

Personal Independence Payment (PIP) is the most common problem people turn to Citizens Advice for help with. The benefit was introduced in April 2013 as a replacement for Disability Living Allowance (DLA). Citizens Advice has raised concerns about how PIP is being implemented including wrong decisions and the double booking of medical assessments.

Local Citizens Advice have helped with over 460,000 issues relating to PIP since it was introduced in April 2013.

PIP is the most visited area of the Citizens Advice website with over 570,000 views of PIP advice pages between July and September 2015.

Between July and September 2015 the most common PIP queries were:



**111,100**  
Eligibility

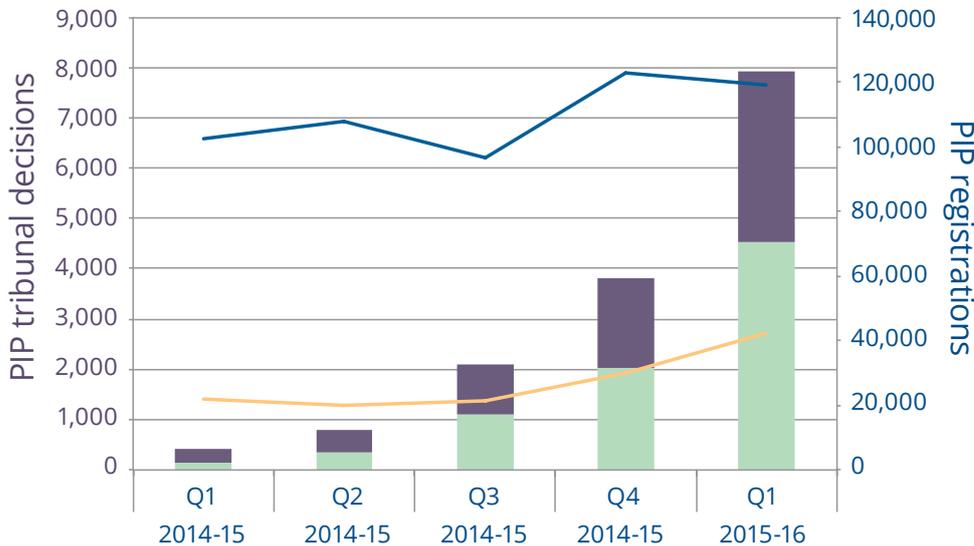


**61,750**  
Making and managing a PIP claim



**34,000**  
Challenging a decision and appeals

## PIP registrations and appeal outcomes



In the year to June 2015 almost 15,000 appeals about a PIP decision reached tribunal.

In over half of these cases the tribunal found in favour of the claimant, overturning the DWP's original decision.

-  Decision upheld for DWP
-  Decision in favour of claimant
-  PIP new registrations
-  DLA to PIP reassessments

Citizens Advice Gateshead was one of the first to receive reports from clients that their medical assessments for PIP had been double booked. If both people turned up for their appointments, the first person to arrive would be seen and the other person would be re-booked for a later date. Gateshead's evidence prompted a parliamentary question.

## Case study

**Alison Dunn, Chief Executive of Citizens Advice Gateshead, said:**

“Going for a PIP medical assessment can be a real physical and emotional challenge. We’re finding a number of people are arriving at their PIP assessment only to be turned away because their appointments had been double booked.

“The system must change so anyone who turns up for their booked PIP medical assessment is seen that same day.”

**Ben\* visited Citizens Advice Gateshead for help with his application for PIP. He has severe mental health problems and became extremely distressed after he was sent home from his PIP medical assessment when the appointment time was double booked.**

“The first time I went [for my PIP assessment] I was feeling anxious because I didn’t want to lose my money. When they made another appointment I didn’t like that. It’s not OK when they make those changes – it raises my anxiety. I wanted it to stop.”

\*Name has been changed

**“For many sick and disabled people applying for PIP is an uphill struggle.**

“With half of PIP appeals ruling in favour of the claimant, it is clear that there are still implementation problems with this new benefit. It is important to remember that these problems can have a significant impact on the individual involved from worries about whether they will get the support they need to a delay in receiving the payment.

“As more and more people are due to be reassessed for PIP, the Government must take action to ensure the implementation of this policy is fair to claimants.”

**Gillian Guy**

Chief Executive, Citizens Advice



**Between its introduction in April 2013 and June 2015 over 2,100 people were sent home from their PIP medical assessment due to overbooking.**

Parliamentary Question from Ian Mearns MP (Gateshead) answered by Justin Tomlinson MP on 30 June 2015.

**A survey of 263 local Citizens Advice staff and volunteers in October 2015 found:**



**1 in 10**

is aware of a case where someone applying for PIP had turned up for their medical assessment only to be sent home again as their appointment had been double booked.

**Of people turning to Citizens Advice for help with a PIP issue:**



**25%**  
have dependent children



**23%**  
are in work