



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Minutes

Title:	PIP Independent Assessment Services Lot Performance Group (Lot 1 and Lot 3)																					
Date:S38	[REDACTED]																					
Location:S38	[REDACTED]																					
Chair: S40(2)	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]																				
Attendees: S40(2)	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>[REDACTED]</td> <td>[REDACTED]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>[REDACTED]</td> <td>[REDACTED]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>[REDACTED]</td> <td>[REDACTED]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>[REDACTED]</td> <td>[REDACTED]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>[REDACTED]</td> <td>[REDACTED]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>[REDACTED]</td> <td>[REDACTED]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>[REDACTED]</td> <td>[REDACTED]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>[REDACTED]</td> <td>[REDACTED]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>[REDACTED]</td> <td>[REDACTED]</td> </tr> <tr> <td>[REDACTED]</td> <td>[REDACTED]</td> </tr> </table>		[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
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Notes:	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]																				
<p>1. Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>1.1. [REDACTED] S40(2) thanked everyone for attending the meeting.</p> <p>1.2. [REDACTED] S40(2) asked everyone if they were content with approving the Minutes from the December meeting; all agreed the Minutes accurately represented the discussions and could be signed off.</p>																						
<p>2. Action Points</p> <p>2.1. [REDACTED] S40(2) went through all the outstanding action points (see Action Point Log for further details of all outstanding actions).</p> <p>2.2. Update provided on [REDACTED] S38 and it was decided to close this action. [REDACTED] S40(2) then took an action to ensure that all Case Managers provide more robust narrative when referring Advice cases on in-house Award Review cases due to the Providers not having the previous assessment report to provide the advice on ([REDACTED] S38).</p>																						
<p>3. IAS Performance Update</p> <p>3.1. [REDACTED] S40(2) provided an update on recruitment, absence and attrition:</p> <p>Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruited [REDACTED] S43 Front Office FTE in December, which grew the headcount by 3 FTE. 																						

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- Additional December start date allowed ■ S43 Front Office staff to join IAS.
- IAS developing Regional and Assessment Centre recruitment improvement plans for hotspot areas.
- ■ S43 have restructured their recruiters to align to IAS regions and have a senior recruiter for each region.
- Candidate Attraction Events schedule e.g. open evenings, nursing events, radio broadcasts etc, being finalised for 2019.
- Role title for all adverts has been changed to Disability Assessor as research indicates that internet searches for these roles will be more successful.
- Recruitment portal will go live in Quarter 1 2019.
- Back Office specific recruitment pack is now live.
- IAS re-launching the “refer a friend” campaign.
- ■ S43 project is now live from 7th January 2019 and IAS are dual running this with telephone interviews to identify the more successful method.
- Daily recruitment calls put in place.
- ■ S43 (new recruitment partner in the North East) contract started on 1st January 2019.

Absence:

- 0.4% overall decrease in Sickness absence in December.
- Return To Work (RTW) governance being reviewed to ensure the right processes are being followed by managers.
- Sick pay terms reviewed against the rest of the health assessment provision market.
- Income Protection (IP) review of existing cases completed to ensure all cases are appropriate and that any appropriate cases can/have been moved on to the correct process stage.
- Strategy planning for 2019, including Jump into January and Stride for Pride initiatives commencing in January, to improve health and wellbeing.
- Promoting Mental Health first aiders (27) across the organisation.
- Sickness absence management training (face to face) to start in January 2019.
- Occupational Health webinars (three) completed with 100+ managers attending.
- Deep dive into Mental Health related absence commenced in Lot 3, which will be extended to Lot 1 if required.
- RTW Interviews being tracked and monitored.
- Atos-wide Stress Risk Assessment form being reviewed and re-designed to be PIP specific.
- Regional absence dashboard calls restructured to focus on improvement actions.

Attrition:

- ■ S43 Front Office FTE left IAS in December. This is the lowest Quarter 4 attrition since 2015.
- 17 people have rescinded their notice following positive discussions with their managers.

