

To: UC Programme Board**From: JP Marks
Work and Health Services
Director General**

Alternative Access Routes for Vulnerable Customers

Universal Credit offers and provides multiple channels for customers. This includes;

- 24 hour online self service
- Digital interaction via the journal
- Telephony – including next generation text
- Face to Face in Jobcentres – Front of House support
- Claims by phone process for digitally excluded customers
- Visiting Service
 - 30,191 visits have been conducted (UC Customers, April 18 – to date)
 - In the last 4 months 751 customers have had their visits prioritised since improving the Terminal Illness process.
- Big Word
- Notifications via: the service, letters, alternative formats
- Citizens Advice Help to Claim (up until the end of the first Assessment Period)
- Trusted Partners and Stakeholders
- Family and Friends
- Appointees
- Assisted Digital survey to ensure we can monitor and support customers needs
 - 20.18% of customers reported that they received help when setting up their claim
 - Of which 44.59% were supported by friends and family
- We are Testing Video Relay Service - with a view to securing funding for further roll out
- We are compliant with the Disability Equality act

Supporting our Customers

We identify and support customers on a daily basis with multiple complexities, where doing the right thing at the right time is critical. The complex needs toolkits/Universal Learning contains all the relevant guidance and tools to support our people to help customers with complex needs - a few examples have been listed below;

- Homelessness/or at risk, implemented duty to refer – 95% of Work Coaches interviewed confirmed they had a good understanding of homelessness
- Ensuring our people are aware of the DWP offer for customers experiencing Domestic Abuse
- Helping our customers with no Bank Accounts

We also have the following dedicated processes/Work Coaches in place;

- Prison Work Coaches – to support prison leavers to ensure they have the right information to claim benefits at the point of need

- Care Leaver SPOCs – we continue to work with the local authority to ensure we know who is leaving care and when so we can apply the appropriate exceptions available and offer any additional support that may be required
- Disability Employment Advisors Leads and Disability Employment Advisors

Supporting our People

Helping colleagues to support customers effectively;

- Reviewing our policy/safeguarding process to help our colleagues supporting vulnerable customers, to ensure they are protecting the customer and their own wellbeing
- Customer Service Managers – receiving specialist training (Domestic Abuse, Homelessness)