



Department
for Work &
Pensions



Independent Disability Advisory Panel

Who we are and how we work



About the Panel



We are the **Independent Disability Advisory Panel**.



Independent means that the people on the Panel do not work for the Government.



Advisory means we tell the Government what we think they should do.

Then the Government makes the final decisions.



Panel means a group of people who meet up.

They talk and listen to each other.

About our Panel members



The Panel members are people who are Deaf, disabled, or have a health condition that lasts a long time.



They come to workshops every month.



The workshops started in January 2026. The last workshop will be in December 2026.



Panel members share what they know about health and disability.



They can tell us about other people and places who are interested in health and disability too.

The Chair



The **Chair** is the person who leads the meeting.

And they support the Panel members too.

The Chair's name is Zara Todd.



Part of Zara's job is to talk to the Government about the Panel's work.



If Panel members cannot agree about something, Zara will decide what happens.

The Secretariat



The **Secretariat** is a group of people who work for the Government.

They help to sort out and run the Panel meetings.

The Panel's work



Department
for Work &
Pensions



Our job is to help the **Department for Work and Pensions**.

They are called the **DWP** for short.



The DWP is part of the UK Government.



The Panel will help the DWP with things like **policies**, **research** and **communications**.



Policies are like rules.

They tell people and organisations how to do something.



We will make sure that policies work well for people with disabilities or health conditions.



Research means looking at something to find out more about it.



Communications means how the DWP shares information with people in the UK.



The Chair and the Secretariat work together to plan the Panel's meetings.



Panel members help them decide what we will talk about.



We will work on things where we can make the most difference.



We can talk about any of the DWP's work on health and disability.



But we cannot talk about Personal Independence Payments benefit.



There is work already happening on this.

How we work

We use the Social Model of Disability



The **social model** says that a person is not disabled because of their own body or mind.



It is the world around them that stops them from doing something.



A person with a learning disability might want to know more about a service.

They might get a leaflet about it.



But the leaflet has lots of hard words in it.

It might be hard to understand.



The problem is not that the person has a learning disability.



The problem is the leaflet.

The service should put the leaflet in Easy Read.

This will help the person to read and understand it.



We include everyone

We make sure everyone on the Panel can join in our meetings.



We are anti-racist

Nobody is treated differently because of their culture, skin colour or background.

We help people to feel safe



Many people have had very difficult experiences in life.

This is called **trauma**.



We do everything we can to make sure people are safe and supported.



We respect each other

We listen to each other.

Everyone has important things to say.

We learn



We think about the work we have done, and how to make it better.

We are ready to learn from each other's experiences.



We are honest and open

The DWP shares information with the Panel.



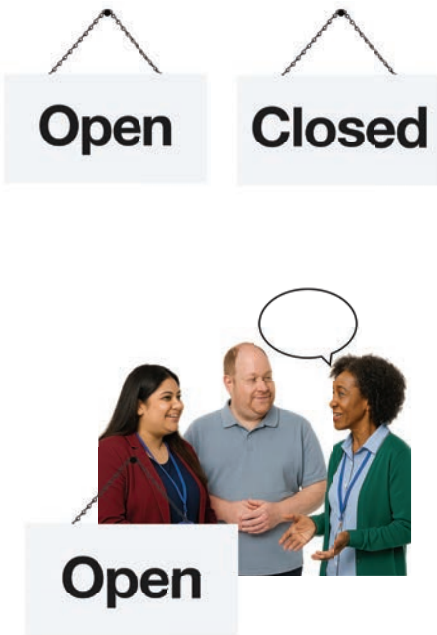
When the Panel says what they think, the DWP will tell the Panel what is being done with it.

Sharing information

Our meetings can be **open** or **closed**.

Open meetings

Panel members can tell other people what we talked about, and things that were said.



But they must not use Panel member's names.

Or the names of the places they might work for.



Closed meetings

Panel members should not tell other people about the things we talked about.



All of the information is private. Panel members should not share it with anyone outside the Panel.



Finding out if the Panel has worked well



After 12 months, the Secretariat will look at what difference the Panel has made.



They will use:

- Online surveys.



- Meetings where Panel members can say what they think.



- Interviews. This is when you meet with someone face to face. They might ask you questions. Or ask you to tell them about something.