

Calderdale DART Winter 2013 Newsletter

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➤ **AGM**

Our AGM took place on 9th January. At the meeting John McGall was elected as Chair-person; Trevor Wilson was elected as Vice Chair-person and Jackie Tetley was elected as our Honorary Treasurer. Trevor had been our Chair-person during the previous 4 years and in accordance with our Constitution, had to vacate the position. We would like to thank Trevor for his many years of support and for agreeing to take on the role of Vice Chair-person for the next 12 months. We would also like to welcome John and Jackie into their new roles.

We are always interested in recruiting new Trustees onto our Management Committee and if anyone reading this is interested please contact Tony Kay (Manager) for further details.

Sainsbury's

We will be having a collection at Sainsburys supermarket, Wade Street, Halifax on Wednesday 27th February between 9am and 6pm in aid of Calderdale DART. Please come along and support us. If anyone would like to volunteer to help out, please get in touch.

easyfundraising
.org.uk

easyfundraising is the easiest way to raise money for Calderdale DART. Shop with any of over 2000 well known retailers listed on **[easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)** and a percentage of what you spend is passed to Calderdale DART at no additional cost to you. Retailers include Amazon, M&S, Vodafone, eBay, Tesco, Viking and many more. Please register to support us today – **<http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/calderdaledart>**



➤ **Time table for changes to benefits, Tax Credits and Pensions**

From January 2013

- Households where someone is earning more than £50,000 a year will have the value of their child benefit reduced through a tapered income tax charge.

From April 2013

- Local council tax support replaces council tax benefit.
- Mandatory reconsideration and direct lodgement of appeals with HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) for universal credit and personal independence payment.
- Community care grants and crisis loans for general living expenses (including rent in advance) will be abolished and replaced by new local provision. The new provision will be administered by local authorities in England.
- Crisis loan alignment payments and other crisis loans paid due to issues with benefit will be replaced by a new national scheme of Short Term Advances.
- Total weekly benefits (jobseekers allowance, income support, employment support allowance, housing benefit, child benefit, carers allowance and later the new universal credit) will be limited to £500 a week for lone-parents/couples or £350 per week for single claimants. This benefits cap does not apply to households where someone is claiming working tax credits or getting disability living allowance.
- Launch of universal credit pathfinder to demonstrate how the new scheme will work.

From 8 April 2013

- Working age disability living allowance (DLA) will be replaced by a new personal independence payment (PIP) in pilot areas in the North West and parts of the North East of England.
- The level of in-year rises of income that will be disregarded from calculations of tax credit entitlement will decrease from £10,000 to £5,000.

- Local housing allowance rates will be updated in line with consumer price index (CPI).
- Housing entitlements for working age people in the social sector will reflect family size.
- From 5th April 2013 the Simplified PAYE Deduction Scheme (SPDS) will close. The SPDS provides an alternative to standard PAYE for non – business employers. It was intended to offer a simpler system particularly for domestic employers or elderly/disabled individuals employing carers.

From June 2013

- DLA recipients will begin to be invited to claim personal independence payment (PIP)

From October 2013

- Universal credit will start to be rolled out for new claimants in Great Britain. Eventually all new claimants will claim universal credit. If you are getting jobseeker's allowance, employment support allowance, housing benefit, working tax credit or child tax credit you will be moved over at a later date.
- Universal credit Freephone number available.
- Mandatory reconsideration and direct lodgement of appeals with HM Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) for all DWP-administered benefits and child maintenance cases (already introduced for universal credit and personal independence payment).
- Reassessment/migration onto the personal independence payment of anyone whose DLA award is due to end or who report a change in condition and young people who reach the age of 16.

From March 2014

- Migration of existing incapacity benefits claimants (incapacity benefit, severe disablement allowance and income support on disability grounds) onto employment and support allowance should be completed by the end of March.

From December 2014

- The proposed date for the abolition of those remaining cases of pre-tax credit income support/income-based jobseeker's allowance child additions is 31 December 2014. Previously the date of transfer was to have been 31 December 2011 (and before then 2008).

