Department of Health & Social Care | Department for Work & Pensions

Fit Note Reform Pilot - Participant Information Sheet

Introduction

The fit note reform pilot is designed to support people whose health is affecting their ability to work. Taking part is voluntary. Before you decide whether to take part, we would like you to understand what participation involves.

The person who gave you this form will go through it with you, to help you decide whether you would like to take part. Please ask if you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand.

What is the fit note reform pilot?

The fit note reform pilot is testing a new approach to supporting people with health conditions to stay in or return to work.

If you decide to take part in the pilot, instead of being signed off work with a fit note from your GP, you will be offered a referral to a new Community Work and Health Team for support. The service is called Enable and is delivered by Morecambe Bay Primary Care Collaborative. The team will work with you to understand how your health affects your ability to work, discuss what support may help, and agree a plan for staying in or returning to work where appropriate. If you are not well enough to work, the Enable Team can also sign you off sick.

If you take part, you may be offered a range of support, including:

- A conversation with a work and health professional to discuss how your health affects your ability to work or stay in work
- A workability plan that you will develop with a work and health professional instead of them writing you a fit note
- Advice and support to help you stay in work or return to work, or sign you off sick where appropriate
- Access or referral to other local health, wellbeing, or employment support services
- Support for your employer to understand and implement workplace adjustments that might help you

A workability plan can be devised instead of a fit note.

Am I eligible to take part?

You may be eligible to take part if:

- You have a health condition that affects your ability to work for more than 7 days
- Your GP practice is taking part in the pilot

- You are over 16
- You are employed

What is a Workability Conversation and Plan?

You will have a conversation with your work and health professional about your health and its impact on your ability to work. Based on the conversation, you will develop a workability plan together. The workability plan will be given to you instead of a fit note from your GP, to be shared with your employer (for example, if they need to pay you Statutory Sick Pay).

The conversation and plan are formed of two parts:

- A discussion about your health: This will include your current health condition and how it is affecting you and might also include any other physical or emotional or practical things that you might need support with. This information will be treated as confidential and will not be shared with your employer.
- A discussion about your job: This focuses on your tasks and responsibilities at work, your workplace goals, and any adjustments or support that may help you. This part will be shared with your employer, to help them support you.

Your workability plan may include:

- Whether you need any time off work
- What you are currently able to do at work
- What you may be able to do with adjustments or support
- Activities you should avoid for now
- Suggested temporary workplace adjustments (e.g. changes to duties or hours)
- When your plan should be reviewed

You should give the plan to your employer. It can be used in the same way as a fit note for purposes such as supporting Statutory Sick Pay.

You can ask your practitioner to show you what a workability plan looks like.

What information will be collected about me, and how will it be used?

If you choose to take part, we will collect information about you. We will use this information to:

- provide support through the pilot;
- run and manage the pilot; and
- understand and evaluate how the pilot is working.

We may collect the following information about you:

- **Personal details (**Name; National Insurance number; Address; Telephone number)
- **Employment information**

- **Health information** (Information about how your health affects your ability to work)
- **Support and work-related information** (Details of the support you receive; Your Workability Plan)
- **Demographic information** (date of birth; sex, ethnicity; disability status. This information will be used for equality monitoring purposes and to help us understand whether participants represent a range of backgrounds and experiences.)

Your information may be shared between:

- Your Integrated Care Board (ICB) and the work and health service delivering the pilot
- Your GP practice (to keep them informed of your support)
- The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), to support delivery and evaluation of the pilot

DWP may use this information, together with information it already holds (for example, employment or benefits information), to understand and evaluate how the pilot is working. The information will only be used for evaluation of the fit note reform pilots and monitoring how the pilots are delivered.

Whether you take part or not will not affect your dealings with the DWP, Jobcentre Plus, or any other government agencies. Any benefits you may be claiming will not be affected in any way, and any information collected will not be used to assess your eligibility for benefits.

As part of the evaluation, DWP may share your information with organisations carrying out evaluation activities on its behalf. DWP and/or those organisations may use this information to contact you and invite you to take part in activities such as interviews or surveys. If you are contacted, they will explain what participation would involve and give you an opportunity to ask questions. Taking part in any interview, survey or other evaluation activity will be entirely voluntary.

