**Lothian Centre for Inclusive Living (LCiL)**

**Grapevine Disability Information Service**

**What is PIP phone assessment like?**

**Phone interview with the DWP.**

Here we would like to give you some information about this over-the-phone method of assessment that has taken over from face-to-face assessments due to Covid-19 to respect social distancing measures put in place by the government.

This factsheet has been written with the most up to date information we have from clients and other Welfare Rights advisors. Please, bear in mind that this method of assessment is evolving as we speak and the assessment may differ slightly from what we have discovered and shared with you here.

**Note**. We do not know if the calls are recorded or not - this is worth asking the assessor at the start of your call at your interview.

The assessment call lasts for about 1 (one) hour. If you have any concern/s about how you and/or your representative would cope with this length, please notify the DWP in advance about your requirements for adjustments (e.g. need breaks, need two shorter calls instead of one longer, need assessor to speak louder/quieter than usual, need for interpretation etc.).

Yourself/a trusted friend/a family member/a support worker/Grapevine can request a conference call from the Assessment Services, so that you would not be alone with the assessor during the call. This is temporarily substituting the physical presence of people who would normally accompany you to the assessment.  **Please note that Grapevine can only request this if you have filled out a mandate allowing them to speak to the DWP on your behalf.**

**What happens next?**

If you prefer a conference call, please let your assessor know about this at the earliest occasion. Then you can provide the phone numbers of the other person/s whom you would like to be part of the call. Alternatively, **Grapevine can pass on this/these number/s to the assessor providing you have filled out a mandate so we can share your details.**

* This means that the assessor can contact whoever you want to be part of the assessment.
* The assessor will call your support person/people to seek permission from them then connect them into the call.
* The assessor first would do the same with you (asking for your permission for the call to take place).
* The next step is when your assessor connects everyone into the same call.

Whenever your supporter/s in the call would like to add something in or correct something that was said, they can simply ask for permission to do this by verbally indicating that they have comments. Then their useful information can be shared.

At the end of the call, both you and/or your support person/s can say if there’s more that needs to be added, or if something was missed out.

If you would like more information about how you can prepare for your PIP assessment and the nature of what you may be asked please let Grapevine know. We have a separate factsheet giving you more information.

We hope that your phone assessment will be successful. Please remember if you do not receive the award you expect, Grapevine can support you to challenge this decision.

Best wishes,

**The Grapevine Team**

**Grapevine Contact details:**Tel: 0131 475 2370 (Monday-Friday 10am-4pm)

Email: grapevine@lothiancil.org.uk  [www.lothiancil.org.uk](http://www.lothiancil.org.uk)

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