jun-09 | 7,300 | 500 | 300 | 2,500 | 300 | 10,900 |
| Jul-09 | 7,500 | 500 | 300 | 2,100 | 200 | 10,600 |
| Aug-09 | 7,000 | 500 | 300 | 1,500 | 200 | 9,500 |
| Sep-09 | 7,600 | 500 | 400 | 1,100 | 200 | 9,800 |
| Oct-09 | 7,000 | 500 | 300 | 600 | 200 | 8,600 |
| Nov-09 | 6,800 | 500 | 200 | 300 | 200 | 8,000 |
| Dec-09 | 5,800 | 500 | 200 | 100 | 200 | 6,800 |
| Jan-10 | 7,500 | 600 | 300 | 100 | 200 | 8,600 |
| Feb-10 | 6,900 | 500 | 200 | 0 | 200 | 7,900 |
| Total | 105,700 | 7,900 | 4,800 | 30,000 | 4,100 | 152,400 |

5.2.1 Table 8 presents figures for people in the Work Related Activity Group (WRAG) using the detailed reasons described in section 4.3. Total WRAG figures are the same as those in section 5.3 except for the inclusion of people in the WRAG after appeal. The number of people in the WRAG after appeal is likely to increase as more appeals are heard.

Table 9 - Work Related Activity Group by reason (including effect of appeals) – percentages

| Month of Claim Start | WRAG - 15 Points or more at WCA | WRAG - for medical reasons | WRAG - Clerical WCA | WRAG - after appeal | WRAG - based on JCP DM Decision and reconsiderations | WRAG - Total |
|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Oct-08 | 57% | 5% | 3% | 32% | 4% | 100% |
| Nov-08 | 57% | 4% | 3% | 32% | 4% | 100% |
| Dec-08 | 57% | 5% | 3% | 31% | 3% | 100% |
| Jan-09 | 57% | 5% | 3% | 31% | 3% | 100% |
| Feb-09 | 58% | 4% | 3% | 31% | 3% | 100% |
| Mar-09 | 59% | 4% | 3% | 31% | 3% | 100% |
| Apr-09 | 61% | 4% | 3% | 29% | 3% | 100% |
| May-09 | 63% | 4% | 3% | 26% | 3% | 100% |
| Jun-09 | 67% | 5% | 3% | 23% | 2% | 100% |
| Jul-09 | 71% | 5% | 3% | 20% | 2% | 100% |
| Aug-09 | 74% | 5% | 3% | 16% | 2% | 100% |
| Sep-09 | 77% | 5% | 4% | 12% | 2% | 100% |
| Oct-09 | 81% | 6% | 3% | 7% | 2% | 100% |
| Nov-09 | 85% | 6% | 3% | 4% | 2% | 100% |
| Dec-09 | 86% | 8% | 3% | 1% | 2% | 100% |
| Jan-10 | 87% | 7% | 3% | 1% | 3% | 100% |
| Feb-10 | 88% | 6% | 3% | 0% | 2% | 100% |
| Total | 69% | 5% | 3% | 20% | 3% | 100% |

5.2.2 Table 9 presents the same figures shown in Table 8 as percentages.

5.3 WCA Assessment Result by Health Condition

Table 10 - Result of assessment by ICD10 Condition Group – ESA claims to February 2010 - volumes