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- Weekly governance calls taking place with senior management team to identify common themes.
- IAS now focusing attention on leavers with less than 6 months service (37% left within the first 6 months).
- Part time recruits' learning curve is under review and development.
- New starters are being surveyed on their experience relating to the new learning curve.
- Back Office training and central training venue has gone live from January intake.
- Weekly Team Talk communications are in place to share key initiatives with HPs.
- The Reward & Recognition scheme for 2019 has been finalised and will be launch in February.
- The eXpand leadership training now complete. Two 2-hour coaching sessions and 'living case study' project to be completed for all eXpand attendees during 2019.
- Great Place To Work results will be announce in February, team agreeing communications and events/activities for 2019 to keep momentum going forward.
- DWP Visits (██████████ S38) started in January 2019.

3.2. ██████████ S40(2) provided an update on IAS performance:

- There were c5k less referrals in December than forecast, which was largely driven by not having started the movement of Award Review cases that were initially forecast.
- IAS Clearances were down by c5k. This was mainly due to:
 - Reduced PBR outputs from reduced intake.
 - Reduced PBR outputs as evidence seeking affected by Christmas period.
 - Front Office and Supply Chain sickness higher than modelled.
 - Other seasonal impacts higher than expected e.g. UTA, FTA, Leave.
- SLA4a performance improved marginally in both lots from the previous month and is expected to continue to improve.
- Cases over 55 days increased slightly. This was driven by a significantly increased UTA rate i.e. over 2k of the cases carried over from December month-end having their appointments rearranged into early 2019 (likely related to Christmas period).
██████████ S40(2) asked if there were differences in the capacity modelling assumptions for Lot 1 and Lot 3 when looking at solutions to clearing the aged cases in each Lot due to the different performance levels i.e. Lot 1 has 1,605 cases over 55 days and Lot 3 has 5,065 at December month-end. ██████████ S40(2) took an action to see if the capacity modelling assumptions are different per Lot and to provide an explanation around the assumptions to ██████████ S40(2) and ██████████ S40(2) (██████████ S43).
- IAS recruited 26 FTE in December against an expectation of 27. Attrition and FTE changes were -23 against an overall expectation of -23. This led to a growth in FTE of 3.0.
- The growth of 3.0 FTE has taken IAS to a total of 752.5 FTE against their planned level of 763.0 and sees IAS continuing to move in the right direction.

- Front Office sickness remains high at 15.0% and this is partially driven by seasonal trends. IAS remain focused on ensuring absence management processes are complied with.
- The PBR rate in December was lower than recent months due to further evidence being harder to obtain over the Christmas period. IAS have taken the decision to hold onto the cases they believe a PBR can be completed and will review them again in January.

3.3. [REDACTED] S40(2) provided an updated on feedback from stakeholder forums and her engagement with claimants and Disability Rights Groups (DRGs):

Appeals:

- Early response to new appeal tribunal feedback loop is good but questions are regularly asked if appeal details are being fed back on every appeal. Not all appeals have a DWP Presenting Officer so feedback cannot be provided on each or individual appeals hearings.

Assessment Appointments:

- Issues raised regarding claimants only being given one rearranged appointment. [REDACTED] S40(2) asked if there was any further updates regarding the CR to implement a process for the claimant to be able to rearrange their appointment twice. [REDACTED] S40(2) took an action to get an update on the second rearranged appointment CR and to provide an update response to CHES and IAS ([REDACTED] S38).
- The bringing of an advocate is encouraged, but advocate availability may require a change of appointment when a change has already been made.
- Feedback provided by DRGs regarding a perceived inflexibility for Vulnerable Adults with “good and bad days”.

Video Recording Pilot

- DRGs wanted updates on the Video Pilot and any future plans regarding the implementation of video recording assessment. IAS have been invited to a meeting hosted by Capita on 31st January to go through the video recording pilot results to date, which could be presented back to DRGs at future forums.

Complexity of PIP2 Form

- Hearing this a lot at DRG meetings.

Further Evidence (FE)

- Lack of understanding of when it should be submitted, associated costs, return rates, return times, quality of information; still poorly understood.

