

# Freedom of Information request 19/2011

Received January 2011  
Published February 2011

## Information request

Number of incapacity benefit/severe disability allowance (IB/SDA) claimants who were recorded as claiming benefit because of "Alcoholism" every year from 2005 to the present date.

## DWP response

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

To qualify for Incapacity Benefit (IB), claimants have to undertake an assessment of incapacity for work called a Personal Capability Assessment. Under the Employment Support Allowance regime, new claimants have to undergo the Work Capability assessment. From April 2011 Incapacity Benefit recipients will begin also to undertake this assessment. The medical condition recorded on the claim form does not itself confer entitlement to Incapacity Benefit or Employment Support Allowance. So, for example, a decision on entitlement for a customer claiming Incapacity Benefit on the basis of alcoholism would be based on their ability to carry out the range of activities assessed by the Personal / Work Capability Assessment; or on the effects of any associated mental health problems. We have therefore presented information below on how the majority of people, with alcoholism and placed in the Work Related Activity Group, qualified for entitlement. This information relates to ESA claims only as we do not hold the equivalent information for IB claims.

For people with mental and behavioural disorders due to use of alcohol around two thirds of the Work Related Activity Group qualified after scoring 15 points or more at the Work Capability Assessment. The top three functional impairment activities are as follows:

- 66% scored in activities relating to understanding and focus
- 61% in activities relating to adapting to change
- 51% in activities relating to social interaction

Please note that people can score points in more than one activity group so figures will not sum to 100%. Figures are consistent with the October 2010

WCA publication, available at the link below. The publication also explains reasons for placement in the WRAG and point scoring across the whole range of functional activities assessed by the WCA. It is also important to note that where someone has more than one diagnosis or disabling condition, only the predominant one is currently recorded.

You can access official statistics on the Employment Support Allowance Work Capability Assessment by health condition and function on the Department's website at:

[http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/workingage/esa\\_wca/index.php?page=esa\\_wca\\_arc](http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/workingage/esa_wca/index.php?page=esa_wca_arc)

The information that you have requested is shown in the tables below. Figures for ESA by medical condition are not available at 2005 to 2009.

**Number of IB/SDA Claimants with a recorded medical condition of Alcoholism, May 2005 to May 2010**

	All	Alcoholism				SDA
		IB/SDA rate in payment				
		IB Short-term (Lower)	IB Short-term (Higher)	IB Long-term	IB Credits	
May-05	47,760	1,480	1,370	15,720	28,630	570
May-06	49,210	1,480	1,380	16,090	29,750	510
May-07	51,430	1,740	1,470	16,400	31,350	480
May-08	53,410	1,850	1,580	16,680	32,880	430
May-09	49,410	210	1,340	17,110	30,330	420
May-10	43,510	140	150	16,140	26,700	390

**Number of ESA Claimants with a recorded medical condition of Alcoholism, May 2010**

Date	All	Benefit Type			
		Contributory	Contributory and Income Based	Income Based	Credits
May-10	13,430	3,350	420	8,510	1,150

Source: DWP Information Directorate: Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study

Notes:

1. Caseload figures are rounded to the nearest 10. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
2. Causes of incapacity are based on the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, published by the World Health Organisation.

National Statistics on Employment Support Allowance and Incapacity Benefits/Severe Disablement Allowance claimants are published on the DWP website via the Tabulation Tool, which allows you to construct tables to your own requirements: <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/index.php?page=tabtool> .

The Department has also published Ad Hoc analysis on alcoholism on the website at:

[http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/adhoc\\_analysis/2010/AD\\_HOC\\_DLA\\_IB\\_SDA\\_ESA\\_alcoholism.xls](http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd1/adhoc_analysis/2010/AD_HOC_DLA_IB_SDA_ESA_alcoholism.xls) and various research reports are available at:

<http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rrs-index.asp> . For example alcohol misusers' experiences of employment and the benefit system and research estimating total numbers of working age benefit claimants who misuse drugs or alcohol:

[http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report\\_abstracts/rr\\_abstracts/rra\\_718.asp](http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report_abstracts/rr_abstracts/rra_718.asp)

[http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report\\_abstracts/wp\\_abstracts/wpa\\_046.asp](http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/report_abstracts/wp_abstracts/wpa_046.asp).