From April 2015

- Post Office card account (POCA) to be reviewed.

From October 2015

- Reassessment/migration onto the personal independence payment (PIP), as part of a rolling schedule, of remaining working age DLA claimants. This had originally been expected to commence from October 2013 but has now been put back for claimants receiving life time or indefinite awards of DLA.

From April 2017

- Introduction of single-tier pension.

From October 2020

- State pension age for both men and women increases to 66.

From April 2026

- The Government will start to raise the State Pension age to 67 in stages from this date.

From April 2028

- State pension age will be 67.

(Information from Disability Rights UK)

➤ **Medical conditions, disabilities and driving**



There's no legal age at which you must stop driving. You can decide when to stop, but medical conditions can affect your driving and might mean you have to give up your driving licence until you can meet the medical standards of fitness to drive again.

When you decide to stop driving or are advised by your doctor to stop you'll need to tell DVLA and send them your licence.

Telling DVLA about a medical condition or disability

If you have a driving licence you must tell DVLA if:

- you have a 'notifiable' medical condition or disability

- your medical condition or disability has got worse since you first got your licence
- you develop a new medical condition or disability

Notifiable medical conditions

‘Notifiable’ medical conditions and disabilities include epilepsy, strokes and other neurological conditions, mental health problems, physical disabilities and visual impairments.

Surrendering your licence

If your doctor tells you to stop driving because of your medical condition you must surrender your licence to DVLA.

What happens after you tell DVLA?

DVLA aims to make a decision within 3 weeks. However, if they need more information about your medical condition it could take up to 90 working days because they might:

- contact your doctor or consultant
- arrange for you to be examined
- ask you to take a driving assessment or an eyesight or driving test

What the DVLA will decide

Once DVLA has assessed your medical condition or disability you may:

- get to keep your old licence or get a new one
- be issued with a shorter period licence – for 1, 2 or 3 years, after which time your condition will need to be reviewed
- you may need to adapt your car by fitting special controls
- you may be told to stop driving and your licence taken away

Adapting your vehicle

If you have been told that you must adapt your car, you get an independent assessment of your adaptation needs through the **Forum of Mobility Centres**.

If your licence is taken away

You'll be given a medical reason why, and be told when you can re-apply for your licence. You'll also be sent a notice that explains your right to appeal against the decision.

Renewing or re-applying for your licence

If you've been issued with a short period driving licence, DVLA will send you renewal application documents 90 days before your licence is due to expire.

If your licence was taken away, you need to check with your doctor that you meet the medical standards of fitness to drive before you re-apply.

Drivers Customer Services
Correspondence Team
DVLA
Swansea
SA6 7JL

Drivers Medical Enquiries

Telephone: 0300 790 6806 (car or motorcycle), 0300 790 6807 (bus, coach or lorry)

Fax: 0845 850 0095

Monday to Friday, 8am to 5:30pm

Saturday, 8am to 1pm

Personal Independence Payment - PIP



We have received numerous queries already about the introduction of PIP later in the year. Initially this will only affect any new claimants but eventually everyone receiving DLA will be migrated across to PIP in the same way as those people who were on Incapacity Benefit have (and still are) migrated across to Employment & Support Allowance. We have heard many people say that because they are on "lifetime" or indefinite awards of DLA they will not be affected by the introduction of PIP this may be true in some cases but for people of working age the vast majority will have to go through the PIP migration process. Due to our current funding situation we will only be able to help a limited number of people with PIP claims.

What is PIP?

The personal independence payment (PIP) replaces working age disability living allowance (DLA) from 8 April 2013. The change applies across the UK.

What are the rules for PIP?