| ICD10 Condition Group | Support Group | WRAG | Fit for Work | Do not complete assessment | In Progress | Total |
|--|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Certain Infectious and Parasitic Diseases | 900 | 1,300 | 2,200 | 3,100 | 300 | 7,700 |
| Neoplasms | 14,000 | 3,700 | 3,600 | 5,400 | 500 | 27,200 |
| Diseases of the Blood and Blood forming organs and certain diseases involving the immune mechanism | 100 | 300 | 600 | 400 | 0 | 1,500 |
| Endocrine, Nutritional and Metabolic Diseases | 600 | 2,400 | 4,300 | 2,400 | 200 | 9,900 |
| Mental and Behavioural Disorders | 14,600 | 60,000 | 117,000 | 76,900 | 14,200 | 282,600 |
| Diseases of the Nervous System | 4,100 | 7,500 | 7,200 | 5,300 | 700 | 24,900 |
| Diseases of the Eye and Adnexa | 200 | 1,300 | 1,400 | 1,300 | 100 | 4,200 |
| Diseases of the Ear and Mastoid Process | 100 | 700 | 800 | 800 | 100 | 2,500 |
| Diseases of the Circulatory System | 2,800 | 7,700 | 13,300 | 7,900 | 700 | 32,500 |
| Diseases of the Respiratory System | 1,200 | 3,400 | 5,700 | 4,000 | 300 | 14,700 |
| Diseases of the Digestive System | 1,100 | 2,600 | 6,500 | 7,100 | 400 | 17,600 |
| Diseases of the Skin and Subcutaneous System | 200 | 1,000 | 2,200 | 2,400 | 100 | 5,900 |
| Diseases of the Musculoskeletal system and Connective Tissue | 2,800 | 27,100 | 50,900 | 31,500 | 2,300 | 114,600 |
| Diseases of the Genitourinary System | 600 | 1,600 | 2,300 | 2,400 | 200 | 7,100 |
| Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Puerperium | 400 | 400 | 900 | 2,700 | 100 | 4,400 |
| Certain Conditions Originating in the Perinatal Period | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Congenital Malformations, Deformations and Chromosomal Abnormalities | 600 | 200 | 100 | 100 | 0 | 1,000 |
| Symptoms, Signs and Abnormal Clinical and Laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified | 5,300 | 18,000 | 40,500 | 43,100 | 3,200 | 110,100 |
| Injury, Poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes | 2,100 | 13,000 | 34,800 | 56,100 | 1,700 | 107,700 |
| Factors influencing health status and contact with health services | 900 | 1,500 | 2,000 | 1,500 | 300 | 6,200 |
| Not Recorded | 1,000 | 700 | 5,000 | 52,900 | 0 | 59,700 |
| Total | 53,700 | 154,400 | 301,300 | 307,200 | 25,500 | 842,100 |

5.3.1 Table 10 shows the health condition recorded against each ESA claim from October 2008 to February 2010 by result of initial assessment. These figures are consistent with the quarterly WCA statistics in section 3 (which do not include the impact of appeals).

Table 11 - Result of assessment by ICD10 Condition Group – ESA claims to February 2010 – percentages

| ICD10 Condition Group | Support Group | WRAG | Fit for Work | Do not complete assessment | In Progress | Total |
|--|---------------|------------|--------------|----------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Certain Infectious and Parasitic Diseases | 12% | 16% | 28% | 40% | 3% | 100% |
| Neoplasms | 51% | 14% | 13% | 20% | 2% | 100% |
| Diseases of the Blood and Blood forming organs and certain diseases involving the immune mechanism | 9% | 20% | 42% | 26% | 3% | 100% |
| Endocrine, Nutritional and Metabolic Diseases | 6% | 24% | 44% | 24% | 2% | 100% |
| Mental and Behavioural Disorders | 5% | 21% | 41% | 27% | 5% | 100% |
| Diseases of the Nervous System | 17% | 30% | 29% | 21% | 3% | 100% |
| Diseases of the Eye and Adnexa | 4% | 30% | 34% | 30% | 2% | 100% |
| Diseases of the Ear and Mastoid Process | 5% | 28% | 34% | 31% | 2% | 100% |
| Diseases of the Circulatory System | 9% | 24% | 41% | 24% | 2% | 100% |
| Diseases of the Respiratory System | 8% | 23% | 39% | 27% | 2% | 100% |
| Diseases of the Digestive System | 6% | 15% | 37% | 40% | 2% | 100% |
| Diseases of the Skin and Subcutaneous System | 4% | 16% | 37% | 41% | 2% | 100% |
| Diseases of the Musculoskeletal system and Connective Tissue | 2% | 24% | 44% | 27% | 2% | 100% |
| Diseases of the Genitourinary System | 8% | 22% | 33% | 34% | 3% | 100% |
| Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Puerperium | 8% | 10% | 19% | 60% | 3% | 100% |
| Certain Conditions Originating in the Perinatal Period | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| Congenital Malformations, Deformations and Chromosomal Abnormalities | 56% | 21% | 9% | 10% | 3% | 100% |
| Symptoms, Signs and Abnormal Clinical and Laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified | 5% | 16% | 37% | 39% | 3% | 100% |
| Injury, Poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes | 2% | 12% | 32% | 52% | 2% | 100% |
| Factors influencing health status and contact with health services | 15% | 24% | 33% | 24% | 4% | 100% |
| Not Recorded | 2% | 1% | 8% | 89% | 0% | 100% |
| Total | 6% | 18% | 36% | 36% | 3% | 100% |

