

# Freedom of Information request 848/2011

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## Information request

In a House of Lords debate on 16th March 2011, Lord Freud, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions, stated as follows:

"This is a very real and very urgent problem for us all, especially given that there are now 2.6 million working-age people claiming incapacity benefits, of whom some 850,000 have been claiming for a decade."

Please can you confirm the following:

- a break-down of the 850,000 claimants by type of illnesses and/or medical condition;
- a break-down of the 2.6 million claimants by type of illnesses and/or medical condition.

Please note that I request this data for specific illnesses (e.g. multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's) and not for disease groups (e.g. neurological diseases).

Please can you confirm this data for the current year as well as the preceding ten years.

## DWP response

Please note that Incapacity Benefit (IB) was replaced by Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) for new claims from October 2008.

The Department publishes a wide range of statistics on benefit claimants on its website via the Tabulation Tool at <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=tabtool> and on the NOMIS website <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/Default.asp>, which is the Office for National Statistics' official website of labour market statistics. Both websites allow you to construct tables to your own requirements. For example you are able to construct caseload statistics for Incapacity Benefit and Employment and Support Allowance by disease groups.

The figures that you have quoted referred to data released for May 2010. Figures for August 2010 have since been released; I have therefore provided you with the most up to date figures. For information Ad Hoc analysis on duration of Employment and Support Allowance, Incapacity Benefit and Severe Disablement Allowance Claims, at May 2010 is published on the Departments website at:

[http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/adhoc\\_analysis/2011/esa\\_ibsda\\_durations\\_may10.pdf](http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/adhoc_analysis/2011/esa_ibsda_durations_may10.pdf)

The information that you have requested is shown in attached tables. Figures for ESA by medical condition are not available prior to 2010.

Please note information is not available to identify claims in the 'Over 10 years' category for the full time series that you have requested. This is because when IB was introduced to replace Sickness/Invalidity Benefit all existing claimants transferred over to IB were given the start date of 13 April 1995. I have therefore provided information on those claiming for more than 10 years up to 2005.