

**EQUALITY, POVERTY AND SOCIAL SECURITY****Social Security Experience Panels:  
Adult Disability Payment - Mobility  
component eligibility criteria****Background**

The Scottish Government is now responsible for some of the benefits previously delivered by the UK Government Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). As part of the work to prepare for this change, in 2017 the Scottish Government set up the Social Security Experience Panels.

**Department  
For Work  
and  
Pensions**



**Scottish  
Government**



Over 2,400 people who have recent experience of receiving at least one of the benefits devolved to Scotland registered to take part in the Experience Panels when they were launched.

## About the research

This visual summary sets out the findings from a report on Adult Disability Payment (ADP).



ADP is the twelfth payment now delivered by Social Security Scotland. It replaces the DWP-delivered Personal Independence Payment (PIP) in Scotland, and it will provide support to over 600,000 disabled people by 2027.



Over the next couple of years, people in Scotland who are in receipt of PIP or working-age Disability Living Allowance (DLA) will be transferred to ADP.

This research explored participants' views on the eligibility criteria for mobility component of ADP, including:



- Moving Around
- Planning and Following Journeys
- Fluctuating Conditions



Participants were asked about their experiences of using the descriptors, their thoughts on any positive or negative aspects of the descriptors, and any ideas they had for how mobility needs could be considered differently

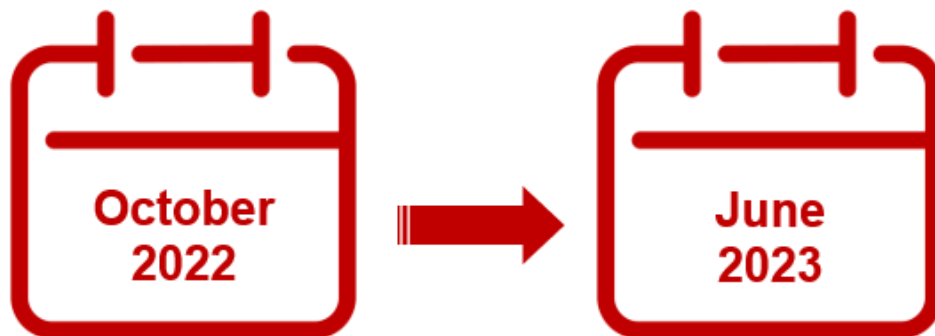
The research involved:



15 interviews and 3 focus groups with Experience Panels members.

191 survey responses from Experience Panels members

The research ran from October 2022 to June 2023.



## Moving Around criteria

Many participants and respondents criticised the use of distances within the criteria.

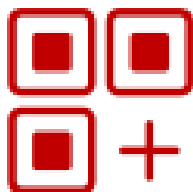


Suggestions included revising the distances used or removing them altogether. Many participants stated that they found the distances abstract and difficult to relate to their own mobility.

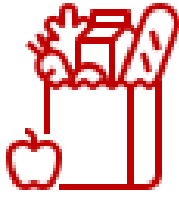
Quote from panel member:



“It is really difficult. I’m not really sure of the distances, like, how far? Like, the window to the door there, how far is it to there?”



Many participants highlighted additional factors that they felt should be considered, including pain, consequences of movement, surfaces, time, balance and the effects of medication.



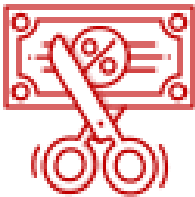
Some participants suggested that a better way to understand mobility would be to include categories for everyday tasks and situations, such as carrying shopping.



Some participants wanted to have additional space in their application form to describe how their condition affects their mobility. 75 per cent of survey respondents agreed with this suggestion.



Others commented that they were unsure how their use of a mobility aid related to the criteria. Several expressed a preference for mobility to be considered only on the basis of unaided movement.



Participants highlighted additional costs that they faced due to reduced mobility, including increased transport costs, increased expenses around the home, and extra outlay on some household items.

