

Restart Scheme – Claimants with a health condition or disability

Contents

Background

Claimants with a fit note awaiting a Work Capability Assessment or outcome

Claimants who do not give a fit note or have been found fit for work

Action for all referrals

Examples

Background

The Restart Scheme has been designed to support a wide group of claimants with a range of needs and health conditions.

Restart Scheme providers will deliver intensive, personalised support to help participants overcome barriers to work and tailor support to meet the needs of the individual. The Restart Scheme will be suitable for most people in the target group.

Claimants with a fit note awaiting a Work Capability Assessment or outcome

Claimants eligible for the Restart Scheme who have a fit note, are awaiting a Work Capability Assessment (WCA) or the outcome of a WCA must not automatically be discounted for referral. However, consideration must be given on a case by case basis.

The work coach must use their knowledge of the individual claimant, consider the impact of their health condition and determine

- whether participation in the Restart Scheme can be considered a realistic and achievable goal
- whether it is reasonable to expect the claimant to meet the requirements of a mandatory programme:
 - if you consider it reasonable, the claimant should be referred to the Restart Scheme
 - if you consider that it is **not** reasonable to expect the claimant to comply with the requirements of a mandatory programme, you should not refer them to the Restart Scheme

Work-related requirements are switched-off for the first 14 days after a claimant reports that they are unfit for work. This can happen for a maximum of two periods of 14 days in any rolling 12-month period. The provider must be advised at the warm-handover if this applies and that any work search activities will be voluntary until the 14 days have expired.

However, this requirement does not prevent a referral to the Restart Scheme being made within the first 14 days of a health declaration being reported.

If the claimant is already a Restart participant when this applies, the provider must be informed of the change of circumstances and that any work search activities will be voluntary until the 14 day period has expired.

Claimants who are treated as having Limited Capability for Work Related Activity must not be referred to the Restart Scheme.

If a claimant has an appointee to manage their affairs and it has been decided they do not have capacity to accept a claimant commitment, a referral to the Restart Scheme cannot be made.

It would not be appropriate to refer those with a life threatening condition to the Restart Scheme as we could not legally mandate them to participate.

Claimants who do not have a fit note or have been found fit for work

Most people in this group will benefit from the support offered by the Restart Scheme. A referral should be made for claimants within the Intensive Work Search Regime who have an ongoing health condition or disability and who:

- do not have a current fit note or medical evidence
- are not awaiting a WCA, or
- have been found fit for work following a WCA and continue to submit a fit note or medical evidence for a condition which is the same (or substantially the same) as the condition for which the WCA decision was made

Actions for all referrals

The work coach must:

- establish if there are any issues around protecting claimants at risk which may need to be taken into account (a referral to the Restart Scheme must not be made if this would present a risk of harm to anyone)
- be reasonable and ensure that work-related requirements are tailored to reflect any restrictions that claimants with a health condition may have (this may include hours of work, type of work and location which are appropriate to the claimant's condition)

- make providers aware (during the warm handover) of any switching-off and/or tailoring in the Claimant Commitment so they can adapt their support accordingly
- discuss their suitability with the claimant (as with all referrals to the Restart Scheme) and promote the benefits participation to maximise their engagement in the scheme
- make the claimant aware that participation in the Restart scheme is mandatory, especially those that are keen to be referred
- emphasise that referral to the Restart Scheme could be particularly beneficial for those currently not engaging through the Tailoring Up process

Examples

Sandra

Sandra is 45, has been claiming benefits for 24 months and has been in the Intensive Work Search regime for 13 months.

Sandra previously worked in the care sector, however, due to a serious accident she was no longer able to continue. Although Sandra has now recovered physically, she has recently become very nervous when not in familiar places and has frequent panic attacks. Sandra feels anxious, cannot sleep well and because of this feels generally run down. She feels overwhelmed by her current circumstances and has recently started taking anti-depressants. Sandra has now submitted a fit note due to her current health condition.

Sandra would like to return to the care sector at some point as she is familiar with this area of work and feels that the routine of work would help her anxiety levels. However, due to the impact this has had on her confidence and general sense of wellbeing, she is nervous of taking the next steps to future employment.

Is a referral to the Restart Scheme appropriate for Sandra?

Yes, Sandra can be referred to the Restart Scheme. As Sandra is in the first 14 days of sickness, any mandatory work search activities have been removed from her Claimant Commitment and these can be introduced from day 15. She meets the eligibility criteria and after a discussion with her work coach, it was agreed she would benefit from the Restart Scheme. This can offer her motivation and confidence building, alongside support to return to the care sector. The provider must be advised that any work search activities will be voluntary until the 14 days expire.

Philip

Philip is 56 and is a double amputee losing both legs in a motor bike accident 3 years ago. Prior to the accident he was a self-employed decorator.

He worked hard to rebuild his life and with support from Access to Work and has found work in an administrative role for a small catering company. Philip was made redundant as the business collapsed and has been claiming Universal Credit being in the Intensive Work Search regime for the last 12 months.

Philip has been looking for other office work but has been unsuccessful in getting an interview. He has now lost confidence, feels overwhelmed by his current circumstances and has recently started drinking more alcohol to try to sleep better. Philip has a fit note for severe depression and has been referred for a WCA. His GP has referred him to engage with structured treatment and recovery services as part of an active route way back to work.

Is a referral to the Restart Scheme appropriate for Philip?

No, although Philip could benefit from the support the Restart Scheme can offer - due to his mental health condition and the treatment he is undertaking, it would not be appropriate to refer him at this point. Once he is engaging in the structured treatment, he could be reconsidered for the Restart Scheme. Access to Work and any other reasonable adjustments should be considered, such as the most appropriate working pattern if feasible, once Philip finds employment.

Simon

Simon has been claiming Universal Credit for 12 months and is in the Intensive Work Search regime. He was recently involved in a car accident, has fractured some ribs and has mild whiplash. Simon has a fit note for 6 weeks and the GP has provided information that he 'may be fit for work' detailing what circumstances and arrangements could be put in place while he is recovering from his injuries.

Is a referral to the Restart Scheme appropriate for Simon?

Yes, although Simon is not currently able to work, his Claimant Commitment has been tailored to take his current capabilities into account by adding voluntary and mandatory commitments. Although initially reluctant, following a discussion with his work coach, Simon could see participation on the Restart Scheme would be beneficial for him to increase his chances of finding sustained employment once fully recovered. The provider must be made aware of any tailoring in the Claimant Commitment so they can adapt their support accordingly.

Alison

Alison has been receiving Universal Credit for 15 months and is in the Intensive Work Search regime. she recently declared she had sustained a back injury following a fall. She has already provided a fit note and advised her work coach she has another GP's appointment to receive an up-to-date fit note. The pain she faces daily and the side-effects from her medication is affecting her ability to work. Her Claimant Commitment has been tailored to suit her current

circumstances. Alison has also provided additional medical evidence confirming she will need an operation on her back. She has been referred for a WCA and is awaiting the outcome.

Is a referral to the Restart Scheme appropriate for Alison?

No, although Alison can be asked to attend Work Focused Interviews and undertake work preparation requirements tailored to her individual needs (making her suitable for referral to the Restart Scheme), because of the chronic pain she is suffering, together with the side effects of her medication whilst awaiting surgery, it would not be appropriate to refer her to the Restart Scheme at this point.