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Mr Mick Quinn  
Welfare Rights Officer  
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation  
Trust  
Welfare Rights Unit  
Foundry House  
The Oval  
Bedlington  
NE22 5HS

RECEIVED

13 MAY 2015

Our reference: N/A

11<sup>th</sup> May 2015

Dear Mick

Thank you for your communication regarding Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and the award review process.

I think it may help if I respond to each of your questions about the award review process.

Currently we are addressing award review cases and the decisions in an order of priority according to when that particular case's award is due to end and we are currently working on cases ending in June and July 2015. As well as prioritising these cases we are also making headway into the decisions for all award review cases. The process we use therefore allows us to identify urgent cases and progress them accordingly.

If it is decided that the benefit is reduced or removed the decision will be implemented from the date the decision is made, this will negate any overpayment or distress to the claimant.

If it is decided that the current level of award needs to be increased DWP will take action to implement this from the date the award review process began, which is the date DWP started the review process and issued the PIP 2 UI form.

There is a statement in the PIP7001 which states the following

'If your award of PIP has an end date, you'll be sent a letter around 14 weeks before your award ends. This letter will explain how to claim again if you want to'

The PIP7001 letter has generic elements to it, this paragraph above relates to decisions where the Case Manager (CM) has determined that a claimant is entitled to an award **from** and **to** a specific date and there is no paragraph stating that we will contact the claimant to make sure

Complaint Resolution Manager

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they are receiving the correct level of benefit. In these cases the CM has provided an end date and there is no award review date given.

It is in cases where an end date is provided that the claimant will have to make an advance claim if they feel that they may still be entitled to PIP. The letter which comes out 14 weeks prior to the end of award is called a PIP 0506.

Therefore the 14 week date does not signify the date DWP will provide a decision, we are, as said previously targeting the more urgent cases whilst also working through decisions according to the dates the report was received back with DWP. Also as all entitlement letters specify the claimant must keep the Department informed of any changes which could affect the amount of PIP they receive. This is the same during the award review process and this information will be considered by the CM when decision is being processed.

I hope you will find my response suitable, however if you do have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.