Lack of Trust

- Of PIP, both of DWP and Assessment Providers.

Perceived lack of quality

- In the assessment reports and decisions.

General lack of understanding by claimants of the process

- Still lots of feedback from claimants that indicates not reading/absorbing information sent by DWP and IAS e.g. not aware they can bring a companion, can change an appointment, don't pay for evidence etc. IAS trying to address this with more educational content presented at DRG meetings and regular updates on the IAS website. The recently published DWP PIP DWP videos are still “news” to many

groups IAS speak to and IAS always provide a link to the videos. [REDACTED] S40(2) took an action to ensure OED look into further publicity of the DWP PIP Videos to increase overall awareness of PIP ([REDACTED] S38).

Blockers HPs are experiencing in getting FE from fellow professionals

- Quality/timeliness of GP Factual Report(GPFR)/Hospital Factual Report (HFR) completion and obtaining telephone information.
- Christie's Cancer nurses being instructed to refuse calls from IAS and ask for letter requests instead.
- Some GP surgeries have notices saying they will not provide any information for benefit claims of any sort.

[REDACTED] S40(2) took an action to ask [REDACTED] S40(2) whether there was a forum set up or needs to be set up for DWP/IAS/Capita to discuss issues experienced with the evidence gathering process with the BMI and the GP community.

[REDACTED] S43

2018 Round Up from Forums

- 74 Engagements with external stakeholders, including engagement with 17 new organisations.
- Excellent feedback from many organisations on the quality and benefit of Claimant Champion meetings and involvement.
- HP community fully informed on Stakeholder Engagement via fortnightly Newsletters.
- Targeted invitations to Stakeholder Forums for HPs with specialist backgrounds e.g. Huntington's Disease. Non-clinical staff also attending Stakeholder Forums to raise their levels of awareness.
- First "Claimant Experience Forum" workshop held in [REDACTED] S38.
- Condition Insight Report Portfolio continues to grow.

Stakeholder Engagement – looking ahead to 2019

- The next IAS Engagement Forum will be held on [REDACTED] S38 DWP participation at these forums is hugely appreciated by Stakeholders.
- IAS working closely with DWP Presenting Officer Managers to arrange attendance for clinical and non-clinical staff at tribunals and to raise general awareness of what happens at Tribunals.
- [REDACTED] S40(2) has recently set up Claimant Experience Forums to discuss a handful of problem cases to identify why they have gone wrong and to identify and implement actions to prevent recurrence of the issues. Clinical and Operational teams all represented on this Forum.
- Increased emphasis on meetings with Veterans Groups.
- Target engagement with certain groups to mirror DWP specialist areas e.g. NHS.

4. CHES Performance Review

- 4.1. [REDACTED] S40(2) went through the DWP Service Delivery Reports (LPG Packs) and highlighted the following key performance:

Lot 1 Performance for December 2018:

- **NR FTA Rate:** December saw an increase in claimant's failing to attend their assessment appointments (10.7%). This in the main follows previous December

trends; however there were also an unusual increase in the number of abandoned home consultation visits.

