

Providing vulnerable members with extra support

Summer 2021

Pragmatic solutions to practical problems

We pride ourselves on consistently providing all members with a responsive and helpful service. It is important that they receive clear, accessible communications, and can pick up the phone to speak to a person who knows their scheme should they have any questions.

But we recognise that there are some members who require extra support - typically, although not limited to, those who are suffering from a decline in mental capacity, ill health or bereavement.

Our ability to provide tailored support to members with vulnerabilities has been particularly valuable as the Covid-19 pandemic has unfolded. Members have been confronted with logistical challenges and extra pressures, and we were ready to provide pragmatic solutions to practical problems - enabling, for example, members and their relatives to get documents to us while on lockdown.

We make sure our procedures and communications can adapt to the needs of members so that our service is accessible to all.



Procedures

Specialist experience

We have a specialist group experienced at dealing with sensitive and/or bespoke cases. The group advises our teams on how best to approach particular cases.

Protecting members from fraud

While we are able to adapt our procedures, we will always verify the identity of someone before providing information on a member's benefits and all sensitive information is stored appropriately.

Pragmatic solutions

We provide solutions based on what members are able to do, rather than focus on what they aren't. We work with them to find out how we can best help them - for example calling them at a time of day when their medication is most effective, or providing alternative ways of getting important documents to us.



Communications

Accessibility

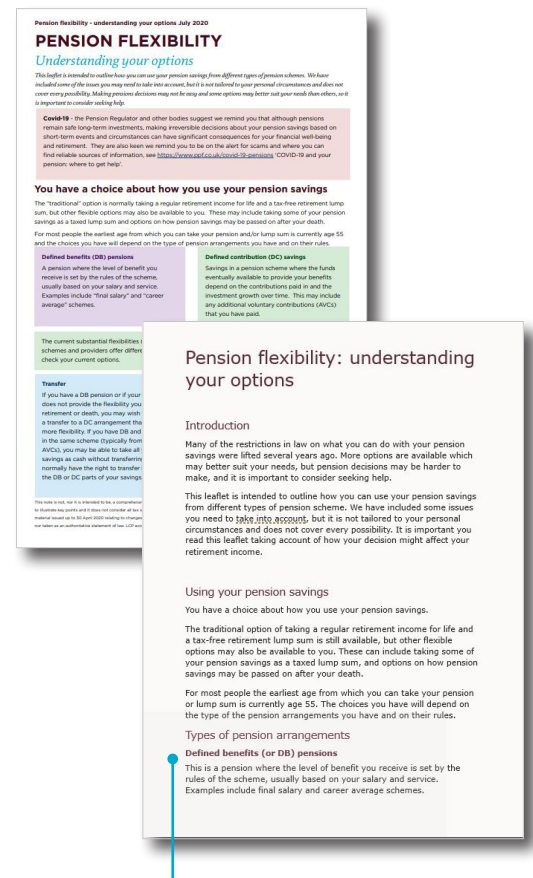
As part of our accessible communications policy, we have versions of our key flyers that are compatible with read aloud functionality, and are in a font style that is more easily readable for those with visual impairments.

Clear actions

Our communications will always have clear actions - members are directed as to what they need to do and by when. Communications to members who need extra help are reviewed by our specialists to see if any additional wording or signposting would be helpful.

No jargon

We aim to make our communications as jargon-free and understandable as possible. We explain concepts in layman's terms and use short, clear, sentences. We assess any new material using the widely recognised Flesch Kincaid grading system.



Accessible version - compatible with read aloud functionality and in an easier to read font style

Want to know more?

If you have any questions on how we support vulnerable members then please call your usual contact.