To get the personal independence payment you must:

- be aged 16-64
- Satisfy the daily living and/or mobility activities test for 3 months prior to claiming and are likely to continue to satisfy this test for a period of at least 9 months after claiming. You will not necessarily have to wait 3 months from your date of claim before getting PIP as the qualifying period starts from when your eligible needs arise and not from when you make a claim.
- pass the residence and presence tests

You will not be able to claim PIP once you are 65 years old but you will be able to stay on PIP if you claimed or received it before you reached the age of 65

You can receive PIP whether you are in or out of work.

The weekly amounts of PIP are:

Daily living component

1. standard rate – If you have a limited ability to carry out daily living activities - £53.00
2. enhanced rate – If you have a severely limited ability to carry out daily living activities - £79.15

Mobility component

1. standard rate – If you have a limited mobility - £21.00
2. enhanced rate – If you have a severely limited mobility - £55.25

If you have a terminal illness (that is if you are suffering from a progressive disease where death can be expected within 6 months) you will automatically receive the daily living component enhanced rate. You will also be able to apply for the mobility component and receive it immediately if you qualify.

If you are in a care home you will be entitled to the mobility component so long as you satisfy the qualifying conditions.

If you are paid PIP you are free to spend the money in the way that suits you best.

The Activities tests

In order to qualify for PIP you will have score a certain number of points in relation to 12 activities. These are:

1. Preparing food.
2. Taking nutrition.
3. Managing therapy or monitoring a health condition.
4. Washing and bathing.
5. Managing toilet needs or incontinence.
6. Dressing and undressing.
7. Communicating verbally.
8. Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words.
9. Engaging with other people face to face.
10. Making budgeting decisions.
11. Planning and following journeys. (used in the test for the mobility component)
12. Moving around. (used in the test for the mobility component)

Each activity has a set of descriptors. Points are awarded for each activity that you cannot do based on whether you fit a descriptor within those activities. If you can show that a descriptor applies to you for 6 months within a 12 month period you will be awarded the appropriate points. If more than one descriptor applies you will be awarded whichever descriptor gives you the most points.

For a descriptor to apply you must be able to reliably complete the activity as described in the descriptor. 'Reliably' means whether they can do so:

- Safely –the activity must be unlikely to cause harm to you or to another person.
- To a necessary and appropriate standard – given the nature of the activity.
- Repeatedly – as often as is reasonably required.
- In a timely manner – in a reasonable time period.

When deciding this, a decision maker should take into account any pain, breathlessness or tiredness you feel when carrying out an activity.

If you have a fluctuating condition the most appropriate descriptor will be the one which is likely to apply for the greatest proportion of that time.

If you are waiting for further treatment, the descriptor that applies to you will be based on your existing situation rather than based on assumptions about any future improvement in your health.

The entitlement thresholds (pass mark) for the rates and components of the PIP are:

Daily Living component (activities 1 to 10)

Standard rate: 8 points

Enhanced rate: 12 points

Mobility component (activities 11 to 12)

Standard rate: 8 points

Enhanced rate: 12 points

How will the activities tests be applied?

In most cases you will be asked to attend a face-to-face consultation with an independent healthcare professional (HCP). At the consultation the HCP looks at your ability to carry out the PIP activities. The HCP will look at your claim form and any medical evidence from your GP or consultant, if you have one. You will be able to take someone with you to the consultation such as a family member or carer.

Following the consultation the HCP will advise a benefit decision maker at the Department for Work and Pensions who will be the one who actually decides if you are entitled to PIP and which component applies. The decision maker will also decide the length of your award and the date when it will be reviewed, based on the likelihood of your health condition or impairment changing.

Depending on your circumstances you may get a short award of up to 2 years or a longer award lasting up to 5 or 10 years. If you are given a longer award you may still be contacted, during this time, to see if your needs have changed.

Which organisation will be responsible for carrying out these consultations?

- Atos IT Services UK Ltd will carry out assessments in London, Southern England, the North East, the North West England and Scotland

Atos will be working in partnership with the NHS, private hospitals and national networks of locally-based health professionals, such as physiotherapists, using their premises and staff to undertake face-to-face consultations.

