



Department
for Work &
Pensions

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Dear Ms Stewart,

Thank you for your further email of 13 October to the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work about the Work Capability Assessment (WCA). Government Ministers receive a large volume of correspondence and they are unable to reply personally on every occasion. I have been asked to respond and I apologise for the delay that has occurred.

Our records show that a number of responses have been provided in this matter. To emphasise, the WCA is not a medical assessment diagnosing and offering treatment options. Nor does it consider the health condition or disability the individual may have. Instead, it assesses individuals against a set of descriptors to determine how their illness or disability affects their ability to work. It does so by looking at the available evidence, including evidence from the claimant's GP and other professionals involved in their care.

The therapeutic role of a GP is to diagnose and/or plan treatment. Whereas the role of the qualified Healthcare Professionals who carry out assessment on the Department's behalf, is Disability Assessment Medicine and they are trained experts in carrying out this type of assessment.

The Healthcare Professionals can only give advice to the Department's Decision Makers based on the available evidence, and similarly Decision Makers can only decide entitlement based on the available information.

For these reasons, claimants are asked to provide their GP and or other nominated professionals' contact details on the claim form, so that if the Healthcare Professional carrying out the assessment or the Decision Maker deciding entitlement, requires further information or clarification, they can obtain this by contacting the claimant's GP or other nominated professional.

As you are aware, since the inception of the WCA we have and will continue to look at our processes and procedures to improve the overall claimant experience, as this is what claimants have a right to expect and deserve.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert Watling', with a long horizontal flourish underneath.

Robert Watling
Head of the Ministerial Correspondence Team