Once the evaluation has been completed and your personal information is no longer needed, it will be securely deleted. If the results of the evaluation are published, it will be online, though all results will be anonymised, so you will not be identified.

How will my information be protected?

Enable service delivered by Morecambe Bay Primary Care Collaborative is responsible for the information used to deliver the Fit Note Reform Pilot, and DWP is responsible for the information used to evaluate it. In data protection law, these organisations are known as "Data Controllers".

They are responsible for keeping your information safe, making sure it is used appropriately, and handling it in line with data protection laws.

You can find more information about how they use and protect personal information using the links below:

Privacy Notice For Patients - Morecambe Bay Primary Care Collaborative

DWP:

www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions/about/personal-information-charter."

What if I don't want to take part anymore?

Taking part in the pilot is completely voluntary, and you can stop taking part at any time without giving a reason. If you choose to stop taking part, we will not collect any further information from you for the pilot. However, information that has already been collected may still be used to evaluate the pilot

Your rights

- You do not have to take part in the programme – it is voluntary and entirely up to you.
- Your right to claim benefits will not be affected whether you choose to take part or not.
- If you decide to take part but later change your mind, you can stop taking part at any time without giving a reason. Information that has already been collected may still be used to evaluate the pilot, as explained above
- You have the right to see any of the personal information that is held about you. Morecambe Bay Primary Care Collaborative can give you a form to fill out to request to see this information. You can also make a request by emailing mbpcc.gpfed@nhs.net
- You can ask for your personal information to be corrected if it is inaccurate or incomplete
- If you have concerns about how your personal information is being used, you can contact:
    - Morecambe Bay Primary Care Collaborative; Named Data Protection Officer, Andrew Giles mbpcc.gpfed@nhs.net and
    - The DWP Data Protection Officer, Dominic Hartley data.protectionofficer@dwp.gov.uk.
- You also have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), the UK's independent regulator for data protection. You can find more information at **www.ico.org.uk** or call **0303 123 1113**.

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Participation Agreement

Fit Note Reform Pilot Participation Form:

Please indicate whether you understand each statement. If you answer "No" to any statement, the adviser will discuss it with you before you decide whether to take part.

1. I have read and understood the Participant Information Sheet.	Yes / No
2. I have had a chance to think about the information in the Participant Information Sheet, ask questions and have had these answered well.	Yes/ No
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time. I know that my right to claim benefits will not be affected.	Yes / No
4. I understand that my personal information will be shared with DWP.	Yes / No
5. I understand that my personal information will be shared with Morecambe Bay Primary Care Collaborative (MBPCC), the organisation carrying out evaluation activities on behalf of DWP.	Yes / No
6. I understand that the information collected about me for this programme will be kept confidential and used for delivering, monitoring and evaluating the pilots	Yes / No
7. I understand that I can see any of my personal information that is being stored about me.	Yes / No
8. I understand that once the evaluation is completed and my personal information is no longer needed, it will be securely deleted.	Yes / No
9. I understand that the findings of the evaluation will be published and will not contain my name or any information that can be used to identify me.	Yes / No
10. I understand that if I stop taking part in the pilot, no further information will be collected from me for the pilot, but information already collected may still be used to evaluate the pilot.	Yes / No

If you have circled ‘Yes’ to all the above statements, then please proceed to the statements below.

I agree to take part in the fit note reform pilot	Yes / No
I understand that my information will be shared, used, and linked as set out above	Yes / No

If you cannot sign the form yourself, you can ask someone else (an advocate) to sign it for you. The advocate should be:

1. Someone you are happy to sign the form for you.
2. Aged over 16.

Name of participant…….

Date…….

Signature……....

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Signature of person administering the agreement process:
……

If you sign below, you are confirming that the participant has understood the verbal explanation of the programme participation.

Name of advocate (if required) ……

Signature of advocate (if required) ……

One copy should be retained by the participant, and one by the Integrated Care Board.