Residence and presence tests

In order to claim personal independence normally you must:

- have been present in Great Britain for 104 weeks out of the 156 weeks before claiming (2 out of the last 3 years)
- be habitually resident

Under current benefit rules 'present' means physically present in the UK. There are specific rules that may allow you to be treated as present during a temporary absence.

If you are terminally ill you only have to be present in the UK, you do not need to have been present in Great Britain for 104 weeks out of the 156 weeks before claiming.

The habitual residence test is a test to see if you normally live in the United Kingdom, the Channel Islands, the Republic of Ireland or the Isle of Man. The test will be applied if you have been living abroad.

There is no legal definition of 'habitual residence'. Relevant factors are where you normally live, where you expect to live in future, your reasons for coming to this country, the length of time spent abroad before you came here, and any ties you still have with the country where you have come from.

However, the test should not be applied if someone:

- is a European Union national with 'worker status', or the 'right to reside' (under EC worker legislation); or
- has refugee status; or
- has exceptional leave to remain or enter.

If these do not apply, a decision maker (DM) will decide whether you are habitually resident or not. Get advice if you fail this test.

PIP and DLA

If you are currently receiving disability living allowance (DLA) and you are between the ages of 16 and 64, when PIP is introduced in April 2013, you will be sent a written invitation to claim PIP to see if you satisfy the rules for the new benefit.

If you pass the PIP test you will be awarded it straight away. You will not have to meet the PIP 3 month qualifying period but you will have to satisfy the 9 month test.

There are currently no proposals to migrate you onto PIP if you are a child under 16 or an adult on attendance allowance or over 65 and claiming DLA.

PIP and carer's allowance

The Government intends that both the daily living components of PIP will act as a passport to carer's allowance in the same way as the middle and higher rate care component of disability living allowance.

PIP and 16 year olds

If you are receiving DLA as a child, from October 2013 your parent/guardian will be sent a letter once you are 15 years and 7 months old telling you about claiming PIP.

If your 16th birthday is before October you will be asked to complete a DLA renewal form instead and be reassessed for PIP at a later date, after October 2013.

PIP and Motability

It is intended that you will be able to qualify for Motability Scheme help if you are receiving the enhanced mobility component of PIP.

PIP and transport

The DWP will be working with the Department for Transport (DfT) and the devolved administrations in Scotland and Wales to decide how people on PIP will be "passport" to help with transport needs and costs. Currently the higher rate mobility component of DLA is a passport to:

- automatic qualification for a Blue Badge
- eligibility for concessionary travel (free off-peak travel on local buses)
- exemption from road tax (Vehicle Excise Duty)
- the age at which a driver licence can be issued (16 instead of 17)
- exemption from payment for a medical examination for the purpose of obtaining an exemption from wearing seat belts

In England the Government has decided that you will be able to get a Blue Badge if you score 8 points or more under the 'Moving Around' activity

Timetable for the introduction of PIP

Personal independence payment assessment timeline

From 8 April 2013 – An initial pilot of a few thousand new PIP claims in the North West and parts of the North East of England. No existing DLA claimants will be asked to claim PIP at

this point. DLA recipients who wish to claim PIP in advance of being migrated, referred to by the DWP as “self-selectors”, will not be allowed to claim it at this stage.

From June 2013 – New claims to PIP will be taken in all remaining areas of Great Britain. The DWP will not accept new claims for DLA from anyone aged 16-64, unless they are making a renewal claim from a fixed term DLA award which is due to expire before the end of February 2014. These claimants will re-claim DLA, and where entitlement continues will be invited to claim PIP at a later stage.

From October 2013 – The following DLA recipients will begin to be invited to claim PIP:

- Children turning 16 (unless the child is terminally ill)
- People reporting changes of circumstances which would affect their rate of payment (this does not include payability decisions as a result of going into a care home, hospital or prison or other changes of circumstances e.g. change of address). The rate of DLA will not be adjusted;
- Fixed-term DLA award recipients whose award expires from the end of February 2014 (reassessment activity starts approximately 20 weeks before existing DLA awards end); and
- Self-selectors (includes those with indefinite or fixed-term awards).

