IPR Recommendations

Ref	Action	Progress Update
1	Employment and Support Allowance, Jobseeker's Allowance and Universal Credit to assure IPRG the wording on letters about approaching State Pension age contain adequate signposting to the Retirement Services claim process	
2	Retirement Services to assure IPRG that the process for handing over documents between DWP visiting and the relevant business areas are investigated to see if improvements could be made.	Paused due to Covid-19. No visits happening and the model may be changed when visits restart.
3	Inconsistent exploration of health conditions has been identified within Contracted Health assessments.	
4	DWP and Assessment Providers are working to improve the quality of PIP assessment reports. Improvement actions are identified, discussed and monitored following feedback from Independent Audit. This provides evidence of behaviours demonstrated during telephony assessments to improve the identification and actions to consider when engaging with vulnerable customers	
5	Explore opportunities for a fast-track link into Assessment Providers to make enquiries on behalf of vulnerable customer	21/10/2020 [redacted] will liaise with HCP to obtain named contacts for escalation purposes on behalf of vulnerable customers

6	The guidance and training available to staff around supporting customers with mental health conditions is extended from the current Six Point Plan [redacted]	10/11/2020 [redacted] currently undertaking a review of the 3 versions of the six point plan for social media, office based and homeworkers. She is sampling areas across the business to understand how the plan is working. She also has availability for speech analytics to be included in the sample to help identify how colleagues react to threats of harm. Update on the review expected mid-December. 15/12/2020 update as above
7	PIP [redacted] to ensure that the correct process is promptly followed on receipt of information that a customer has died.	07/01/2020 Response from [redacted] -We have been testing in PIP cases. This has been about reacting to the Tell Us Once notification and ringing the customer to clear all benefits issues for them, regardless of the product. It also has been telling the customer about benefits which they may be entitled to in respect of the death, Bereavement Support Payment and SF Funeral Expenses payments.
8	IPRG to be assured that Personal Independence Payment colleagues recognise what constitutes a customer complaint and to respond to customers accordingly.	
9	Child Maintenance Group to assure IPRG the quality assurance process in place for income calculations has sufficient rigour to ensure all income types are accurately recorded	
10	Letters sent to customers regarding income figures contained errors. Child Maintenance Group to assure IPRG that there is a rigorous process ensuring these letters contain accurate information for customers.	
11	Child Maintenance Group to assure IPRG that when letters to customers are not automatically generated, colleagues follow the correct process for issuing clerical replacements.	
12	IPRG to be assured by Child Maintenance Group that colleagues are aware of the criteria for Deduction of Earnings Orders usage.	
13	IPRG to be assured by Child Maintenance Group that applications for income variations are acted upon timeously	

14	IPRG to be assured by Child Maintenance Group that post returned undelivered is identified to customers and offered for re-issue once confirmed addresses have been established.	
15	Child Maintenance Group to assure IPRG that Operational instructions are followed to ascertain Paying Parents address when post is returned undelivered.	
16	IPRG to be assured by Customer Communications Team that the improvements made to system generated letter CMSL4098 are applied to the clerical version	
17	Internal Process Review Group to be assured by Policy and Service Planning and Design that consideration will be given to review the ambiguity of the operational instructions and policy in the following areas: Successful Habitual Residence Test decision, Acceptance of the Pension Credit claim and the Failure to allocate a National Insurance Number due to death	
18	Universal Credit to assure IPRG that, operational instructions regarding the work capability assessment referral process are reinforced and this action is embedded in the quality assurance framework to improve compliance.	

		10/11/2020 [redacted] currently undertaking a review of the 3 versions of the six point plan for social media, office based and homeworkers. She is sampling areas across the business to understand how the plan is working. She also has availability for speech analytics to be included in the sample to help identify how colleagues react to threats of harm. Update on the review expected mid-December 15/12/2020• Update from [redacted] initial feedback from the survey shows the following: Lack of consistency overall • We need to simplify the 6PP – it is too long, cannot read it easily when have an incident • Guidance – over 60% said it is not easy to find on the intranet • Review of 6PP – over 80% said they didn't know or it was No, the 6PP was not reviewed. Post event reviews need to be looked at – How do we support colleagues, not just on the day but later. • Signposting to support – 40% do not signpost to help/support • More support needed for homeworkers • Training – only 42% had received training
19	Universal Credit and Income Support to assure IPRG that they will consider a new tactical approach to enable colleagues to be more responsive in reacting to threats of self-harm from our customers.	There seemed to be a lack of confidence in handling these calls/customers. There were a few people saying we should hand off calls to someone who is more experienced or a team leader like they do in PIP (champions). The focus groups will provide us with an opportunity to delve deeper into the findings. We aim to explore: • When they would invoke a 6PP – is it only when suicide risk is identified, what about a customer who is in distress? What about where a member of the customers household is at risk? • What training has been received.do we need to do more on MH training? • What scenarios would be helpful for colleagues to go through to build confidence • Is 6PP appropriate as it mentions customer intent suicide/self-harm – should it be a support plan? • How do we learn lessons where we have invoked a plan – do we look at the cause/trigger to see if it was related to any action or inaction by DWP? • Access to 6PP – why are people not using digital copies and are relying on a hard copy? • What follow up do we do with a customer where a plan has been invoked

