



Consultation on the PIP assessment moving around activity

About Quarriers

Quarriers is a major Scottish charity providing practical care and support every day to thousands of people. Through more than 120 services for adult disability, children and families, epilepsy and young adults in Scotland and a growing number of services in parts of England, we challenge inequality of opportunity and choice, to bring about positive change in people's lives.

What are your views on the moving around activity within the current PIP assessment criteria?

Quarriers fully supports the position of the Disability Benefits Consortiums position on this consultation.

Quarriers believes the 20-metre rule currently proposed is fundamentally flawed and we would ask the Government to reinstate the use of the 50-metre rule to identify those greatest in need.

Quarriers questions the initial logic of changing to 20 metres as the charity believes this proposal will leave the most vulnerable in our society without vital support and force disabled people to leave work and education, increasing the risks of poverty and isolation.

The charity acknowledges it is very difficult to set a distance to assess a person's mobility as where people live and the accessibility of local bus and train services have a significant impact on a person's ability to maintain a minimum level of independence. A 50-metre benchmark is well established and research based measure of significant mobility impairment. The 50 metres measure is used in measuring Disability Living Allowance, Disabled parking badge and guidance for creating an accessible building environment.

Page 61 of the Second draft PIP criteria says:

"50 metres is considered to be the distance that an individual is required to be able to walk in order to achieve a basic level of independence."

Quarriers would question that 20 metres is a workable figure and the distance was not established from a strong evidence base and would lead to the automatic discount thousands of disabled people who are most in need.

The PIP criteria currently states that only those who: “Can stand and then move more than 1 metre but no more than 20 metres, either aided or unaided” will be eligible to qualify for the enhanced rate of the mobility component. Individuals must be able to complete the distance safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period, but can use aids such as walking sticks, crutches and prostheses.

The enhanced rate of the mobility component of PIP is worth £55.25 per week. Those that no longer qualify, but still receive the standard rate, will lose £33.25 a week and more importantly will lose access to their Motability vehicle. This change could result in people who are able to travel 21 metres aided losing the right to Motability this will result in a large number of people becoming confined to their homes. People who live in rural communities are unlikely to have access to public transport within 21 metres of their home and with the withdrawal of mobility these people would see their basic right of independence removed.

Quarriers is concerned the distance of 20 metres may only succeed in reducing the cost of enhanced rate for PIP but would not help those disabled people in greatest need. Many people may be able to walk over the 20-metre distance suggested but would be very unlikely to be able to walk anywhere near the 50 metre distance suggested and would face the exact same barriers and costs of those on the enhanced rate of care but would not qualify.

Quarriers is also concerned the current mobility measure does not take into consideration the further barriers people that live in rural communities with poor access to public transport or community support face.

Quarriers is extremely concerned that if the enhanced rate of mobility distance is not restored to the previous measure of 50 metres it would result in a large number of disabled people:

- Leaving employment, education and volunteering roles;
- Increased poverty and isolation of disabled people, with a high risk of increased bad health and mental health issues specifically depression and stress;
- Rising costs to other areas, such as unemployment benefits, access to work, social care and NHS.

Quarriers believes the current assessment criteria and threshold of 20 metres is fundamentally flawed and would call the enhanced rate be restored to the previous threshold of 50 metres.

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