From October 2015 – All the remaining claimants in receipt of a DLA award will be invited to make a claim for PIP. DWP will randomly select those recipients of DLA in receipt of an indefinite award or a fixed term award, and notify them about what they need to do to claim PIP. DWP will invite claims as early as possible from recipients who have turned 65 after 8 April 2013, when PIP was first introduced.

(Information from Disability Rights UK)

There have already been a number of changes from the original draft rules for PIP and there may be further changes to come in time. You should try to get advice before applying for PIP and certainly before you go for a change of circumstances review of an existing DLA award. However there is a shortage of expertise in Calderdale therefore you may need to make your own enquiries.

➤ **McVey invites ridicule as she dismisses her own PIP figures**

A minister has refused to admit that her government has tightened eligibility for support for people with the highest mobility needs, even though her own department’s figures prove that it has.

Esther McVey, the Conservative minister for disabled people, was giving evidence to the Commons Work and Pensions committee for the first time since her ministerial appointment.

She repeatedly insisted that she wanted to provide “clarity” on the replacement of disability living allowance (DLA) with the new personal independence payment (PIP) for working-age disabled people.

But McVey then claimed that the latest changes to the assessment criteria for the PIP mobility component would not lead to fewer disabled people receiving the enhanced rate, even though she was told by Labour MP Sheila Gilmore that the government’s own document shows the changes would mean 51,000 fewer people eligible by 2018.

Despite the government publishing them last month, McVey refused to comment on the numbers, saying she was only “accountable” for the reforms until the next election in 2015.

She said the government’s 2018 figures were “hypothetical”, because there would be a review of the PIP reforms in 2014, and added: “I don’t think it’s correct to pursue those incorrect [Department for Work and Pensions] numbers.”

McVey claimed the latest changes provided “clarity” to “what was otherwise a very vague criteria”.

Previous drafts of the PIP eligibility criteria stated that a claimant who could not walk “up to” 50 metres without using a self-propelled wheelchair would be entitled to the enhanced rate of the mobility component of PIP, making them eligible to lease a Motability vehicle.

But last month’s final draft of the assessment criteria states that a PIP claimant would be eligible for the enhanced rate if they “can stand and then move more than one metre but no more than 20 metres, either aided or unaided”.

The move from 50 metres to 20 has caused concern and anger among disabled activists, peers, MPs, and a string of disability organisations.

Gilmore told McVey that 20 metres was “a very short distance”, and asked whether it was “purely coincidental” that the numbers who would be eligible for the enhanced rate in 2018 had fallen following the latest changes.

Gilmore said after the meeting that the changes were now “as clear as mud”, accused DWP of being “deceptive” in the way it had consulted people over the changes, and said McVey’s refusal to discuss DWP’s own 2018 figures was “absurd”.

The disabled Liberal Democrat peer Baroness [Celia] Thomas said the sudden change from 50 metres to 20 had “shaken my faith in the whole process”.

She added: “It’s a terrible mess and just shows how stupid they were to alter the regulations at the last minute.”

A Department for Work and Pensions spokesman again declined to admit that eligibility had been tightened.

Meanwhile, Baroness [Tanni] Grey-Thompson has warned fellow peers that the “lack of consultation with disabled people and all supporting evidence from experts in disability access as to what distance enables practical mobility and participation mean that there is a real risk that this issue will be open to judicial review”.

Lord Freud, the Conservative welfare reform minister, insisted that the change “has made it clearer and simpler” and “has not changed the numbers affected”.

But after Lord Sterling, the Conservative chair and co-founder of the Motability car scheme, said there was “concern among disabled people” at the change from 50 metres to 20 – believed to be the first time he has spoken out over the PIP changes – Lord Freud agreed to consider “further communication with the relevant parties” on the issue.

