

Draft DWP Excellence Plan – Phase One activities

This plan contains an indication of the range of improvement activity that is going on across the Department to exemplify our service ambitions and change how we are perceived by internal colleagues and external stakeholders in terms of ‘trust’, ‘compassion’ and ‘transparency’. The list below is not comprehensive and excludes small changes and those that are largely related to a single benefit, e,g, changes to the five week wait for Universal Credit.

The plan is organised around the ‘pillars’ of DWP excellence (to be agreed with Executive Team colleagues).

Phase two will include further activity around building systemic and enduring culture change, improving capability, and further developing our communications (internally and externally). It will require close working across the Department. For internal stakeholders we will ensure that this plan is communicated effectively and colleagues feel confident in our commitment to deliver the plan.

Activity	Pillar	SR	Description	Volumes (where appropriate)	Launch period
Independent Serious Case Panel	Review serious cases and provide effective safeguarding	Yes	A panel made up of senior DWP Officials and Independent oversight members. The role of the panel will be to review the most serious cases and ensure that the root causes of failure are identified, recommendations are created and accountability is assigned at the most senior levels in the organisation for ensuring sustainable improvements.	To be confirmed as we establish the scope of the panel over the next 6 months	Q3 (from 30/09)
Develop and implement new safeguarding policies	Review serious cases and provide effective safeguarding	Yes	Chief Psychologist and a wider team are developing a new safeguarding policy capturing best practice from across Government (incl. NHS).	Not Applicable	Q3
Never Events – learning from failure	Review serious cases and provide effective safeguarding	Yes	Replicating the 'Never Events' process used in Healthcare (NHS and USA) and applying it to DWP (e.g. making contact with a deceased customer after we have been notified).	Not yet known	Q4
Develop progress measures for 'DWP Excellence'	Review serious cases and provide effective safeguarding	Yes	Develop effective mechanisms to monitor progress against our 'compassionate service' agenda and the 'Plan for DWP Excellence' - learning from the 'Avoidable Mortality' metric in NHS	Not Applicable	Q4

Improving our decision making capability	Develop how we make decisions	Yes	Initially rolling out Holistic and Empowered Decision Making across all disability related benefits – building on the tests in PIP Disputes, which saw an increase in overturn rates at Mandatory Reconsideration and a reduction in cases going to Appeal	TBC	Q1 2020/21 (some improvements from Q3)
Independent review of sanctions policy	Develop how we make decisions	No	Options on the approach to review our sanctions policy have been issued to SoS - this includes independently reviewing both policy and delivery of sanctions	Not Applicable	Q4
Implement new Quality Strategy	Become a stronger Learning Organisation	No	Transforming our approach to quality, assurance and continuous improvement, increasing engagement and ownership "in the line" with a particular focus on leadership and management behaviours required to enable our vision of great service	Not Applicable	Q3
Learning from case failures (VOC:AL)	Become a stronger Learning Organisation	Yes	Applying good practice from CMG by implementing a 'action learning' approach (initially across Service Excellence)	Not Applicable	Q4
Early Warning system (colleague feedback)	Become a stronger Learning Organisation	Yes	Enabling colleagues to rapidly raise concerns about individual customers and more broadly around policy and procedures	Not yet known	Q4
Building specialist investigative capabilities to identify the Root Cause of failure(s)	Become a stronger Learning Organisation	Yes	Learning from Healthcare, Defence and Aviation industries to have leading capabilities in identifying the Root Cause of failure and applying systematic solutions to reduce error and failure.	Not Applicable	Q4

Strengthening our customer insight capabilities	Become a stronger Learning Organisation	Yes	Bringing together our existing customer insight teams and developing new sources of insight to enable us to adapt our services quickly and more effectively.	Not Applicable	Q3
Reducing the impact of benefit related debt recovery on customers	Improve responsiveness, customer experience and service outcomes	No	Developing options to reduce the impact of benefit related debt recovery on customers. Advice on options is currently with SoS, but includes slowing down the recovery of debt, writing off debt in certain circumstances and enhancements to 'early repayment'.	TBC - dependent on different policy choices	Q1 (20/21)
Improvements to how we support customers with Terminal Illness	Improve responsiveness, customer experience and service outcomes	No	Review our process and procedures for supporting SRTI customers so that we have one way of doing it across applicable services (PIP, UC, ESA, AA, DLA) Review the definition of terminally ill for benefit purposes	c.72k per annum	Q3 Q4
Additional support for completing a claim	Improve responsiveness, customer experience and service outcomes	Yes	Ensuring that customers are provided with additional support where required to make a claim. This was part of our SR bid, we are currently developing options on how this is implemented	Not yet known	Q2 (20/21)
Improvements to potential suicide processes and management	Improve responsiveness, customer experience and service outcomes	No	Provide additional support for colleagues who are required to support customers alongside improving processes and systems (including introducing a checklist)	Not yet known	Q3
DLA child – reductions in renewals for certain cases	Improve responsiveness, customer experience and service outcomes	No	Current milestones placing limits on awards for DLAC have been removed. As a result those customers with ADHD and Autism (2 of our biggest application reasons) will no longer be required to have their cases reviewed at ages 7 and 14.	c.125k customers	Live

Improve process for lump sum payments to vulnerable claimants	Improve responsiveness, customer experience and service outcomes	No	Provide the right support to claimants who are eligible to receive a large payment from DWP ensuring they will not be put in harm by receiving large sums in a single payment.	Not yet known	Q4
Streamline the process of children moving from DLA to PIP	Improve responsiveness, customer experience and service outcomes	No	Developing a range of options to improve processes (currently in Discovery) which will improve customer experience and DEL	36k (19/20 forecast)	Q1 (20/21)