

Recording complex needs

Summary

Recording details of claimants with complex needs so they can access DWP services

Content

When a claimant with complex needs contacts the DWP, their customer journey must be comparable in quality and outcome to those who are non-complex.

Further information can be found at the DWP Vulnerability hub.

For DWP purposes, the description of vulnerability is 'An individual who is identified as having complex needs and/or requires additional support to enable them to access and use DWP services'.

Universal Credit claimants are classified as having complex needs if their circumstances increase the likelihood that they will have difficulty:

- accessing Universal Credit
- proving eligibility to Universal Credit
- maintaining conditionality
- maintaining their Universal Credit account
- maintaining their finances

A consequence of this is that the claimant may experience difficulties with:

- understanding information
- interpreting situations
- making decisions
- giving consent
- communicating information or their views
- requesting specialist or additional help and support

The following are examples of life events, personal circumstances and health conditions/disability that could impact the claimant's ability to access DWP benefits and/or use the appropriate services.

Some individuals may not require additional support even though they are experiencing some or all of the following examples:

- adoption - children
- age - older person
- age - older person - financial abuse (pensions)
- age - Young Person - 16 & 17 year olds
- bereavement, death - recently bereaved
- caring responsibilities
- children - childcare
- children who leave care/over 18 care leavers
- crime – victim of crime
- cultural barriers, language barriers – English not their first language
- debt/indebted
- divorce/termination of civil partnerships
- domestic violence and abuse
- drug and alcohol dependency
- gender recognition/transgender
- homeless (person without accommodation, in temporary accommodation, frequent change of address)
- just left hospital
- leaving the armed forces, ex-armed forces personnel and their spouses/partners
- lone parent
- MAPPA individuals (Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements)
- offender/ex-offender/prisoners/detainees
- race - immigration status/refugee/asylum seeker/people arriving from abroad
- redundancy
- retirement
- rural isolation
- suicide and/or Self Harm Declaration
- supported by Troubled Families programme

This is not a complete list.

Establishing whether a complex need has already been recorded

When a claimant who has complex needs has been identified, an account developer/telephony agent/decision maker (AD/TA/DM) selects the 'Personal' screen within the Work Services Platform (WSP) to establish whether the complex need has been recorded.

The AD/TA/DM then views 'notes' from the navigation menu in WSP to view any information regarding complex needs that are not in the 'Personal' screen.

Recording claimant's complex needs on the Work Services Platform

If the AD/TA/DM has identified the claimant has complex needs, they must establish if the complex need falls into one of the WSP category/categories and record this, these are:

- offender status
- carers marker
- ex-HM forces
- partner of (ex) HM forces member
- people who have claimed benefit for 22 out of the last 24 months
- NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) (NEET only applies to 18 year olds)
- homeless
- claimed an incapacity benefit within the last 6 months
- care leaver
- refugee status
- has special arrangements (if the 'Yes' radio button is populated, this will display active special arrangements)
- health barriers to work (if the 'Yes' radio button is populated, this will display the active health barriers to work)

If the complex need falls into one or more of the categories above, the AD/TA/DM should select all the relevant categories.

If there is a complex need that does not fall into one of the WSP categories, the AD/TA/DM records the complex need in notes on the claimant record and:

1. Selects 'Notes'.
2. Selects the hyperlink 'Add new note'.
3. Records the complex need(s).
4. Selects anywhere outside of the notes box (to save the note).

When completing the notes in the claimant's record, bear in mind that the claimant may fall into more than one category. The notes made by the AD/TA/DM must be factual and for DWP business use only. They should ensure they meet the requirements of the Data Protection Act and that the information is relevant to the contact, accurate and current. The note must not include any more information than is necessary.

Recording the claimant's special arrangements on the Work Services Platform

When a claimant is accessing DWP services, it may be necessary to provide special arrangements. On WSP this is known as 'special needs'.

If a claimant who has special arrangements has been identified, the AD/TA/DM:

1. Selects the 'Yes' radio button ('Has special needs').
2. Selects 'Special needs' (this becomes available when the 'Yes' radio button is selected).
3. Selects 'Add new special need' from the ribbon.
4. Selects 'Appropriate special need' type from the look up record as follows:
 - Private Room
 - Remote management
 - Room fitted with an audio loop
 - Text phone for hearing
 - Text phone for speech

- The claimant requires an interpreter to be provided
- The claimant will bring their own interpreter
- Trusted intermediaries
- Wheel chair access

5. Selects 'Ok'.

The AD/TA/DM books a specific work-related interview and checks whether there is an outstanding interview for the claimant with their work coach. If there is no appointment on WSP, the AD/TA/DM books a specific work-related interview with the owning work coach to ensure the claimant is receiving the support required for their complex needs.

The AD/TA/DM decides whether the claimant needs additional time to complete any potential interview. This will be set in the 'Schedule variants', not in the 'Special arrangements' box. See Booking appointments.

Claimant is aged 16/17

If claimant is 16/17 years old they are automatically considered to have complex needs. The age of the claimant can be viewed in the 'Claimant' screen within WSP.

Claimant declares they are having difficulty meeting their monthly rent/Council Tax

If a claimant declares they are financially struggling to pay their rent, they may be able to get further support and financial help from their local authority who have the provision to consider a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP). The AD/TA/DM signposts the claimant to their local authority and if appropriate sends them an SMS text using the template - UC LA Financial Assistance.

If the claimant would like help and support with their Council Tax payments, the AD should signpost them to their local authority and if appropriate sends an SMS text using the template - UC Council Tax Reduction Support.