Lord Freud was also asked by peers why the government had left out from the criteria the need to be able to perform the activities laid out in the PIP assessment “reliably, safely, repeatedly and in a timely manner”, another key issue that campaigners have been raising since the final draft was published last month.

Baroness Thomas, her party’s former work and pensions spokeswoman, said the number of appeals would “rocket” and there would be “such a period of uncertainty in so many ways for so many people”, if the words were not included in regulations.

At present the words are included in guidance, which does not have the same statutory force as regulations.

Lord Freud said the government was “urgently” looking at how to put the words into the regulations “in a way that works legally”.

News provided by John Pring at www.disabilitynewsservice.com (Jan 2013)

➤ **Bedroom Tax**



Welfare reforms will cut the amount of benefit that people can get if they are deemed to have a spare bedroom in their council or housing association home. This measure will apply from **April 2013** to tenants of working age.

The power to do this is contained in the Welfare Reform Act 2012 and is commonly referred to as the bedroom tax, size criteria or under-occupation penalty.

What do the changes mean?

The size criteria in the social rented sector will restrict housing benefit to allow for one bedroom for each person or couple living as part of the household, with the following exceptions:

- Children under 16 of same gender expected to share

- Children under 10 expected to share regardless of gender
- Disabled tenant or partner who needs non-resident overnight carer will be allowed an extra bedroom

Who will be affected?

All claimants who are deemed to have at least one spare bedroom will be affected. This includes:

- Separated parents who share the care of their children and who may have been allocated an extra bedroom to reflect this. Benefit rules mean that there must be a designated 'main carer' for children (who receives the extra benefit)
- Couples who use their 'spare' bedroom when recovering from an illness or operation
- Foster carers because foster children are not counted as part of the household for benefit purposes
- Parents whose children visit but are not part of the household
- Families with disabled children
- Disabled people including people living in adapted or specially designed properties.

How much will people lose?

The cut will be a fixed percentage of the Housing Benefit eligible rent. The Government has said that this will be set at 14% for one extra bedroom and 25% for two or more extra bedrooms.

The Government's impact assessment shows that those affected will lose an average of £14 a week. Housing association tenants are expected to lose £16 a week on average.

How many people will see their benefit cut?

The proposal will affect an estimated 660,000 working-age social tenants – 31% of existing working-age housing benefit claimants in the social sector. The majority of these people have only one extra bedroom.

Do the regulations define a bedroom?

No. The Government's view is that it is for landlords to specify the size of the property and this ought to match what is on any tenancy agreement and reflect the level of rent charged.

The bedroom tax will not take account of whether a room is a single or a double bedroom. A room either is a bedroom or is not a bedroom.

Pennine Housing 2000 has produced an online bedroom Tax calculator to find it visit:

<http://www.ph2k.org.uk/?page=phbenefitcalc>

You can also find out more from Gov .uk by going to <https://www.gov.uk/>

➤ **Disabled people with highest needs ‘will lose 19 times more’ than average**

Disabled people with the highest support needs will lose 19 times more than the average person as a result of “devastating” government cuts to services and benefits, according to a new report.

The report, *A Fair Society? How the Cuts Target Disabled People*, accuses the government of aiming the bulk of its cuts at areas that are “least likely to cause embarrassment” to MPs, even though these are areas that are “likely to be most socially damaging”

The report, written for The Campaign for a Fair Society (CFS) – an alliance of disabled people and disability organisations – says that cuts to English local government and benefits make up more than half of all the coalition’s cuts, even though they represent only about a quarter of central government spending.

Because government cuts have been targeted on local government, the report argues, and more than three-fifths of council spending is on social care, the cuts “are not fair but targeted, and they target people in poverty, disabled people and their families”.

Jim Elder-Woodward, a leading disabled campaigner and chair of CFS’s UK steering group, said the report showed the government was targeting disabled people and those on welfare and that the cuts were “unjustified, unfair and extremely dangerous”.

He said: “There are much more humane ways of cutting the deficit, other than cutting the lifelines to so many vulnerable people.”

