

Freedom of Information request 2015-588

Date received 13 February 2015

Date of response 12 March 2015

Information request

I wish to ask the following under FOI legislation.

How many people claimed disability benefits in each of the past two years in the council areas of Dundee, Perth and Kinross, Angus and Fife due to drinking too much alcohol?

The figures should be broken down year on year and by council area.

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" and the information 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.

Please note that as the National roll out of PIP did not begin until June 2013, we can only provide meaningful data for October 2014 (the latest data available) and not October 2013.

Number of ESA, IB/SDA and PIP recipients with a primary medical condition of alcohol misuse, in Angus, Dundee City, Perth & Kinross and Fife: May 2013, May 2014 and Oct 14 (for PIP)

| Benefit | Date | Condition | Local Authority | | | |
|---------|--------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|--------|-----------------|
| | | | Angus | Dundee City | Fife | Perth & Kinross |
| ESA | May-13 | All Conditions | 3,110 | 6,770 | 12,010 | 3,640 |
| | | Alcohol misuse | 80 | 250 | 330 | 100 |
| | May-14 | All Conditions | 3,890 | 8,590 | 15,330 | 4,480 |
| | | Alcohol misuse | 100 | 310 | 410 | 110 |
| IB/SDA | May-13 | All Conditions | 1,290 | 2,840 | 5,100 | 1,630 |
| | | Alcohol misuse | 20 | 70 | 90 | 30 |
| | May-14 | All Conditions | 580 | 1,120 | 2,130 | 610 |
| | | Alcohol misuse | - | 20 | 30 | 10 |
| PIP | Oct-14 | All Conditions | 298 | 530 | 1,269 | 393 |
| | | Alcohol misuse | 5 | 5 | 13 | 0 |

Source: DWP Work and Pensions Longitudinal Study 100% data and PIP Computer System claimant records

Notes:

1. Caseload figures for ESA and IB/SDA are rounded to the nearest 10. Alternative disclosure control has been applied to the PIP figures.
2. " - " denotes nil or negligible
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. Figures are for total claimants at each given point in time i.e. total claimants as at May 2013, May 2014 and October 2014.

6. PIP is a functional rather than a medical process and individuals with similar disabling conditions may legitimately have different outcomes and payment rates.
7. PIP caseload statistics are cases in payment and include both new claims & reassessment cases, and normal rules and Special Rules for Terminally Ill cases.
8. PIP statistics are currently labelled as experimental and therefore may be subject to change.

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 **Scotland** 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.