Move to Universal Credit (UC) update

First of all, let me thank you for your ongoing support for the Move to UC pilot.

As you are aware, the aim of the pilot is to learn how we can safely move claimants in receipt of legacy benefits such as Jobseeker’s Allowance, Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance, Working Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit and Housing Benefit on to Universal Credit.

I am pleased to let you know that through the Work Coach face-to-face model we’ve been testing, we have found we have been able to provide claimants with the support they need in order to make the transition as smooth and easy as possible.. All claimants who have moved across have been paid their Universal Credit in full, and on time. For a very small number of claimants whose entitlement under UC was lower than their legacy entitlement, we have also successfully calculated and paid their transitional protection.

Your input to our approach through our series of national stakeholder events and our workshops and webinars has been invaluable. We had intended to host further stakeholder events. However, you will understand that global events have now overtaken our planning and due to the Coronavirus outbreak, the Move to UC pilot has been temporarily suspended. With unprecedented demand for Universal Credit, our departmental priority has to be to get payment to those who need it, as quickly as we possibly can.

This means that, for the time being:

* we will not engage with any new claimants to bring them into the Move to UC journey;
* we have informed (via telephone) those claimants we have already had warm-up conversations with, but have not issued a migration notice to, that we are not expecting them to Move to UC at present and that we will re-engage with them when business as usual resumes;
* we have informed (via telephone) those claimants we have already issued with a migration notice, but have not yet moved to UC, that we do not expect them to move and that their migration notice has been withdrawn. They will also receive a migration withdrawal notice by post. We will re-engage these claimants once business as usual resumes; and
* for those claimants who have already moved to UC, we will continue to monitor and support them for the first few months of their UC claim, as planned.

We will keep you updated on any developments.

Thank you.