And he accused the government of “vilifying and stigmatising” those on welfare as “lazy scroungers” and “scoundrels, crooks and n’er-do-wells”.

Dr Simon Duffy, director of The Centre for Welfare Reform, who wrote the report, suggested that spending on social care would be cut by as much as 50 per cent by 2018.

He says in the report: “It is difficult to overstate the problem here. These kinds of cuts (cuts to services that have historically always been under-funded) are devastating.”

The report points to cuts to funding for voluntary organisations, care and support and supported housing, and benefit cuts such as the closure of the Independent Living Fund, cuts to disability living allowance spending as it is replaced by personal independence payment, and the time-limiting and means-testing of employment and support allowance.

Duffy calculates that the poorest 21 per cent of the population will bear 39 per cent of the government's cuts, while disabled people (eight per cent of the population) will bear 29 per cent of the cuts, and disabled people with the highest support needs (two per cent of the population) will bear 15 per cent of the cuts.

He says the combination of cuts to benefits and services means disabled people will lose an average £4,410 per person – nine times more than the burden placed on the average person.

And the two per cent with the highest support needs will lose an average of £8,832 per person – 19 times more than the burden placed on the average person.

The report repeats the call by opposition MPs and many disabled activists for the government to carry out an assessment of the cumulative impact of all of its cuts on disabled people.

It also calls for a halt to the cuts and a fairer and more sustainable welfare system.

Meanwhile, a new report by five disability charities – Scope, Mencap, National Autistic Society, Sense and Leonard Cheshire Disability – says the social care system for working-age disabled adults is underfunded by at least £1.2 billion a year.

A survey of more than 600 disabled adults for the report found over a third (36 per cent) said that – because of the withdrawal of funding for their support – they were unable to fulfil basic personal care tasks such as washing once a day, getting dressed or leaving the house.

One in three said they had fallen into debt in order to pay for their care.

Research commissioned by Scope suggested that an anticipated government decision to restrict council-funded care to those with “substantial” needs – as part of its new care and support reforms – would mean more than 100,000 people with “moderate” needs would be at risk of not getting the basic support they needed to help them eat, wash and leave their homes.

Setting the eligibility threshold at the “moderate” level of need – rather than substantial – for working-age disabled people would cost an extra £1.2 billion a year, says the report.

(16 January 2013

News provided by John Pring at www.disabilitynewsservice.com)

➤ **Handyperson service**

The Handyperson Service can visit your home to carry out small jobs you find difficult to do or cannot get anyone else to help you with.

Anyone who is over 60 or disabled who lives in their own home or rented property can access the service.

What work can the handyperson do?

The handyperson can do lots of small jobs. Examples include:

- fixing a tap washer
- putting up a shelf or cupboard

- fitting a door bell or key safe
- re-laying flags
- putting up a curtain rail
- putting up or taking down curtains
- fitting door and window locks
- Fitting an extra handrail on the stairs.

If you have any queries about any jobs you need doing please do not hesitate to contact us and we will advise if we can do it.

The handyperson can change plugs and fuses but not other electrical or gas work and no gardening or decorating. The type of work is limited to small DIY type jobs taking no more than half a day to carry out. Assistance is available for longer and more complex jobs.

What will it cost?

You will have to pay the cost of all materials and there is a labour charge.

If you receive a means tested benefit the labour charge is £10, otherwise it is £25. Means tested benefits include (Income Support, Council Tax benefit, Pension Credit).

If the work takes less than 30 minutes then the labour charge is only £5.

Mrs C said she felt much happier and that a weight had been lifted off her mind. She said that she now enjoys living in the property and feels much more optimistic about the future. It goes to show that even the smallest jobs can have a significant impact on people's lives.

