

Report Summary

Social Security Administration Office of the Inspector General

May 2009



Objective

To assess the Social Security Administration's (SSA) national rollout of Quick Disability Determinations (QDD).

Background

On August 1, 2006, SSA implemented the QDD process in the Boston Region. QDD cases are initial disability cases that are electronically identified as (a) having a high potential the claimant is disabled, (b) likely that evidence of the claimant's allegations can be easily and quickly obtained, and (c) a case that can be processed quickly in the disability determination services (DDS).

In our May 2007 review, we analyzed cases selected for the QDD pilot in the Boston Region. As a result of our review, SSA issued formal procedures to ensure payments for QDD claims are not delayed in any Agency component. In October 2007, SSA began expanding QDD beyond the Boston Region, and the national rollout was completed in February 2008.

To view the full report, visit
http://www.ssa.gov/oig/ADO_BEPDF/A-01-09-19030.pdf

National Rollout of Quick Disability Determinations (A-01-09-19030)

Our Findings

We found that SSA generally made medical determinations for claims selected for QDD processing within the Agency's recommended timeframe of 20 days or less. Additionally, the controls put in place after the QDD pilot in the Boston Region helped ensure claimants were paid in a timely manner.

Of the 575 QDD cases selected for review, 537 (about 93 percent) were allowed for disability benefits. The average processing time for all allowances was 15 days from the date the claim was received in the DDS until the medical determination was completed by the DDS or affirmed by a Federal quality reviewer. DDS adjudicators removed 60 of these 537 claims from QDD processing before completing the medical reviews—generally because the claimant's medical records could not be quickly obtained. The average processing time for the 477 claims that were allowed and remained in the QDD process was 9 days.

The remaining cases were not allowed. Based on our review of these cases, it appeared the claims were appropriately selected for QDD processing, based on information the claimants initially provided to SSA.

Conclusion

Since the national rollout, QDD is working as intended. We found that SSA allowed 93 percent of claims selected for QDD and generally made medical determinations for these claims within the recommended timeframe of 20 days or less. Additionally, the controls put in place after our review of the pilot program helped ensure claimants were paid in a timely manner.

SSA concurred with the conclusions in the report.