

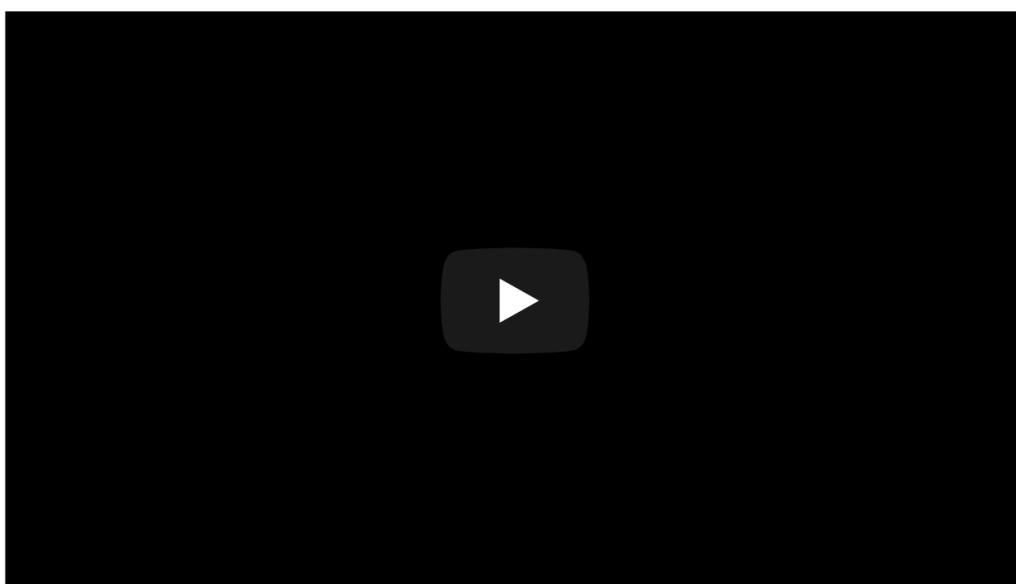


[Print page \(https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/print/4058\)](https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/print/4058) |

The Activity Trap: Disabled people's fear of being active

09 October 2018

Disabled people count for one in five of Britain's population, almost 14 million people, but they are currently the least active group in society.



[View video \(https://youtu.be/JWpTxvtg744\)](https://youtu.be/JWpTxvtg744)

[\(https://youtu.be/JWpTxvtg744\)](https://youtu.be/JWpTxvtg744) [Read report \(http://www.activityalliance.org.uk/how-we-help/research/4404-the-activity-trap-benefits-or-being-fit\)](http://www.activityalliance.org.uk/how-we-help/research/4404-the-activity-trap-benefits-or-being-fit)

The benefits system and other forms of government and NHS financial assistance are designed to enable disabled people to be active in all aspects of their lives. However evidence suggests that disabled people fear losing such support as a result of being seen to be active.

This study focused primarily on participants with physical impairments and sought to determine the prevalence and extent of this fear, with a particular emphasis on the processes of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA).

Forward to the report by Kamran Mallick, Chief Executive Disability Rights UK

Disabled people deserve the same right to be active as everybody else, no matter whether they want to make use of their local gym or become an elite athlete. But the reality is that disabled people are still twice as likely to be inactive as non-disabled people.

The Activity Trap opens the debate into how disability discrimination impacts physical activity.

It is rigorous, well evidenced and has an important role to play in changing the reality of disability, inclusion and sport. It is the first time that the sport and activity sector has delved knowingly into the wider systemic barriers that affect disabled people's ability to be active.

Being active and reaping the benefits from activity does not happen in isolation. We cannot continue to assume that becoming active is a simple process of moving from inactive to active. There are many stages and considerations in between that we may not even associate with taking part in sport and active recreation.

To many disabled people, finding appropriate transport, getting personal support or even having the confidence to leave the house can affect our motivations to be more active. We need to understand the challenges and barriers that disabled people face on a daily basis, including how we are represented in the media. It is not simply because we do not want to take part or cannot be bothered.

The numbers within the report, although shocking, give us a starting point for change. Undeniably, they show that unless we provide robust, effective support to disabled people in all aspects of their lives, we are not going to see a meaningful increase in the number of people being active.

It will take work with and across government to make active lives possible and we hope this report helps to widen the discussion beyond sport and health. Whilst some actions are long-term and will not happen overnight, there are things we can fix within the system at local and national level.

These changes will make society better for everyone, including disabled people.

Key findings from the study include:

- Being active is important to disabled people.
- Disability benefits are critical in enabling disabled people to be active.
- A fear of losing benefits is preventing disabled people from being more active.
- Fears of being active are driven by perceptions of government agencies as well as personal experience and knowledge of benefits not being awarded or being removed.
- The research also highlighted the challenges that disabled people face through the benefits application system.
- A clearer understanding may enable more disabled people to use their benefit payments to be active.

Four key recommendations and four significant discussion points emerged from the study to address some of the fears, ambiguity and difficulty involved in being physically active when receiving benefits and financial assistance, especially with regard to PIP.

Activity Alliance and Dwarf Sports Association UK will work with expert partners, including Disability Rights UK, to move forward the

recommendations and discussion points from this report.



<http://www.activityalliance.org.uk/how-we-help/research/4404-the-activity-trap-benefits-or-being-fit>

The Activity Trap: Benefits or being fit?

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