		• Form completion – use of UCB and or a customer declaration of suicide – should we have one form rather than two? When would you complete UCB?
20	Universal Credit to assure IPRG a review of systems access to be taken to improve timescales for clearance of work when customers are victims of fraud	11/11/2020 update [redacted] Although this would sit more with UC, I am not sure it would improve timescales, SCOLA access was more in relation to understanding progress (so escalations not done inappropriately). At the time there were considerable delays in the UC team making decisions, this is no longer the case, additionally further delays in communicating that decision to Legacy, again this is no longer the case. Access to JIRA would give a progress update, and in that respect would be useful, but formal confirmation of resolution/ decision from the UC SIL would still be required to repatriate benefits. Review set with [redacted] for mid-December to check on progress

21	Employment and Support Allowance to assure IPRG that additional support measures are in place where under/overpayments are identified for customers with complex needs.	
22	Employment and Support Allowance to assure IPRG they will communicate operational instructions regarding the Severe Disability Premium and this action is embedded in the quality assurance framework to improve compliance.	
23	IPRG to be assured by Employment and Support Allowance and Personal Independence Payment that additional measures are introduced, such as a call or visiting officer referral, before suspending payments for vulnerable customers where payments have been returned by the bank and customers do not respond to official correspondence.	
24	Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG they will consider the wording of the Award Review *How your disability affects you* form.	29/10/2020 - [redacted] SPD- A working group was set up (including Policy, SPD etc.) which ran until late 2019. The prototype was produced but not QA'd or signed off until an NGS release was assigned. SPD [redacted] are working with External Comms and BPTDs colleagues to bring forward the NGS release (currently planned for April 2021) for the PIP2 , information booklet and covering letter to an earlier date. The revised version has just been sent out on 29/10 for QA. PIP2 draft and supporting emails saved in Recommendations supporting documents folder. Needs to be updated - think this is going live March 2021
25	Employment and Support Allowance to assure IPRG that, where there is an extensive gap or delay between work capability assessment periods, to consider additional support to establish any changes in customers' circumstances and/or medical conditions.	

26	Employment and Support Allowance Contracted Health to assure IPRG that, where an assessment is suspended by the Healthcare Professional due to the customer's behaviours and/or medical condition, Independent Assessment Services to consider a 'paper based scrutiny decision' before contacting the customer for a further assessment.	24/09/2020 [redacted] to engage with Health Care Providers to identify any training opportunities for Health Care Professionals when conducting appointments with vulnerable customers. Particularly around the process of offering a paper-based assessment when appropriate
27	Customer Experience to assure IPRG that Customer Support Leaders identify local arrangements to refer vulnerable customers to the Local Authority and ensure these are visible.	
28	Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG they will consider changes to the wording of the AR1 form to ensure that it clearly requests details of all health conditions.	29/10/2020 - [redacted] SPD- A working group was set up (including Policy, SPD etc.) which ran until late 2019. The prototype was produced but not QA'd or signed off until an NGS release was assigned. SPD [redacted] re working with External Comms and BPTDs colleagues to bring forward the NGS release (currently planned for April 2021) for the PIP2 , information booklet and covering letter to an earlier date. The revised version has just been sent out on 29/10 for QA. PIP2 draft and supporting emails saved in Recommendations supporting documents folder. Needs to be updated - think this is going live March 2021
29	Employment and Support Allowance and Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG they will identify ways of sharing information to minimise the impact of concurrent actions on customers, including those with mental health conditions.	24/09/2020 [redacted] and [redacted] to Connect to ongoing SCP work to examine improvement opportunities on cross-product line information sharing
30	Employment and Support Allowance to assure IPRG they will consider how colleagues can be alerted to customers with complex needs, such as the use of a support marker on the Employment and Support Allowance system.	24/09/2020 Engage with [redacted] and [redacted] to Understand and share with IPRG, improvements currently in scope as part of the Work and Health Transformation programme to add context to current and future IPR Investigations

