

Equality Impact Assessment

Stage 1 - Screening

This should be carried out at the development stage of any policy or approach. It should be based on existing knowledge, data and best estimates of the impact of an issue and the people it will affect.

Name of strategy/project/policy/process/function:

This is the test version of a new style Attendance Allowance claim pack. It affects the AA1 and AA1A claim packs.

Name and Contact Details of the Officer(s) responsible for the assessment:

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Purpose and aim(s) of the policy, process or service:

The purpose is to improve the content and design of the AA1 and AA1A claim packs by:

- changing to the tick box format used in the new DLA Adult claim pack;
- making changes to improve the AA form more than the DLA Adult version; and
- bringing the AA forms up to Plain English Campaign's Crystal Mark standard for clarity.

Who will benefit mainly from this policy, process or service?

Customers, third party groups (for example, Citizens Advice Bureau) and DWP claims completion and administrative staff will benefit by having more user-friendly application forms covering more of the relevant information needed to assess the claims quickly and accurately.

The test form will be available on request in alternative formats:

- English large print;
- English Braille; and
- translation services are available for forms completion.

If the form is rolled out, we will translate it into Welsh and we will provide Welsh versions in large print and Braille as well as the standard version. However we will not be producing Welsh versions of the test form because the form will not be used for customers with a Welsh postcode.

What information and/or data (evidence) has been obtained to impact assess

this policy, process or service?

The new style AA claim form we are testing is based on the DLA Adult claim form which we rolled out nationally in April 2007. For the development of the DLA Adult claim form, social research methods (Qualitative analysis) was conducted with DCS working age customers in the early development stages. Customers were selected from four areas nationally by their disability type and gender. The report influenced the design and questioning methods of the DLA form.

The Attendance Allowance form has also been developed along the lines of the DLA Adult claim form using the tick box and free text format. This has been proven to help DLA Adult customers with completion.

During the development of the Attendance Allowance form for the test stage we have consulted with the DCS Advisory Forum and staff. The changes to the forms have been Quality Assured by the key stakeholders from inside the DCS business areas and also DCS Advisory Forum. (See appendix 1)

Has a negative impact been identified on any group?

No negative impacts identified

Is that impact legal? (i.e. does it unlawfully discriminate in relation to equality legislation). If the answer is yes, outline the reasons why.

N/A

Could the impact be minimised or removed?

N/A

Does the policy, process or service have a positive impact on any group?

Include the reason for positive impact and outline how and why this will be positive.

There will be a positive impact on Customers, third party groups (Citizens Advice Bureau for example) and DWP claims completion and administrative staff who will benefit by having more user-friendly application forms covering more of the relevant information needed to assess the claims quickly and accurately.

There will be a positive impact for customers who require communications in alternative formats. We are promoting alternative formats by adding a new question to the form which asks the customer how they want to be contacted in the future. This refers to the alternative formats of Braille, large print, audio and British Sign Language (BSL).

If there is no evidence that the strategy, policy or project promotes equality and diversity or improved relations could it be adapted to do so?

If the policy, process or service does not have a positive impact state any changes that could be made to incorporate this.

There is evidence in the paragraph above.

Conclusion

Summarize the outcome of the screening process including decisions made about proceeding or not to the full impact assessment stage.

During the development of the test form, we have sourced information from the extensive DLA research, test and evaluation stages. We now want to test the AA form for pension age customers. I therefore consider the screening process the only stage necessary in this

impact assessment.

Review: Neil Stead

Signed: Neil Stead

Date: 11/09/07

If you have indicated there is a significant negative impact on any group, carry out a **Full Impact Assessment**.

Appendix 1

Quality Assurance of the test form is carried out by the following areas:

DCS Business Change Management Team (BCMT)

DCPU Operations

DBC Operations Bootle DBC and Manchester DBC, both areas undertook the DLA test therefore have extensive experience of how the new style forms work.

Customer Services Bootle DBC

DCS Operations Assurance Team

Work, Welfare and Equality Group

DLA/AA Procedures Northern Ireland (for information)

DCS Advisory Forum

DCS Communications Team