- **SLA4a NR Clearances:** performance for December improved to 70.9% (Red) pre-mitigation. There were 276 cases put forward for mitigation and all cases were accepted; improving performance to 72.0% (Red) post mitigation. The current run rate from this week's performance dashboard was 72.7% (Red).
- **NR Cases over 40 days:** there was a slight increase in cases over 40 days at December month-end (5,644); however this was due to less working days in the month and seasonal leave commitments in December.
- **SLA4b NR Cases over 55 days:** there was a slight decrease in the number of cases over 55 days at December month-end (1,605 and Red).
- **Clearances:** clearances were down from previous months; however this was down to less working days in the month and seasonal leave commitments in December.
- **NR PBR Rate (Clearances):** the PBR rate against clearances in December was 12.5% and lower than previous months and expected levels. This was mainly due to challenges with contacting medical professionals e.g. GPs, to validate and substantiate evidence and functional queries in order to complete a PBR. Due to this IAS diverted some PBR resource to Initial Reviews; however this resource was diverted back to PBRs from the new year.
- **Head of Work:** increased to 50,127 at December month-end; however this has reduced to 48,455 as at 21st January (this week's performance dashboard).
- **SLA1 U Grade Audit Reports:** in-month performance for December was 2.5% (Green); improving the rolling three month's performance for December to 3.1% (Red).
- **SLA3 Rework Accuracy:** performance for December was 0.6% (Red) pre-mitigation. IAS put forward 20 cases for mitigation and all were accepted, improving performance to 0.5%, meeting the post mitigation performance target (Green).
- **SLA14a Rework Examination Clearances:** performance for December was 81.8% (Red). IAS put forward 2 cases for mitigation, with only one case being accepted, improving performance to 84.8% (Red) post mitigation. Small volumes make this target a significantly challenging target to meet; effectively this is a 100% target.
- **SLA14b Rework Examination Cases older than 25 days:** there were four cases older than 25 days at December month-end. [REDACTED] S40(2) took an action to provide an update on the statuses of these four cases ([REDACTED] S38). No cases were put forward for mitigation as the key reasons for these cases being older than 25 days were claimant unavailability and reduced HP capacity in the areas around where these claimant's live; therefore the December month-end position remained four cases older than 25 days post mitigation. IAS continue to make best endeavours to clear all cases within the target.

Total pre-mitigation service credits were [REDACTED] S43; the post mitigation service credits to be applied are [REDACTED] S43 and the No-Pay Amount for SLA1 amounting to [REDACTED] S43.

Lot 3 Performance for December 2018:

- **NR FTA Rate:** December saw an increase in claimant's failing to attend their assessment (11.6%). This in the main follows previous December trends; however there was also an unusual increase in the number of abandoned home consultation visits.

- **SLA4a NR Clearances:** performance for December improved to 48.4% (Red). There were 65 cases put forward for mitigation and all cases were accepted; improving performance to 48.8% (Red) post mitigation. The current run rate from this week's performance dashboard was 50.0% (Red).
- **NR Cases over 40 days:** there was an increase in cases over 40 days at December month-end (14,056); however this was due to less working days in the month and seasonal leave commitments in December.
- **SLA4b NR Cases over 55 days:** there was an increase in cases over 55 days at December month-end (5,064 and Red); however this was due to less working days in the month and seasonal leave commitments in December.
- **Clearances:** clearances were down from previous months; however this was down to less working days in the month and seasonal leave commitments in December.
- **NR PBR Rate (Clearances):** the PBR rate against clearances in December was 15.4% and lower than previous months and expected levels. This was mainly due to challenges with contacting medical professionals e.g. GPs, to validate and substantiate evidence and functional queries in order to complete a PBR. Due to this IAS diverted some PBR resource to Initial Reviews; however this resource was diverted back to PBRs from the new year.
- **Head of Work:** increased to 58,052 at December month-end; however this has reduced to 57,458 as at 21st January (this week's performance dashboard).
- **SLA1 U Grade Audit Reports:** in-month performance for December was 2.2% (Green); improving the rolling three month's performance for December to 2.9% (Green). This is the first time since the contract started that the 3% target has been met, which is a significant achievement for IAS. Quality meetings between DWP and IAS are now focused on sustainability of performance and meeting the target month on month. ██████S40(2) took the opportunity to thank IAS for all the hard work undertaken to get quality performance to this level.
- **SLA3 Rework Accuracy:** performance for December was 0.6% (Red) pre-mitigation. IAS put forward 14 cases for mitigation and all were accepted, improving performance to 0.57% (0.6% to one decimal place and still Red) post mitigation.
- **SLA14a Rework Examination Clearances:** performance for December was 76.5% (Red). IAS did not put forward any cases for mitigation; therefore performance remained 76.5% (Red) post mitigation. Small volumes make this target a significantly challenging target to meet; effectively this is a 100% target.
- **SLA14b Rework Examination Cases older than 25 days:** there was one case older than 25 days at December month-end. This case was not put forward for mitigation; therefore the December month-end position remained one case older than 25 days post mitigation. IAS continue to make best endeavours to clear all cases within the target

Total pre-mitigation service credits were ██████S43; the post mitigation service credits to be applied are ██████S43 and the No-Pay Amount for SLA1 amounting to ██████S43.