## Planning and Following Journeys criteria



Some participants expressed confusion over which areas were being considered in the Planning and Following Journeys section. They were uncertain whether the descriptors were relating to only physical, or physical and psychological aspects.

Others felt that different elements of planning and following journeys needed to be considered separately. Suggestions included:



Separating planning from following journeys. 83 per cent of survey respondents agreed with this suggestion.



Addressing mental health, cognitive and physical conditions separately.



Using separate criteria for familiar and unfamiliar journeys. 77 per cent of survey respondents agreed with this suggestion.

Quote from panel member:



“I think it needs to separate where you’ve got a familiar journey that you do every week, or something that’s out of the ordinary.”



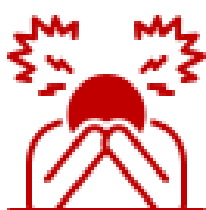
Some participants and respondents felt that it was important to account for differences in types of journey. For example, where different modes of transport are more challenging for someone.



Others stated that the criteria do not cover a person's ability to navigate any obstacles that are encountered on a journey, such as roadworks or diversions.



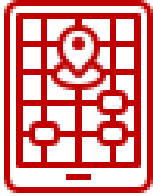
A few highlighted that people may experience varying abilities during a journey. Examples of what could affect a person's ability included mental tiredness ('brain fog'), physical fatigue, and unpredictable conditions.



Several participants and respondents noted that the distress caused by planning a journey could be very significant, without fully preventing travel. Others suggested that situations where someone experienced distress should score more points.



A few wanted to see a clear definition of what constitutes overwhelming psychological distress. 76 per cent of survey respondents agreed with this suggestion.



Some comments reflected uncertainty around what counts as an orientation aid when planning and following a journey.

One participant suggested that these should not be considered during decision-making, so that only a person's unaided ability is considered. 71 per cent of survey respondents agreed with this.

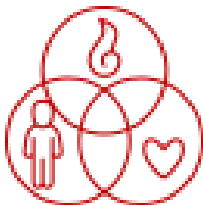
## Fluctuating Conditions criteria



Some participants provided positive feedback on the fluctuating conditions criteria. These included that the 50 per cent format was an improvement, and that changes placing an increased focus on time, safety and fatigue were welcome.



However, others commented that they found the criteria to be too complicated and confusing. Many said that they found it difficult to think of how their conditions affected them in terms of percentages or averages.

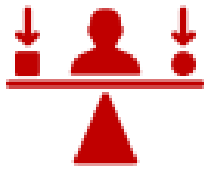


Others stated that they needed a more flexible and holistic way to describe how their fluctuating condition affected them. 86 per cent of survey respondents agreed with this suggestion.

Quote from panel member:



“What you have to do is allow flexibility and how that flexibility comes out with assessing is that you need to look at that person as an individual, be holistic with them.”



Many described the unpredictability of fluctuations as a major challenge to measuring their conditions against the criteria. Several referred to how their condition can be suddenly triggered by a wide range of different factors.



Others felt that there should be automatic qualification for certain conditions. Almost all (93 per cent) survey respondents agreed with this.

## Cross-cutting comments

There were a number of points raised by participants and respondents that applied across all criteria or more generally to the decision-making process. These included:



That the decision-making process needs to be tailored to the particular conditions that an individual has.



That mental health needs to be considered separately from mobility issues. 58 per cent of survey respondents agreed with this, however almost a fifth (18 per cent) disagreed.



That the decision-making process should make better use of a person's medical history or the input of health professionals to determine how they are affected by a condition



Making the application process more accessible, including using more examples and providing applicants with alternative means of communicating about their condition, such as storyboards.

## **What's next?**

The Scottish Government is committed to an independent review of ADP. As part of this review, it is important to gather the views and experiences of people who will be or already are receiving ADP. The findings from this work will be available for the independent review to consider.

The Scottish Government will provide further details on the independent review soon.





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ISBN: 978-1-83521-606-4

Published by the Scottish Government, November 2023