

Welfare To Work for Incapacity Benefit Customers

- Background to Jobcentre Plus
- Overview of welfare to work activity
- Incapacity Benefit as a case study to illustrate welfare to work
- Future of Jobcentre Plus services

Jobcentre Plus Overview

- Formed in April 2002 from merger of Employment Service and working age part of Benefits Agency
- Delivery and co-ordination of the welfare to work agenda through our Jobcentre Plus outlets and outreach
- Building on successes of New Deal
- Obtaining the right vacancies from employers for our increasingly harder to reach customers (locally and through new channels mainly call centres and ICT systems – Job points, web eg worktrain)
- Building mutually profitable relationships with key training, community based, voluntary and public sector organisations, social enterprises, faith based groups, BME representative groups and employers.

Jobcentre Plus Development

- Traditional Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) model for best part of last 50 years – tweaks to benefit rules, programmes and increased conditionality
- Our boroughs at forefront of welfare to work agenda through.....
- ONE Pilot in Waltham Forest and Redbridge from 1998 to 2002 before Jobcentre Plus roll-out
- Jobcentre Plus Phase One Roll-Out offices in Waltham Forest, Barking and Dagenham and Havering
- North London boroughs and Redbridge will complete the programme over the next year.

Incapacity Benefit: Our process

- Customer calls our Contact Centre to make a claim for benefit (0845 600 1302)
- Financial Assessor Interview followed by....
- Personal Adviser work focused interview but...
- New Specialist Incapacity Benefit adviser interview
- Evidence suggests that people are more receptive at the 6 to 8 week stage from new IB claim as benefit issues will be resolved and those well enough to return will have done so.
- And now looking at the existing caseload

Incapacity Benefit: Demography

- Nationally 0.6m in 1978 increased to 3m by 2004
- Health remained same over same period
- 37,000 sick or disabled (IS, IB, SDA) for 4 North East London Boroughs
- 11,000 on JSA and 18,000 on IS
- In LBWF over 10,000 sick or disabled (IS, IB, SDA)
- 7% of working age population in 4 NEL boroughs
- Nationally 1 person on IB for every 10 workers
- Almost half of all our working age benefit recipients
- About a third of our case load from BME

Incapacity Benefit: Claim Profiles

- People on IB are on for a very long time compared to other benefits
- Most on for at least 2 years or more
- 50% of IB customers on for over 5 years
- After 1st year, 20% chance you'll be on for 5 years
- Half of all customers are aged 50 or over
- “Outflows” are very low – if on IB for 12 months, average duration will be 8 years
- Too late if not caught early, longer on, harder to engage and if the person passes 2 year stage they are more likely to die on benefit than get a job!!

Incapacity Benefit: Health Conditions

- 3 qtrs of all have mild to moderate conditions, quite old data but– 33% MH (probably nearer 50% of all in WF), 23% Musculo-skeletal, 11% cardio-respiratory
- 1/3rd say they'd like to work
- General medical opinion is that for many people work is therapeutic (particularly for MH and fitness)
- 1st few months critical – need to give information, advice, support, encouragement, vocational support, help to build confidence
- SIBA's job but a role for HCP's too (if only to refer)

DWP Five Year Plan: White Paper last spring

→ Current system is about benefit and not work which reinforces culture therefore:

For people on IB, the plan proposes:

→ People will be paid a “holding benefit” (same rate as JSA) for 12 weeks until Employment and Support Assessment

→ Rehabilitation and Support Allowance – will be more like JSA with more conditionality to receive payment (ie active participation in work focused activity)

→ Disability and Sickness Allowance- (higher rate, will have WFI but ongoing participation in return to work activity will be voluntary)

Summary

- IB tripled over past ten years, largest group of claimants in our seven boroughs
- WFTW IB Reforms will address structural problems
- ...But we need to do something now
- Need to build better common understanding and referral systems between Jobcentre Plus and partners who help our hard to reach clients. For eg...
- Clearer alternative route out for stuck patients
- Also supports public health improvement
- Breaking the culture – talking about work is “normal”!!! (not a threat!!)

And lastly.....

→ More info on:

jobcentreplus.gov.uk

worktrain.gov.uk

→ Employer Direct 0845 601 2001

→ Jobseeker Direct 0845 606 0234

→ My details:

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