5.3.2 Table 11 presents the same figures shown in Table 10 as percentages.

5.4 WRAG by Functional Impairment

Table 12 - Points scored by people in the WRAG scoring 15 points or more by functional impairment - percentages

| Month of Claim Start | Lower Limb | Upper Limb | Sensory | Continance | Consciousness | Understanding and Focus | Adapting to Change | Social Interaction | Total |
|----------------------|------------|------------|-----------|------------|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Oct-08 | 47% | 11% | 8% | 4% | 7% | 31% | 38% | 23% | 170% |
| Nov-08 | 50% | 11% | 8% | 5% | 7% | 31% | 39% | 21% | 172% |
| Dec-08 | 53% | 11% | 8% | 4% | 6% | 29% | 37% | 20% | 168% |
| Jan-09 | 51% | 11% | 7% | 5% | 7% | 30% | 39% | 21% | 171% |
| Feb-09 | 50% | 9% | 8% | 5% | 6% | 31% | 39% | 23% | 170% |
| Mar-09 | 48% | 9% | 7% | 4% | 7% | 32% | 41% | 23% | 171% |
| Apr-09 | 50% | 9% | 7% | 5% | 7% | 31% | 39% | 21% | 169% |
| May-09 | 50% | 9% | 7% | 4% | 6% | 32% | 40% | 23% | 171% |
| Jun-09 | 49% | 10% | 7% | 4% | 6% | 32% | 41% | 22% | 171% |
| Jul-09 | 47% | 9% | 7% | 4% | 6% | 33% | 41% | 23% | 172% |
| Aug-09 | 49% | 10% | 7% | 4% | 6% | 32% | 40% | 22% | 171% |
| Sep-09 | 49% | 10% | 7% | 4% | 6% | 32% | 41% | 23% | 172% |
| Oct-09 | 50% | 10% | 7% | 4% | 6% | 31% | 39% | 22% | 170% |
| Nov-09 | 49% | 9% | 6% | 4% | 6% | 32% | 40% | 23% | 169% |
| Dec-09 | 51% | 10% | 7% | 4% | 5% | 30% | 38% | 22% | 167% |
| Jan-10 | 51% | 9% | 6% | 4% | 6% | 30% | 38% | 20% | 164% |
| Feb-10 | 49% | 9% | 7% | 4% | 6% | 31% | 41% | 21% | 167% |
| Total | 50% | 10% | 7% | 4% | 6% | 31% | 40% | 22% | 170% |

5.4.1 Table 12 above shows people in the WRAG who scored 15 points at the WCA and in which functional impairment category they scored points. For example 47% of people who started their ESA claim in October 2008 scored points in an activity relating to their lower limbs.

5.4.2 Note that percentages add up to more than 100% as people often score points in more than one category.

5.4.3 Section 6.3 provides further detail on the functional impairment groups presented in table 12.

5.5 WRAG by Functional Impairment and Medical Condition

Table 13 - People who score 15 points or more at the WCA by points scored at the WCA and medical condition—percentages

