These notes are intended to assist you to fill in the application form for Personal Independence Payments (PIP).

(Please note: if you also have a sight impairment or hearing loss, there are separate notes to assist you on the information sheet for PIPs for people who have hydrocephalus.)

Do seek help to fill in the forms, if you feel that you have difficulty in expressing your needs. Citizens Advice Bureau or your local Welfare Rights Adviser – sometimes employed by Adult Care & Support (Social Services), may be able to assist. You will need to phone them to ask for an appointment.

You must be able to carry out all of the activities safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time – this is no more than twice the time that a person without a disability would normally take to complete the activity.

If you have any reports from Adult Social Care, Occupational Therapists, General Practitioners and Specialists, and/or a care plan, make a copy and send them in with your completed application form, list any reports sent in on page 3 of the form.

Preparing and cooking food: This is a cooked, one-course meal for one person, using fresh ingredients. Do ensure that you make it clear that when you have mobility problems, resulting in you requiring to use a wheelchair or crutches at all times in the kitchen, that you have difficulty in carrying or lifting anything hot at /or above waist height. Explain if you have impaired feeling in your legs and that there is a risk of burning yourself if you spill any hot liquid onto your legs; provide details of how often this happens. List any aids used in the kitchen e.g. perching stool, lever taps, kettle tipper etc. Note down any adaptations made to your kitchen, such as a low-access sink or adapted equipment.

Taking nutrition: This includes drinking. Do explain if you have impaired kidney function, and need to be prompted to take on adequate fluids to preserve your kidney function.

Managing therapy/monitoring a health condition: Include any information regarding any assistance that you require to carry out physiotherapy exercises, how often, and how long this takes. Provide details of epilepsy/seizures in this section. If you have diabetes, explain any equipment you use to monitor your blood sugar levels. If you have a recent history of pressure sores, explain where they are and the assistance that you need to monitor your skin and to provide treatment to the sores.

Washing and bathing: Provide details of any equipment, adaptations or assistance you may have to use to transfer in and out of a bath/shower. Explain if you have impaired
feeling below your waist, if you require anyone to check the water temperature to allow you to bathe safely. If you can wash yourself, but do not realise that you have done this inadequately and are still not clean, this would be an example of not completing an activity to an acceptable standard. If you are at risk of seizures explain that you require supervision to keep safe when bathing/showering.

**Managing toilet needs or incontinence:** This includes bladder and bowel incontinence, and includes cleaning yourself afterwards. Provide information of any toilet adaptations you may have, and any assistance you may need to transfer on and off the toilet or deal with any clothing. Provide information about the number of times you have to dress/undress or change your clothing to enable you to manage your toilet needs. Explain any incontinence pads you use, how you catheterise or use any collecting devices, such as stoma bags, or if you use Peristeen or an ACE. Include any assistance that you require to manage your toilet needs. Time how long it takes you to empty your bladder/bowels – do not guess how long this takes. If you have a recent history of bladder infections due to difficulties in maintaining a hygienic environment, provide details.

**Dressing and undressing:** Explain if you are unable to stand up unaided, any assistance you require to dress/undress, and which garments you need assistance with. If it takes you much longer to get dressed, time how long this takes and include this information – do not guess at the time taken. Do not forget to include information about any help you require with orthopaedic footwear and appliances.

**Communicating verbally:** This will be covered in the separate sheet for people who have hydrocephalus.

**Reading and understanding signs, symbols and words:** This will be covered in the separate sheet for people who have hydrocephalus.

**Engaging with people face to face:** This will be covered in a separate sheet for people with hydrocephalus.

**Making budgeting decisions:** This will be covered in a separate sheet for people with hydrocephalus.

**Planning and following journeys:** Provide details of difficulties you may have in following a route on an unfamiliar journey without the help of another person or orientation aid – this is a specialist aid designed to assist disabled people to follow a route safely, and does not include the use of a satellite navigation system.

If you are unable to plan the route of any journey without help, explain why. Provide details of any supervision, prompting or assistance you may need when planning and following a journey.

If you are unable to see or hear, explain any problems you have in crossing roads safely and with locating buildings in new areas. If you have hearing or sight loss and cannot ask for directions in an unfamiliar place, explain why.
**Moving around:** Ensure that you make it clear if you are unable to stand upright, either aided by an appliance or aid, or unaided.

Go into detail about any aids that you use to move around, including a wheelchair, crutches, walking stick, callipers, and explain how far you can move without stopping and why you need to stop. Moving around looks at your ability to move on reasonably level ground outside. Explain any difficulties you may have in coping with kerbs. Do not guess at any distances you feel that you can achieve, before having to stop – ask someone to measure this for you.

September 2014.

Disclaimer: Changes in the law after 2014 might affect the accuracy of some of the information. You should always check details regarding your welfare rights with a local advice centre or the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).

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**Help us**

**Shine** relies on people’s generosity and support so we can help our clients who depend on us for help and advice – people with hydrocephalus, spina bifida, their families and carers. To donate to **Shine** please visit [www.shinecharity.org.uk](http://www.shinecharity.org.uk) or call 01733 421329.

This information has been produced by **Shine’s** medical advisers and approved by **Shine’s** Medical Advisory Committee of senior medical professionals.

**Shine** – Reg Charity No 249338

To see our full range of information sheets and to find out how to donate to **Shine** please visit [www.shinecharity.org.uk](http://www.shinecharity.org.uk)