

Freedom of Information request 2015-849

Date received 2nd March 2015

Date of response 27th March 2015

Information request

How many people in Yorkshire are claiming disability benefit in the past quarter citing alcohol misuse as the main reason. I would also like the figures for the year 2014.

I would also separately like the figures for Leeds.

DWP response

There are several disability benefits which record the primary medical condition of the claimant and the relevant information for these benefits is recorded as "alcohol misuse". In response to the first part of your query information for the latest data available is shown in the table below.

Please note that the medical condition recorded on a benefit claim form does not itself confer entitlement to Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Benefit (IB/SDA) or Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). So, for example, a decision on entitlement for a customer claiming on the basis of alcohol misuse would be based on their ability to carry out the range of activities related to physical and mental function, assessed by the Personal/Work Capability Assessment.

With regard to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payments (PIP), a diagnosed medical condition does not mean that someone is automatically entitled to DLA or PIP. Entitlement is dependent on an assessment of how much help someone needs with personal care and/or mobility because of their disability. Statistics on condition are only collected for administrative purposes.

As requested, below is the latest data available for those with a primary medical condition of alcohol misuse.

Number of ESA, IB/SDA and PIP recipients with a primary medical condition of alcohol misuse, by area: May 2014 and Jan 15 (for PIP)

Benefit	Date	Condition	Area	
			Leeds Local Authority	Yorkshire

ESA	May-14	All Conditions	27,890	184,300
		Alcohol misuse	910	4,240
IB/SDA	May-14	All Conditions	3,320	24,770
		Alcohol misuse	60	230
PIP	Jan-15	All Conditions	3,606	24,321
		Alcohol misuse	40	220

Source: DWP Information Directorate 100% WPLS, Stat-Xplore and PIP Computer System claimant records.

Notes:

1. Statistical disclosure control has been applied to this table to avoid the identification of individuals.
2. Data for ESA and IB/SDA is as of May 2014. Data for PIP is as of January 2015 and is the latest data available at the time of the request.
3. Causes of incapacity are based on the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, published by the World Health Organisation.
4. Medical condition is based on evidence provided at the start of the claim and may not represent a claimant's most recent medical condition. Where someone has more than one diagnosis or disabling condition only the predominant one is used.
5. ESA replaced IB/SDA for new claims from 27 October 2008.
6. PIP started to replace DLA for people aged 16 to 64 from 8 April 2013.
7. PIP is a functional rather than a medical process and individuals with similar disabling conditions may legitimately have different outcomes and payment rates.
8. PIP caseload statistics are cases in payment and include both new claims & reassessment cases, and normal rules and Special Rules for Terminally Ill cases.
9. PIP statistics are currently labelled as experimental and therefore may be subject to change.
10. Yorkshire area is made up of the following local authorities: Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield, Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, Wakefield, York, Craven, Hambleton, Harrogate, Richmondshire, Ryedale, Scarborough, Selby, and the Unitary Authorities: City of Kingston upon Hull and East Riding of Yorkshire.

With regard to the second part of your query, data for the full year of 2014 for all of the disability benefits given above is not yet available and is intended for future publication, therefore this information is exempt from disclosure under the terms of Section 22 (Information intended for future publication) of the Freedom of Information Act. This exemption is qualified, and is therefore subject to a public interest test where the Department considers whether the

balance of the public interest falls in favour of withholding or disclosing the information requested.

Whilst disclosure would improve transparency in the operations of the Department, it is in the public interest to adhere to the existing publication process for official statistics to ensure that the publication of official information is a properly planned and managed process and that the data are accurate once placed into the public domain. It is also in the public interest to ensure that the information is available to all members of the public at the same time and premature publication could undermine this principle.

On this occasion, the balance of the public interest test falls in favour of withholding this information. As explained above, statistics on this issue will be published in due course.

From October 2008 the way in which disabling condition is recorded on the computer system for DLA changed. Previously "Alcohol Misuse" and 'Drug Misuse' cases were recorded together under the general heading of "Alcohol or Drug Misuse". Although they are now recorded separately, many people are still recorded under the combined heading.

Therefore with regard to supplying figures on 'alcohol misuse' for DLA we can confirm that, although the Department does hold some information falling within the description specified in your request, we estimate that the cost of complying with your request would exceed the appropriate limit of £600.

The appropriate limit has been specified in regulations and for central Government it is set at £600. This represents the estimated cost of one person spending 3½ working days in determining whether the Department holds the information, and locating, retrieving and extracting the information. Under section 12 of the Freedom of Information Act the Department is not obliged to comply with your request and we will not be processing your request further.

Within cost, information for the category 'Alcohol or Drug Misuse' is published with statistics on the number of people entitled to Disability Living Allowance (DLA) on the NOMIS website at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk>, the Office for National Statistics official website of labour market statistics, which allows you to construct your own tables.

To produce a table of the number of people who are entitled to DLA go to the NOMIS website via the link above. Under **DATA DOWNLOADS** select **Query Data**, and then select **DWP Benefits** scroll down and select **benefit claimants - disability living allowance by disabling condition** and make your table selection as follows:

1. Click on the **geography** tab on the left and in the drop down menu next to **local authorities: district/unitary** select **some** then choose **Yorkshire and The Humber** region from the drop down menu then tick your required Local Authorities.
2. Then click on the **date** tab and select your required dates.
3. Then click on the **condition** tab and make your selection(s) as required.
4. Finally under **Review selections**, click on **Summary of Selections** to check that the correct variables are included. Once you are happy with the table selection, click **download data**. This will allow you to output your table into an Excel file available for your analysis.

Please note the figures will include people both in receipt of DLA and those with entitlement where the payment has been suspended, for example if they are in hospital.