

Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Summit 2025 Notes

Information and advice to support people with access to benefits and access into employment

1. Disability Huntingdonshire (DISH) www.dish.org.uk (PPT attached)

Benefits overview discussed including how to apply and, eligibility for different benefits.

Focus on PIP (must be 16 to under state pension age). Noted that if applicants choose to change to attendance allowance there is no mobility allowance factored into this benefit.

PIP is financial support and can be claimed if employed. It is not means tested. Individuals must show they have difficulty doing everyday tasks (criteria and scoring system for this shared). These criteria can be particularly hard for people with mental health difficulties to meet as the long backlog for access to services means it is difficult for them to provide evidence.

Guidance on how to make a referral shared.

2. ICB WorkWell www.growthworkswithskills.com/employer-hub/workwell (ppt attached)

Eligibility covers anyone who has a health challenge that is preventing them from working or if they are at risk of being out of work due to a health challenge.

To apply for the service, you must be over the age of 16, live in or are registered with a GP or Job Centre in Cambridgeshire, Peterborough or Royston

and are eligible to work in the UK. You do not need to be claiming any benefits to access the service, and it will not affect any benefits you may already be claiming.

The service provides £250 towards goods or services e.g. therapy, CV writing etc.

Data protection protocols shared (data is shared with DWP).

3. DWP Access to work <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work/apply> (ppt attached)

This is a grant to help people with a health condition or disability (including mental health conditions) to be able to work. It helps with additional costs above and beyond reasonable adjustments e.g. desks, monitors, mental health support services, travel, a support worker or job coach to help in the workplace, disability awareness training for colleagues, communication support at a job interview or in the workplace etc. Employers may be asked to contribute towards the cost of one-off support.

Eligibility criteria covered.

Other benefits may be affected by applying for Access to work.

You can apply online or by phone, but applicants must make sure they have all the required information to hand when they apply, and they must either have a job or a job to start to be eligible.

Once you have applied you get an 'Access to work' advisor who assesses needs.

Wait times can be long, if you apply and are currently in work the process can be 6 months +, if you have a new job to start you will be fast tracked (about 1 month waiting time).