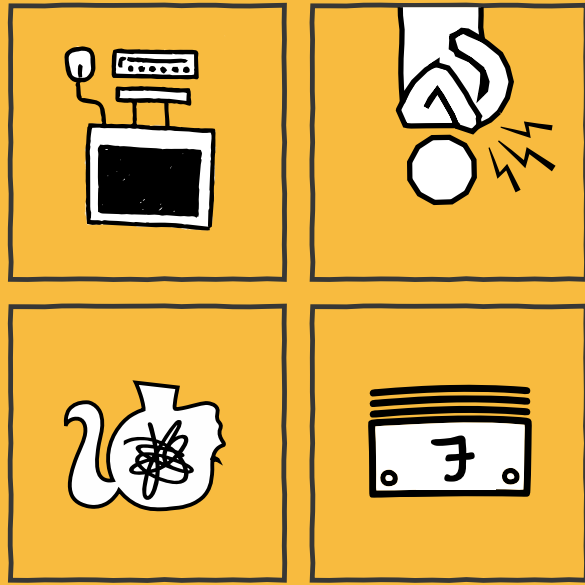


Benefitting from Benefits



Groundswell
Out of homelessness

How to use the guide

- Fill it in yourself or with a support worker and take it to your next DWP appointment
- If you don't want to write just have a think about the questions
- Look at all the sections – some parts may not seem relevant now but they may help you in the future

We hope it will help you to make the most from your benefits. If you need any further help speak to a support worker, DWP staff or contact one of following services.

Turn to Us – call 0808 802 2000
Citizens Advice- call 0800 144 8 444

If you have any questions about the guide or would like some copies contact
research@groundswell.org.uk
or call 02077252851

Trust for London
Tackling poverty and inequality
info@groundswell.org.uk
020 7725 2851
@ItsGroundswell

What does a bad day look like?
And how often do you have bad days?

What does a good day look like?

Start Here 1

Are you receiving benefits?



Yes

There are lots of different benefits and adjustments depending on your situation and if you have any health issues. Talk to DWP staff about any issues you may have.

Yes but have been sanctioned

If you feel you were unfairly sanctioned ask for a 'mandatory reconsideration'. The request for reconsideration must be within one month from the date of the sanction. If you are struggling to buy food and necessities, you may be entitled to a 'hardship payment' – this will be deducted from future payments. Ask Jobcentre staff about local food bank vouchers.

Yes I have recently made a claim and waiting for a payment

You can request an 'advance payment' - this can be paid to you quickly and will be deducted from future payments.

No

You do not need an address, a bank account or identification to start the claiming process

How does your condition affect your ability to do daily tasks and/or to work?

You could also bring letters from GP's and/or other health specialists that the DWP have not yet seen. talk about this in the assessment. and/or disability affects you on a daily basis so you can write down how your health conditions, addiction

Do you have a work capability, PIP or ESA assessment coming up?

Have you told the Jobcentre about your housing situation?

Write down the challenges you have with your housing and how this might affect your ability to stick to your 'claimant commitment' (contract). Its best to tell Jobcentre staff about any issues before you sign your commitment. Remember you don't have to tell the DWP anything you don't feel comfortable with.

***If you need housing benefit contact your local council.**

Write down any recent changes. It is very important that you let the DWP know of any changes that occur as soon as you can to ensure you will continued to be paid on time. If you are in any doubt its best to ask for help

