



**Fostering dependency;
promoting poverty;
putting people at risk.**

The Impact of Changing from Disability
Living Allowance to Personal Independence
Payment (Easy Read)

Preston Learning Disabilities Forum

Below is a Summary of the work that has been done by the Preston Local Forum, Disability Equality North West, Integrate and the React Project

Why we decided this work was important



The government is changing long term disability benefits that we now know as Disability Living Allowances (DLA) to Personal Independence Payment (PIPs)



The government feel that Disability Living Allowance needs to be brought up to date and they want to save some money.



The amount of money that the government want to save is 20%- This means for every £100 that they spend on disability benefit they want to save £20



By changing this benefit to the Personal Independence Payment everyone who is now on Disability Living Allowance will be reassessed

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We think that by reassessing people the government are saying that some people are claiming disability benefit who shouldn't be claiming it. **We think this is wrong**



At the moment people who are claiming Disability Benefits for the first time will start to be assessed for the new Personal Independence Payment in April 2013



People who already claim Disability Living Allowance will start to be reassessed in October 2013*. This will be a gradual process.

(* [Government have changed it to October 2015](#))



Disability Living Allowance at the moment is paid to people who need help with their mobility or care due to their disability. The mobility part is paid at two levels called the higher and lower rate. The Care part is paid over three levels called higher, middle and lower rates.



The new Personal Independence Payment (PIP) will also be paid to people who need help with care and mobility



However, PIP care will only pay rates at the current DLA higher and middle rates (care). The current lower rate care will be got rid of completely. The two PIP rates for care and mobility will be called the enhanced rate and the standard rate.

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This means that some people with disabilities on the lower rate of Disability Living Allowance may not be able to claim Personal Independence Payment



We believe that Disability Living Allowance is essential to people with disabilities and allows them to live their lives.



We believe that Disability Living Allowance helps people with disabilities to work, socialise and live their lives to the full. Without this benefit lots of people with disabilities would really struggle.



The general public seems to believe that Disability Living Allowance is a benefit you receive if you are unemployed. This is wrong- lots of people with disabilities use their Disability Living Allowance to help them to stay in a job.



The government themselves have admitted in the past that Disability Living Allowance works and describe it as “a benefit to meet the extra cost of having a disability”



We say that taking any benefits away from disabled people will mean that the government is failing its most vulnerable people.

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People with disabilities are not at all responsible for our country being in debt, so why should they have to deal with benefit cuts.



The government say that they have not got technology to assess how these changes to benefits will affect people with disabilities **along with all the other cuts**



However other groups have managed to do this and have found that people with disabilities are hit with the most cuts. This also includes people with very severe disabilities

Our Project and What We Found Out



We needed to find out who might be affected by the change from Disability Living Allowance to Person Independence Payments



To do this members of the Preston Local Forum did mock assessments or interviews and asked people with learning disabilities the same questions that they would get asked during a proper assessment for Personal Independence Payment



Members of Preston Local Forum interviewed 11 adults with learning disabilities

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Another 33 adults supported in housing in the community were interviewed by a local provider

The results of these interviews showed that out of 44 people with learning disabilities interviewed:



- 15 would lose the **mobility part** of their benefit with the Personal Independence Payment Criteria

- 4 would lose the **care part** of their benefit with the Personal Independence Payment Criteria

- This would mean that 19 people out of 44 would lose **some of their benefit** with the Personal Independence Payment Criteria



- Out of this 19 people 4 people would lose **both parts** of the benefit and would **not get any money at all** with the Personal Independence Payment Criteria

However



- Out of 44 people interviewed 10 people with learning disabilities would actually move up to the higher rate of mobility and **get more money** with the Personal Independence Payment Criteria

- 14 people would move up to the higher rate of care and **get more money** with the Personal Independence Payment Criteria



Disability Equality North West interviewed people with **all** disabilities who at the moment receive a high rate of Disability Living Allowance.



Only half of those interviewed would carry on getting the higher rate when the personal independence payment is introduced. This would mean that a lot of people with **disabilities** would lose their mobility car



This could mean that some people with **disabilities** could not get to work as their mobility car may be taken off them and they can't use public transport



All the people that took part in the pilot also received extra care and support which is given by the local authority (Lancashire County Council).



This means that people with learning disabilities who get an increase in benefit from the Personal Independence Payment will have to pay more **in charges** for their support



This means there would be no gain for the person themselves from this extra benefit



People with Learning Disabilities who lose benefits through the Personal Independence Payment will be asked to pay less for their support from the Local Authority (Lancashire County Council) **as they will have less money**

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However **paying less in charges** is not expected to cover the potential loss of benefit , **so** people may not be able to manage their disability as well **with less money**



Those losing both mobility and care parts to the Disability Living Allowance benefit will also lose their Disability Premium on Income Support



This may lead to people losing their free bus pass, rail card and local concessions e.g. reduced or free access to sports and leisure



The result of this may be that people with learning disabilities will be less able to cope and become more dependent on other services and be more vulnerable to risk



This means that there could be increased costs on social care and other community services in the long run



One of the Government policies is promoting personalisation and independence through direct payments, and planned social care legislation which is meant promote investment in prevention and early intervention

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We think that by taking money away from people who have lost out with the changes is against the government policy on social care to give people in need of help money to sort it out themselves (Direct payments).



We think that a reduction in benefits and support are likely to hit those in the group most in need of such support, this could lead to people losing independence



We do not believe that support from the local authority will make up for this loss in benefits and income



It is hoped this report will help present evidence to the government and to the Opposition Debate due to take place in January 2013*, and may assist our local politicians to assess the impact on people with learning disabilities should there be no changes. (*Date still to be fixed April 2013)

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(Disability Equality NW), Mark Hampson, Mike Reynolds, Nick
Donkin, Rebecca Cave, Ulricka Campbell, Richard Wood.*



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