Contact

For more information, or to request a leaflet:

- **Email:** handy.person@calderdale.gov.uk
- **Telephone:** 0845 245 6000
- **Address:** Handyperson Service

Doorways

18-20 The Square, Woolshops, Halifax HX1 1RG

➤ **Disability discrimination**

It is unlawful to discriminate against workers because of a physical or mental disability or fail to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a worker with a disability. Under the Equality Act 2010 a person is classified as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal

day-to-day activities. Day-to-day activities include things such as using a telephone, reading a book or using public transport.

The Equality Act 2010 provides disabled people with protection from discrimination in a range of areas, including in employment and occupation.

This means that employers:

- must not directly discriminate against a person because of their actual or perceived disability, or because they associate with a disabled person
- must not treat a disabled person less favourably for a reason related to his or her impairment, unless that treatment can be justified for example an employer may reject someone who has a severe back problem where the job entails heavy lifting.
- must not have procedures, policy or practices which, although applicable to all workers, disproportionately disadvantage those who share a particular disability, unless these can be justified
- Must make reasonable adjustments in the recruitment and employment of disabled people. This can include, for example, adjustments to recruitment and selection procedures, to terms and conditions of employment, to working arrangements and physical changes to the premises or equipment
- Must not treat an employee unfairly who has made or supported a complaint about discrimination because of disability.

Disabled employees are also protected from harassment. Harassment is unwanted conduct related to disability which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Employers should ensure they have policies in place which are designed to prevent discrimination in:

- recruitment and selection
- determining pay
- training and development
- selection for promotion
- discipline and grievances
- countering bullying and harassment

Questions and answers

Must employers take an employee's disability into account?

Yes. If an employee has a disability that is making it difficult to work, employers should consider what reasonable adjustments they can make in the workplace to help or schedule an interview with the employee to discuss what can be done to support them. This could be as simple as supplying an adequate, ergonomic chair or power-assisted piece of equipment. Reasonable adjustments also include re-deployment to a different type of work if necessary.

What can an employee do if they think they have been discriminated against?

If an employee feels they have been discriminated against, they will be able to bring a claim to an Employment Tribunal. However, it's best to talk to their employer first to try to sort out the matter informally, in order to minimise the negative effects on all parties involved.



Through the Acas Helpline (**08457 47 47 47**) you can get advice on specific problems, and explore alternatives to an Employment Tribunal claim, such as mediation or Pre-Claim Conciliation, where appropriate. *(Information from ACAS Website)*

➤ Calderdale & Kirklees Age UK

Cleaning Service

This service is open to older or disabled people throughout Calderdale and Kirklees. Our excellent team of Home Helpers can do your cleaning and help with other household tasks or even do your shopping for you. They provide a friendly face weekly or fortnightly, helping you to remain independent in your own home. For pricing and to book your home helper, call our Halifax office 01422 252 040.

Intensive Clean and Restore

We also offer annual Spring Cleans and one-off Deep Cleans when properties have gone beyond the scope of our Home Helpers. Deep cleans can involve removal of rubbish, minor

repairs, decorating and intensive cleaning. These are priced on an individual basis. Please contact our Huddersfield office for pricing and availability on 01484 535 994.

Handyperson Service

This service offers help with such tasks as small general handyperson jobs, gardening, decorating and installation of key safes and safety aids and adaptations. Charges are reasonable.

For pricing information and to book your Handyperson, please call 01484 535 994.

Garden maintenance



Cutting Hedge Gardening Services

If you are over sixty, or have a disability and need help with your garden and live within a six mile radius of central Halifax then the Cutting Hedge Gardening Services may be able to assist you.

Cutting Hedge is a horticultural training programme for adults who have learning disabilities and the people involved can help with:

- lawn mowing and edging
- strimming
- weeding and planting
- general garden maintenance
- pruning
- Leaf clearance.

The charges are £10 - £30 per session. The price will be quoted on the initial visit, and will be based on the amount of work involved.

- **Name** Louisa Clarkson, Daren Seymour or Helen Priestley
- **Telephone** 01422 250833
- **Address** Halifax Support Services
Chatham Street
Halifax HX1 5DW.



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