

Freedom of Information request 2969/2013

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Information request

Today the Chancellor announced that an increasing number of jobseekers will be required to attend weekly, rather than fortnightly meeting with JobCenter advisors. Please could you advise what internal estimates the Department holds of the impact of this step, including:

- * How many jobseekers do you estimate will be affected by this over an annual period?*
- * How many additional meetings with JobCenter advisors will result?*
- * What will the additional cost to the taxpayer be of these additional meetings?*
- * What studies have been conducted on the efficacy of weekly vs fortnightly meetings with JobCenter advisors in terms of return-to-work outcomes?*
- * How many additional jobseekers are expected to make an early return to work as a result of this measure?*
- * How many additional jobseekers are expected to be disqualified from receiving benefit as a result of this measure without a successful return to work?*
- * What are the savings realised from this measure estimated to be, in terms of a) early return to work and b) punitive disqualification from receipt of JobSeekers Allowance?*

DWP response

The Spending Round announces new measures to support people to move into work, to improve welfare spending control and to ensure that the welfare system remains affordable. Building on the current regime, the Spending Round announces a significant reform package, including introducing weekly rather than fortnightly visits to Jobcentres for an increasing number of all jobseekers;

The Department's estimates are that these changes would impact around four and a half million claims in 2015-16. This estimate is consistent with the Office of Budget Responsibility's projections of the claimant count and the additional claimants who will be subject to full labour market requirements under Universal Credit, which was published in the Universal Credit policy costs in the Economic and Fiscal Outlook report in March 2013.

These measures are estimated to cost £65 million a year and will lead to approximately 19 million additional interviews per year.

No estimates have been made of the impact of weekly vs fortnightly meetings with JobCentre advisors in terms of return-to-work outcomes or disqualification from benefit.