| ICD10 Condition Group | Lower Limb | Upper Limb | Sensory | Continenence | Consciousness | Understanding and Focus | Adapting to Change | Social Interaction | Total claims in WRAG with 15 points or more |
|--|------------|------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---|
| Certain Infectious and Parasitic Diseases | 43% | 6% | 7% | 16% | 4% | 39% | 43% | 26% | 185% |
| Neoplasms | 70% | 14% | 16% | 13% | 8% | 18% | 17% | 6% | 162% |
| Diseases of the Blood and Blood forming organs and certain diseases involving the immune mechanism | 73% | 8% | 6% | 6% | 9% | 20% | 22% | 8% | 154% |
| Endocrine, Nutritional and Metabolic Diseases | 67% | 11% | 17% | 7% | 21% | 15% | 15% | 8% | 160% |
| Mental and Behavioural Disorders | 11% | 2% | 3% | 3% | 3% | 57% | 77% | 44% | 201% |
| Diseases of the Nervous System | 51% | 16% | 9% | 7% | 39% | 24% | 18% | 8% | 172% |
| Diseases of the Eye and Adnexa | 14% | 3% | 92% | 2% | 4% | 6% | 7% | 3% | 131% |
| Diseases of the Ear and Mastoid Process | 25% | 4% | 79% | 2% | 2% | 9% | 12% | 6% | 139% |
| Diseases of the Circulatory System | 81% | 19% | 15% | 3% | 7% | 18% | 14% | 7% | 163% |
| Diseases of the Respiratory System | 87% | 7% | 7% | 4% | 5% | 13% | 15% | 7% | 143% |
| Diseases of the Digestive System | 58% | 6% | 4% | 33% | 5% | 21% | 24% | 12% | 164% |
| Diseases of the Skin and Subcutaneous System | 82% | 19% | 5% | 4% | 3% | 11% | 16% | 9% | 150% |
| Diseases of the Musculoskeletal system and Connective Tissue | 92% | 18% | 5% | 4% | 1% | 7% | 8% | 4% | 139% |
| Diseases of the Genitourinary System | 73% | 8% | 9% | 16% | 6% | 13% | 19% | 10% | 155% |
| Pregnancy, Childbirth and the Puerperium | 51% | 3% | 1% | 2% | 6% | 32% | 45% | 16% | 157% |
| Certain Conditions Originating in the Perinatal Period | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| Congenital Malformations, Deformations and Chromosomal Abnormalities | 51% | 2% | 28% | 12% | 3% | 48% | 32% | 11% | 187% |
| Symptoms, Signs and Abnormal Clinical and Laboratory findings, not elsewhere classified | 63% | 12% | 9% | 5% | 8% | 22% | 25% | 14% | 158% |
| Injury, Poisoning and certain other consequences of external causes | 80% | 13% | 5% | 3% | 3% | 10% | 12% | 7% | 133% |
| Factors influencing health status and contact with health services | 71% | 13% | 7% | 5% | 10% | 15% | 16% | 8% | 144% |
| Not Recorded | 70% | 9% | 5% | 7% | 6% | 16% | 22% | 7% | 141% |
| All conditions | 50% | 10% | 7% | 4% | 6% | 31% | 40% | 22% | 170% |

5.5.1 Table 13 shows people who made an ESA claim between October 2008 and February 2010 and were then placed in the WRAG after scoring 15 points or more at the WCA by health condition and functional impairment. For example, of people with Certain Infectious and Parasitic Diseases, 43% scored points in an activity relating to their lower limbs.

6 Health Condition and Functional Impairment Categories

6.1.1 Below is a more detailed explanation of the Support Group breakdown, the functional impairment breakdown, the non-functional descriptor and WCA deferred categories.

6.2 Support Group

6.2.1 In most cases the reason for being placed in the Support Group is recorded at assessment. The following provides a more detailed description of the breakdowns in Table 6 and Table 7:

- **Chemotherapy** – people receiving certain types of chemotherapy automatically qualify for the support group;
- **Physical or Mental Health Risk** – the regulations (see link below) allow that in ‘exceptional circumstances’ a person may be entitled to ESA and put into the support group if there would be ‘serious risk to the mental or physical health of any person’ if the claimant were to be found ‘fit for work’;
- **Pregnancy Risk** – if a woman is pregnant and there is serious risk to her health or the health of her unborn child if she works;
- **Severe functional disability** – if the claimant meets the functional criteria, covering physical and mental capacity, laid out in the legislation (see link below);
- **Terminally ill** – someone diagnosed as terminally ill with a prognosis of 6 months or less.

6.2.2 The link below is to The Employment and Support Allowance Regulations 2008 which give further detail on the circumstances in which someone qualifies for the Support Group:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2008/794/contents/made>

6.3 Functional Impairment

6.3.1 Below is a more detailed description of the functional impairment categories in which people will score points if they score 15 points or more at the face-to-face WCA. They are split between Physical and Mental, cognitive and intellectual functions:

Physical Functions

- **Lower limb** – physical functions such as ability to walk, stand, sit and bend.
- **Upper Limb** – physical functions such as ability to reach, pick up and manual dexterity.
- **Sensory** – functions such as speech, hearing and vision.
- **Continence** – functions relating to control over the bladder and bowel.
- **Consciousness** – functions relating to involuntary loss of consciousness.