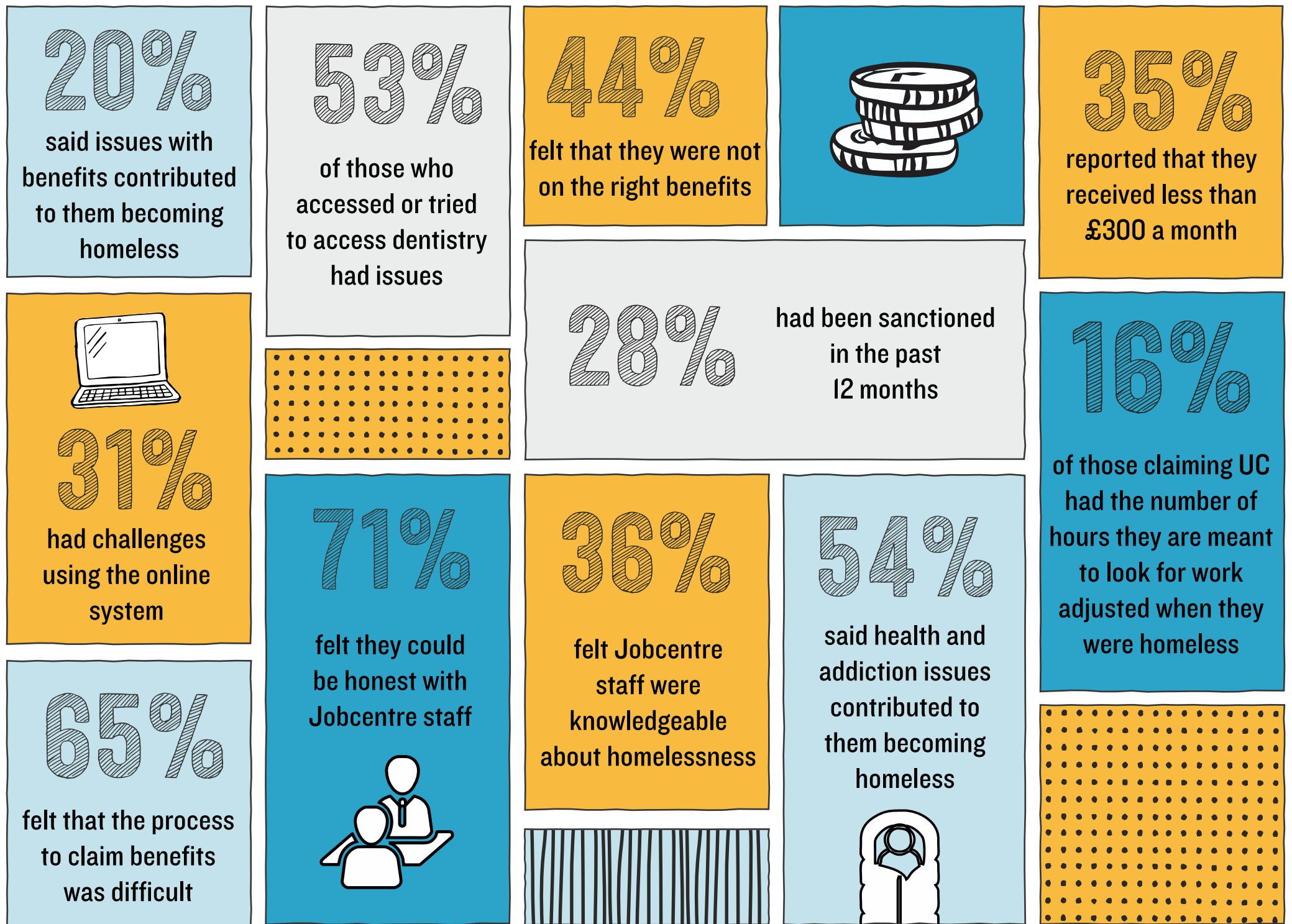
Have you moved address, changed your phone number, email address, started a new job and/or experienced any changes to your health?

Are you affected by any physical and or mental health issues, addictions or learning difficulties?

Write down any issues you have and how this might affect your ability to stick to your 'claimant commitment'.

You do not need to share anything you don't feel comfortable with.

Groundswell spoke to over 240 people
experiencing homelessness about benefits and their health. We found:



Did You Know?

It **may be possible** for you to receive your benefits **weekly or every two weeks**

You can get financial support to get to medical appointments under the '**Healthcare Travel Cost Scheme**'

You can get your **rent paid directly** from your benefits to **your landlord**

You can get support for travel and/or clothes for a job interview under the '**Flexible Support Fund**'

Depending on how much you receive each month you can get **free prescriptions, eye care and dental care**. If you are not eligible based on your benefits you may be eligible for '**low income exemption**'. To do this you will need to fill out an **HC1 form**

If you have a health condition or disability that makes working difficult you may be entitled to '**Access To Work**' fund

You can access information about your benefits on **the phone as well as online and in person**

You can ask to be referred to the **Disability Employment Advisor (DEA)** for support if you have a disability and/or mental health issues

If you have a health assessment coming up you can ask for the following in advance of your assessment:

- To bring someone with you
- For the assessment to take place where you are living
- For an interpreter
- For assessment to be video or audio recorded