

PIP Health Assessment Horsham Matters Resource Guide

The Personal Independence Payment (PIP) health assessment is an important part of your claim. Assessments can take place face to face, by video call, or over the phone. Any reasonable adjustments you requested on your claim form may affect how your assessment is carried out.

This guide explains what to expect and how to prepare so the assessment is fair and you can show and explain how your condition affects your daily life.

Before the Assessment

- Make sure you have completed your PIP2 form with detailed information about how your condition affects you. Have a copy on hand to refer to.
- Ask someone who understands your condition to support you during the assessment. They can help prompt you and support your answers or sometimes speak on your behalf. This could be a family member, friend, carer, support worker, or another professional you trust.
- If travelling to an assessment centre, plan your route, check where you can park and check for any accessibility challenges.
- To receive a reimbursement for travel costs, you can ask for a claim form from the assessment centre.

At the Start of the Assessment

You can ask the assessor a few questions to understand their background. This helps you know how familiar the assessor might be with your needs and how much detail you may need to explain. We suggested asking these questions:

- **Medical background:** “What is your medical training?” (They may be a nurse or other healthcare professional.)
- **Work area:** “Which area of healthcare do you work in?”
- **Specific qualifications:** “Do you have any training or experience with my condition or disability?”

- **Recording confirmation:** Ask the assessor to confirm if your assessment is being recorded, if you requested this on your PIP2 form. If not, we recommend that you reschedule your assessment.
- **Introduce your support person;** Agree with the assessor how your support person will help you during the assessment and when they may answer or advocate for you.

Phone Assessments

Phone assessments can make it easier to attend your health assessment, but they do have some drawbacks. You may need to explain verbally how your condition affects you throughout the assessment, since the assessor cannot see everything.

- Remember, the assessor **cannot see you** on the phone.
- Explain how you are feeling and what you are doing during the assessment, such as: Pacing, fidgeting, or using coping strategies
- Take breaks if needed and explain why you need them.
- Speak clearly about your difficulties, fatigue, or pain you are experiencing throughout the assessment.

Answering Questions

During the assessment, the assessor will ask questions related to the 12 combined activities on your claim form. These questions may be different from the ones on the form, as they are designed to check for any inconsistencies in the evidence you provided.

- **Take your time.** Don't guess answers or speed through them.
- **Avoid simple yes/no answers.** Explain clearly what you can and cannot do.
- **Your support person can help by:**
 - Rewording questions to make them easier to understand
 - Help you give fuller answers by breaking the question down into smaller, easier parts.

- Prompting answers based on your PIP2 evidence
- Highlight the correct descriptor to help guide you in fully explaining your answer.
- **Take regular breaks** if needed. It's important you don't feel overwhelmed and rush through your answers.
- **If you are unsure** how to answer the question, wait for your support persons' prompt before answering.

Important Things to Remember

- The assessor may seem friendly, but they are **not your friend**; their role is to assess your abilities and identify any inconsistencies in your evidence.
- Only answer questions related to your condition. Don't add unrelated information.
- Avoid answering hypothetical or imaginary questions. If you are asked one, ask the assessor which activity they are referring to. Your support person can help reword the question so you can answer using a real-life example.
- Fully describe your difficulties and how they affect your daily life, using real examples.
- Different questions are asked to check for inconsistencies in your evidence, such as "Do you have a pet?" or "Do you drive a car?" If these do not reflect your abilities or limitations, you can ask the assessor to note that they are not a true measure of your disability and does not reflect how your condition affects you.
- You can ask the assessor to repeat or review any answers you have given to make sure they are recorded accurately.

Remember: If you need help or further guidance with making a claim for PIP, speak with a member of our support team at Horsham Matters for a referral to an advisor.

Call or WhatsApp: 0300 124 0204

Email: support@horshammatters.org.uk

Helpful Links:

Horsham Matters – Support: <https://www.horsham-matters.org.uk/get-help-now/>

PIP - Easy to read guide: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/about-pip-what-it-is-and-how-to-claim-it-easy-read-guide>

GOV UK assessment Guide: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-independence-payment-assessment-guide-for-assessment-providers/pip-assessment-guide-part-1-the-assessment-process?utm_source=chatgpt.com

PIP - GOV UK Web page: <https://www.gov.uk/pip>

Horsham District Council (HDC), Council Tax Support: <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/council-tax-and-benefits/council-tax/council-tax-support-discounts-and-exemptions>

HDC – Apply for a Blue Badge: <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/parking/disabled-parking/apply-for-a-blue-badge>

WSCC Disabled person’s bus or railcard information and application form:

https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/media/lizc4bq2/encts_disabled_application_form.pdf

WSCC Household Support: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-and-community/household-support-fund/>

Age UK, Horsham: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/westsussexbrightonhove/activities-and-events/horsham-district/>

Carers Support West Sussex: <https://www.carerssupport.org.uk/>

Prevention Assessment Team: <https://www.sussexcommunity.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/services/prevention-assessment-team>