**Your PIP assessment: top tips**

This factsheet contains useful tips to help you prepare for your face to face assessment. The information applies to assessments held at an assessment centre or at home. This is also known as the consultation.

**What to do before the assessment**

We recommend that you review what you have written in your PIP claim form as well as read through the top tips from our PIP toolkit. You can visit our toolkit online at [**rnib.org.uk/personal-independence-payment-toolkit**](http://www.rnib.org.uk/personal-independence-payment-toolkit) or request a copy through our Helpline by calling us on **0303 123 9999**.

You can read what you wrote in your claim form. This is a good way to review the evidence that you have already submitted, and to remind you of points that you may wish to talk about in the assessment. It may also help you think about mentioning anything you didn’t already include on the form.

**What to take to your assessment**

* Some form of **identification** – your assessment appointment letter tells you what you can use as ID.
* A list of the **aids or appliances** you use – this could include a cane, guide dog, monocular, talking navigation app on your mobile phone, low vision aids, magnifier, software packages that read text, liquid level indicator, adapted chopping boards, finger guard, electric chopper, PenFriend labels, bumpons, shower seat, grab rails etc.

And if you have not already provided or submitted these then:

* A copy of your **Certificate of Visual Impairment (CVI) or BP1 if you live in Scotland and A655 if you live in Northern Ireland**. If you have only an old certificate such as a BD8 bring that with you.
* A list of **medication** that you may take.
* Additional evidence from **your healthcare professional** about how your condition affects you that you didn’t already include in your PIP claim form – such as a letter from your eye consultant, GP, carer, support worker etc.

**Take someone with you for support**

You can take someone with you into the actual assessment if they’re 16 or over. This could be anyone who makes you feel more comfortable, like a friend, relative or carer. If you want, they can take part in discussions and take notes for you.

**During the assessment**

**Do:**

* Tell the assessor everything you can that’s relevant to your condition, even if it’s already on your PIP claim form.
* Talk about how your condition affects you and the kind of things you have difficulty with, or can’t do at all without guidance or assistance.
* Do wait for the assessor to finish typing before speaking again; this will ensure that information you give does not get missed.
* Take your time – don’t let the assessor rush you.

**Don’t:**

* Exaggerate your condition, but also don’t downplay it and minimise its effect.
* Just answer “yes” or “no” to the assessment questions, but tell them how doing something makes you feel both during and after completing an activity, how long it takes, what aids you use or what assistance you need.

**Observations on what you say and do during the assessment**

The assessor will use the information you gave on your PIP claim form, but also record evidence from what you say and do on the day.

From the time you meet with the assessor, they will be making informal observations about you which can be added to the information provided in the report. For example, they might ask you how you got to the assessment centre. If you say you came on the bus, they may make a note that you can travel alone on public transport. If you walk into the examination room without guidance they are likely to note this.

You might also be asked to carry out some physical tasks during the assessment. Don’t feel you have to do things in the assessment that you wouldn’t normally be able to do. If you do them on assessment day, the assessor may think you can always do them.

**Travel expenses**

The cost of the journey from your home to the assessment centre (and back again), parking and fuel at 25p per mile can be reimbursed. If you travel by taxi, you must get the assessment provider to approve the use of the taxi before your assessment. If you don’t, they may not reimburse the fare.

You can ask the receptionist at the assessment centre for a travel expenses claim form before you leave.

**Further information**

For more information about making a claim for PIP, you can visit [**rnib.org.uk/pip**](http://www.rnib.org.uk/pip) or request a copy of our factsheet by calling our Helpline on **0303 123 9999** or emailing [**helpline@rnib.org.uk**](mailto:helpline@rnib.org.uk).

Our Helpline is your direct line to the support, advice and services you need. Whether you want to know more about your eye condition, buy a product from our shop, join our library, find out about possible benefit entitlements, or be put in touch with a trained counsellor, we’re only a call away.

It’s also a way for you to join RNIB Connect, our community for anyone affected by sight loss. RNIB Connect is free to join and you’ll have the chance to meet other people with similar experiences in our helpful, welcoming and supportive community.

Give us a call today to find out how we can help you.

RNIB Legal Rights Service

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