- 4.2. ██████S40(2) asked IAS if the performance and service credits reported to the group accurately reflected the December 2018 position for both Lot 1 and Lot 3; IAS agreed.

5. OED and Operations Updates

- 5.1. [REDACTED] S40(2) mentioned that OED were at the early stages of the Failure To Attend (FTA) letter (issued by Assessment Providers) and 2nd UTA appointment test and learn exercises.
- 5.2. [REDACTED] S40(2) provided the following Operational update:
- **MH & RJ UT Judgment:** the YTD figure of cases cleared now stands at 215,013 (since 26/06/18), against a forecast of 208,128. Total awards now stands at 1,759 broken down as 1,076 under MH and 677 under RJ, and just 6 combined MH/RJ.
 - **OM UT Judgment:** implemented into BAU on 17th December 2018.
 - **Award Reviews:** Changes to the AR1 scrutiny process went live on 31st December 2018. The revised AR1 trigger issue date, whereby the AR1 form will be issued 6 months prior to the award end date rather than 12 months prior, went live from 8th January 2019. This will affect all award reviews where the AR1 is due to be issued between 9th January and the end of April 2019.
 - **Quality of AR PBRs:** there are issues with some Award Review PBRs where the new MH & RJ UT Judgment conditions are not being considered i.e. HPs are stating no change to the award but not considering the MH & RJ conditions.
 - **Pronoun descriptors in Assessment Reports:** there are more instances within assessment reports where there are alternating references to “he” and “she” within the same report.

6. AOB

- 6.1. [REDACTED] S40(2) asked [REDACTED] S40(2) if there was an update on the implementation of the IAS Complaints web portal, following the removal of the email access route from the IAS website for complaints to be sent by claimants to IAS. [REDACTED] S40(2) said that the project is still on track for implementation by the end of January and that [REDACTED] S40(2) was leading on this. Testing to be completed this week. [REDACTED] S40(2) took an action to provide [REDACTED] S40(2) with an update as soon as the web portal has gone live ([REDACTED] S43).
- 6.2. [REDACTED] S40(2) asked is there was any update on the SRTI test and learn. [REDACTED] S40(2) said that the test and learn was still in the evaluation phase.
- 6.3. [REDACTED] S40(2) mentioned that IAS were receiving the majority of Advice referrals in a morning, which was putting pressure on the ability to meet the two day target. [REDACTED] S40(2) asked if there were any specific reasons why the majority of Advice referrals would be coming through in a morning (referrals after 1pm have a KPI start date of the following day due to reduced timescales to clear within two working days)? [REDACTED] S40(2) mentioned that this may be a system issue. [REDACTED] S40(2) took an action to provide [REDACTED] S40(2) with a few dates where the majority of Advice referrals came through in a morning and [REDACTED] S40(2) took an action to investigate possible reasons and provide a response back to [REDACTED] S40(2) ([REDACTED] S43).
- 6.4. [REDACTED] S40(2) mentioned that [REDACTED] S40(2) had raised a query regarding DWP Digital being able to identify SRTI cases from an HPs user role and [REDACTED] S40(2) asked [REDACTED] S40(2) if there were any recent changes to HPs user roles that would change DWP Digital’s ability to check appropriate cases. [REDACTED] S40(2) took an action to investigate internally and provide a response to [REDACTED] S40(2) ([REDACTED] S43).
- 6.5. [REDACTED] S40(2) asked [REDACTED] S40(2) if IAS would have any objections or reservations in contributing to joint-provider workshops regarding derivations of MI to ensure that both Providers implement common and consistent ways of counting data. [REDACTED] S40(2) said that IAS would be happy to contribute to any joint-provider workshops.

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6.6. [REDACTED] S40(2) asked everyone if there was any further AOB items; no-one raised anything.
[REDACTED] S40(2) thanked everyone for their contributions and closed the meeting.

Next Meeting:

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] S38