Mental, cognitive and intellectual functions

- **Understanding and focus** – ability to learn and comprehend, hazard awareness, memory and concentration, and initiating and executing tasks. For example, these descriptors might include someone with a learning disability or someone with dementia.
- **Adapting to change** – ability to cope with changes to routine, to get about and to cope with social situations. These are the sort of challenges someone with autism might face.
- **Social Interaction** – ability to deal with other people. These are the sort of challenges someone with a psychotic condition might face.

6.3.2 The link below provides further information on the Work Capability Assessment and includes a document explaining the functional impairments in further detail:

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/DisabledPeople/FinancialSupport/esa/DG_172012

Non-Functional Descriptors

6.3.3 Customers will be treated as having limited capability for work and placed in the WRAG if they are:

- suffering from a life-threatening disease in relation to which:
 - there is medical evidence that the disease is uncontrollable, or uncontrolled, by a recognised therapeutic procedure, and
 - in the case of a disease that is uncontrolled, there is a reasonable cause for it not to be controlled by a recognised therapeutic procedure;

- suffering from some specific disease or bodily or mental disablement and, by reasons of such disease or disablement, there would be a substantial risk to the mental or physical health of any person if they were found not to have limited capability for work.

WCA – Treat as Limited Capability to Work

6.3.4 Customers will be treated as having limited capability for work and placed in the WRAG if they are:

- An in-patient in a hospital or similar institution undergoing medical or other treatment ;
- Recovering from treatment as an in-patient;
- Pregnant where there is harm to the mother and/or child;
- During a period of confinement for pregnancy;
- Pregnant and in receipt of Maternity Allowance with an ESA top-up;
- Undergoing regular treatment - this means a customer receiving:
 - regular weekly treatment by way of haemodialysis for chronic renal failure;
 - treatment by way of plasmapheresis or by way of radiotherapy;
 - regular weekly treatment by way of total parenteral nutrition for gross impairment of enteric function;
 - receiving treatment by way of intravenous, intraperitoneal or intrathecal chemotherapy; or
 - recovering from intravenous, intraperitoneal or intrathecal chemotherapy treatment.

6.3.5 The link below is to The Employment and Support Allowance Regulations 2008. Part 5 gives a full description of how people can qualify for the Work Related Activity Group:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2008/794/contents/made>

7 Technical Notes

7.1 Changes to calculation methodology since July 2010 publication

- 7.1.1 The July 2010 publication² introduced figures that were based on the DWP decision to supplement the information we had about the Atos recommendation. The DWP decision is made by the Decision Maker in Jobcentre Plus, taking into account the recommendation provided by the Atos healthcare professional and the evidence provided by the applicant. The change was made to provide more accurate figures on the WCA, as it is the Decision Maker's decision that determines whether ESA will be awarded. The change took account of cases where the Jobcentre Plus Decision Maker's final decision differed to the Atos recommendation. Using this variable also meant we could include more complete information on the 3% of assessments where people were clerically assessed by Atos (and the result of the assessment was not recorded centrally) as the result of assessment is recorded by the Decision Maker.
- 7.1.2 Further improvements have been made by using the additional information we get about DWP's final decision on entitlement and these are included in this publication. The improvements are due to a better matching methodology between data from Atos and data from DWP's benefit systems and also due to capturing cases that are returned to Atos for reconsideration. Reconsiderations are recorded clerically, so if the result changed on reconsideration previously we would have used the data from the original decision. This change makes a very small difference to the published figures. Numbers in the Work Related Activity Group have increased by around one percentage point (as a proportion of all ESA on-flows) and numbers found fit for work have decreased by around one percentage point.

7.2 Source Data

- 7.2.1 The data presented in this publication combines three main data sources:
- benefit claims data held by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) covering new ESA claims that started between October 2008 and February 2010;
 - functional assessment data sourced from Atos Healthcare covering assessments completed up to June 2010; and

² All previous publications can be found on the Department's website here: http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/workingage/index.php?page=esa_wca

RESTRICTED STATISTICS

- appeals data sourced from Tribunals Service covering appeals heard up to August 2010 (and which link to ESA claims up to the end of August 2009). Note that data from Tribunals Service does not record the reason for appeal and we must infer this from the original JCP DM Decision. This is typically a fit for work decision.