

DWP Central Freedom of Information Team

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Our Ref: VTR 309 andf IR 61

DATE: 25 July 2012

Dear Mr Newman,

As you know the Information Commissioner's Office has been investigating the Department's handling of a Freedom of Information request you submitted on 25 January – our references Fol 309 and IR 61. In that request you said

You have explained that “The training provided for Decision Makers is intended to improve their background knowledge of medical conditions”. Can you please tell me where I can find the corresponding course syllabus for this aspect of their training?

The Commissioner's investigation has highlighted that DWP could have provided you with some additional information which falls within the scope of your original request.

As explained in our earlier response, Decision Maker training includes formal, technical, learning; work-based learning; job-shadowing of experienced colleagues; observing tribunals; etc.

All relevant formal learning events are detailed in the following attachments:

ESA Decision Makers

DLA Decision Makers

We are also providing as an attachment the detail related to the particular training products aimed at raising awareness of medical conditions.

You will see that there are two products which deal specifically with improving the Decision Makers awareness of medical conditions. The first of these – **'WCA Descriptors'** - is for ESA staff. ESA staff do not need in-depth knowledge of medical conditions as they do not assess medical conditions. As you will see from the module **'ESA Decision Making – LCW Assessment'**, the medical assessment is done by health care professionals and the ESA staff use that assessment to determine entitlement to benefit.

The DLA module - **'Medical Services Talks'** - on the other hand, goes into much more detail as DLA Decision Makers have to assess the effect of health conditions on care and mobility needs.

Also, you will notice that the expert medical input to the medical condition sessions for both ESA and DLA is delivered by an external medical services provider – ATOS Healthcare. The material they use is their own and DWP do not hold copies of it. .

We hope you find this additional information useful

Yours sincerely,

DWP Central FoI Team