

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR SOCIAL SECURITY
BY DEPUTY M.R. HIGGINS OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 19th JANUARY 2010**

Question

In order for members to have a better understanding of those claiming Income Support, would the Minister provide the following information –

- (a) the number of people under the age of 18 claiming support;?
- (b) the number of people aged between 18 and under 25?
- (c) the number of people aged between 25 and 60?
- (d) the number of people aged over 60 years of age?
- (e) The number of people of working age who are medically unfit to work broken down into their gender and the following time periods of sickness absence - less than 6 months; 6 months to less than 12 months; 12 months to 3 years; 3 years to 6 years; more than 6 years but not classed as permanently unfit to work; unfit to work?

Answer

(a)– (d)

The number of individuals included in Income Support households, analysed by age, is given in the table.

	Male	Female	Total
Under 18	1894	1776	3670
18-24	368	392	760
25-59	2021	2950	4971
60+	1588	2616	4204

- (e) There are a number of benefits associated with incapacity but not all of them are relevant to the capacity or otherwise of the individual to work. Individuals receiving Short Term Incapacity Allowance (STIA) have been certified by their GP as being incapable of work due to incapacity. STIA is available for a period of up to one year. On 31st December 2009, there were a total of 607 individuals receiving STIA where their claim had lasted up to 6 months. The great majority of these claims are in respect of very short illnesses that only last a few days. There were 197 claims which had lasted between 6 months and one year. These figures are in respect of all claims and will include individuals receiving Income Support as well as those not receiving Income Support.

For individuals with long term conditions, Long Term Incapacity Allowance (LTIA) is available. This is provided on the basis of loss of faculty as a result of a disease or injury. It is not based on the ability of the individual to work and is paid to individuals regardless of their employment status. Associated with LTIA, an Incapacity Pension is available to individuals who are below pensionable age but as a result of a disease or injury are likely to be permanently incapable of work. In very specific circumstances individuals may move from LTIA to an Incapacity Pension. Individuals receiving an Incapacity Pension are not permitted to work whilst receiving the pension. As at 31st December 2009, 9 individuals were claiming an Incapacity Pension.

Prior to the introduction of LTIA, an Invalidity Benefit was available to individuals with a high degree of incapacity. These individuals were not permitted to work whilst receiving Invalidity Benefit. Their medical condition would be confirmed by a GP every 3 months. Invalidity Benefit was replaced in October 2004 but individuals in receipt of the benefit at that time were allowed to continue to claim the benefit whilst their medical condition satisfied the necessary requirements. In total there are 681 ongoing Invalidity Benefit claims with a total duration of between 5 and 10 years and 539 with a total duration of 10 years or more. As above, these figures are in respect of all claims and will include individuals receiving Income Support as well as those not receiving Income Support.

In respect of Income Support claimants the following information is available:

Benefit Type	Number of Income Support Participants claiming this benefit
STIA	220
Incapacity pension	3
Invalidity benefit	753