31	Universal Credit to assure IPRG they will communicate operational instructions for vulnerable customers who are referred for reductions in benefit and that quality assurance in embedded to improve compliance.	
32	Universal Credit to assure the IPRG that they will communicate operational instructions for customers who declare they have health conditions and these actions is embedded in the quality assurance framework to improve compliance.	
33	Personal Independence Payment Contracted Health to assure IPRG that Assessment Provider reports are robust and meet the agreed quality and to review the standards to ensure appropriateness	
34	Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG they will communicate operational instructions for the receipt of changes or deterioration to customer's conditions reported by telephone and these actions are embedded in the quality framework to improve compliance.	
35	Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG that Holistic and Empowered Decision Making is in place and utilised across initial decision making and Mandatory Reconsideration decisions	
36	Employment and Support Allowance to assure IPRG that they will communicate Mental Health Flag operational instructions, that this action is embedded in the quality assurance framework to improve compliance.	
37	Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG that they will communicate Additional Support marker operational instructions, that this action is embedded in the quality assurance framework to improve compliance.	

38	Personal Independence Payment Contracted Health to assure IPRG they will explore if the Assessment Provider booking processes can be revised, to not issue clinic appointment letters where it is known that a customer is in the process of obtaining further evidence to support a home consultation	
39	Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG that the Six Point Plan operational instructions are communicated to telephony colleagues, that this is embedded in the quality assurance framework to improve compliance.	
40	Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG that Operational Instructions for New Claims Discrepancy Tasks (Identification) are amended to include timescales to improve task clearance and reduce delay	
41	Employment and Support Allowance to assure IPRG that when appeals decisions are notified by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service that prompt action is taken to award arrears payments and avoid delays.	
42	Employment and Support Allowance to assure IPRG that there is a robust process to identify receipt of Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service appeal decisions and to withdraw outstanding work capability assessment if necessary.	
43	Universal Credit to assure IPRG that they will communicate operational instructions for customers who declare they have health conditions and these actions is embedded in the quality assurance framework to improve compliance.	
44	Work and Health Decision Making to assure IPRG that cases selected for the Incapacity Benefit Administrative Exercise are subject to full pre-case checks.	

45	Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG the process for identifying and locating a next of kin to enable benefit arrears to be paid is sufficient and embedded in the quality assurance framework.	
46	Personal Independence Payment Contracted Health to assure IPRG that Assessment Provider reports are robust and meet the agreed quality and to review the standards to ensure appropriateness	
47	Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG they will communicate operational instructions for reported changes in health conditions and this action is embedded in the quality assurance framework to improve compliance	
48	Personal Independence Payment to assure IPRG they will consider establishing timescales for decision making within operational instructions.	
49	Universal Credit to assure IPRG that procedures are changed to make the "Calculate Student Income" to-do a payment blocker to prevent future overpayments.	
50	Retirement Services to assure IPRG that Pension Credit will raise awareness of the operational instructions for the completion of case controls and this action is embedded in the quality assurance framework to improve compliance.	Single line management of the new Single Service – currently negotiating this but could happen in Q1 21/22
51	PIP to explore the introduction of an additional check where existing [redacted] customers fall out of the PIP reassessment process due to non-return of a PIP claim form.	[redacted] 08/1/2021 I have attached instructions highlighting current process for managing the PIP Reassessment processes. https://intranet.dwp.gov.uk/manual/personal-independence-payment-instructions/claimant-fails-return-pip2-pip-2-not-received-0 We amended our instructions in November 2020 to include an additional contact with the claimant to ensure they understood the implications of not returning the form and the potential impacts this may have on other benefits.

		However, There are two main potential places for the claimant to fall out of the PIP claim journey from reassessment. 1. Claimant has made contact with PIP, completed PIP1 (phone call) and has been issued a PIP2 but the claimant has not returned the PIP2. This is the guidance we have strengthened and updated. 2. The second area we are currently looking at is, [redacted] If they do not make any contact with PIP, after 2 weeks, we send a reminder letter and after 4 weeks we will check notes in [redacted] systems to understand any reasons for non-response (such as hospital stay, period abroad etc.) and potentially suspend/close claim. (example attached letter and instructions below) https://intranet.dwp.gov.uk/manual/personal-independence-payment-instructions/pip-invite-issued-claim-pip-not-made-0 - In short, where a claimant does not return the PIP1 claim form, we follow BAU process (issuing reminder letters followed by claim termination) with additional steps if the claimant has an Additional Support (AS) marker. - AS marker; where additional support needs have been identified, we will follow BAU processes and also try to make contact with the claimant, ensuring [redacted] payments are not suspended whilst managing the claim. We will refer to Assessment Provider and proceed to make a decision if we do not receive the claim form once we have exhausted all additional steps. (I believe we have additional steps to manage [redacted] in this scenario). - If no AS marker; where no AS marker and no reason for non-return of form/no response, it is BAU and effectively, the claim will be suspended and closed following process. We have already started to scope this piece as there is an opportunity to improve the way we manage non AS claimants. Any questions please let me know
52	[redacted]	