



Chapter 6 Other issues

Chapter Six – Other issues

We asked:

Question 26 – How do you feel we can improve the way these services work with other locally delivered services and/or local partnership arrangements?

Question 27 – We are committed to producing a full Equality Impact Assessment on the final proposals and would value your input in this area. Do you have any specific comments on the impact of the proposals put forward in this consultation on particular individuals or groups?

Question 28 – Please let us know your views about any other aspect of this consultation?

You said:

Specific groups/individuals that were highlighted by respondents for the Equality Impact Assessment were, in the vast majority, specific impairments/disabilities. Other groups that were highlighted (apart from the normal categories of gender, age, and ethnicity) were the self-employed, part-time workers and those in supported businesses/factories.

Overall the response to the consultation was positive and respondents were pleased to have had the opportunity to contribute. A number of respondents felt that the consultation failed to deal with a number of areas: self-employment as an option, the importance of retention, work with employers, the link with other programmes New Deal and Incapacity Benefit Pilots, and specific impairment group issues.

There were also a number of responses highlighting the need for greater links with health and social care services, and also better links with education services (LSE and Connexions) to assist the 16-19 age group. The use of individualised budgets was also picked up on by a number of respondents.

A lot of respondents also felt that there should have been more about removing the 16 hour rule, and the restrictions on obtaining Access to Work for voluntary work and work trials.

The largest amount of disquiet was about the re-contracting and the move to larger pan disability providers covering districts and sub-contracting to smaller providers. Specialist disability groups in particular were very concerned about the implications.

continued

Specifically you said:

“The role of Specialist Disability Employment Services should include enhanced responsibilities for working with employers to open up more and better employment opportunities for disabled people.”

(Social Security Advisory Committee)

“WORKSTEP is only available to people in paid work of sixteen hours a week or more, which excludes large numbers of people with a severe learning disability who may not be able to work this amount of hours or who may need a ‘stepping stone’ to full time employment...Mencap would like assurance that this issue will be addressed to ensure that those with more severe learning disabilities are not excluded from the new provision.”

(Mencap)

“DWP must consider how the new provision will cater for customers with high support needs who are unable to work for more than 16 hours per week. ERSA would recommend that the new provision is open to customers able to work eight hours or more per week and requiring in-work support to include them within the specialist provision.”

(Employment Related Services Association – ERSA)

“DWP must also focus on job retention as a preventative measure to stop individuals coming out of the labour market in the first place by providing support to them and their employer.”

(Employment Related Services Association – ERSA)

“WORKSTEP is currently only available to disabled people in paid employment of 16 hours a week or more, which excludes large numbers of disabled people... Scope would urge DWP to ensure that even more disabled people can benefit from WORKSTEP by reducing the minimum hours per week worked.”

(Scope)

“Ensuring that disabled people are supported not only to gain employment, but to retain it, is a vital part of an effective supported employment service. Action to reduce the number of people who fall out of employment is vital if we are to avoid disabled people being recycled through JIS, Work Preparation and WORKSTEP over and over again.”

(Scope)

“We are concerned that little attention is given to support for disabled people when leaving education and moving to employment.”

(Equality 2025)

How the Government is taking this forward

1. Respondents have provided a lot of very helpful suggestions about how our services for disabled people who experience barriers to entering and progressing in work can be improved.
2. A full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be available online shortly at www.dwp.gov.uk/resourcecentre/des-consultation.asp
3. We will continue to work across government, with devolved administrations, providers, customers, employers and disability representative groups, to further develop our ability to meet the needs and aspirations of disabled people. Indeed, we are planning to run a series of events over the next few months with these groups of people, to consult further on the design of the new programme, in particular.