Send you fit note
User research findings

29 November 2017
Wakefield library

Researchers

Andrea Feltell-Dack (user researcher)
Matt Blackwell (content designer)

Research type and location

'Pop-up' user research with 5 citizens in Wakefield library on 27 November.

Participants

Participant 1

Male, late 50s.
Claimed ESA and JSA before with experience of sending fit notes.

Uses internet for social media, music, reading about local history.

Has used some government services online before:

- JSA

- Universal Jobmatch

- renewing driving license

Has ADHD and struggles to concentrate.

Has a smartphone with a small screen but doesn't use it for internet due to eyesight. Prefers to use his laptop.

We only tested the desktop version with this participant as he would never attempt a service on his mobile device.

Participant 2

Male, 50s.

Never claimed benefits in his life.

Small business owner of a training consultancy.

Owns and iphone, ipad, desktop PC and laptop.

IT literate.

Uses internet for his business and for banking and some shopping such as ebay.

We only tested the mobile device version with this participant due to time constraints.

Participant 3

Male, late 20s - early 30s.
Has helped his Mum claim ESA and sent sick notes in post for her.
Experienced problems getting confirmation that sick note received.
Has a laptop and tablet. Fairly IT savvy.
Uses internet for emails, shopping and social media.

We tested both mobile device and desktop journey with this customer.

Participant 4

Male, 30s.

Works in IT for police.

His wife has a mental health illness and some days can't leave the house.

She's recently claimed ESA but was initially turned down as DWP hadn't received her fit note.

The fit note has been resent and she's waiting to hear if she can get ESA.

We tested both mobile device and desktop journey with this customer.

Participant 5

Female, late 20s.
Fairly tech savvy. Uses internet for social media, emails, shopping etc.
Stopped using a smartphone as internet related notifications were distracting her too much from day to day life.
She still uses her laptop for accessing the internet when she needs to.
Has an old style Nokia mobile phone.

We tested both mobile device and desktop journey with this customer.

What we wanted to test

Prototype: version beta 2

New features:

- possible content for GOV.UK

- desktop PC or laptop user journey

- error messages if photo or PDF rejected by the service

GOV.UK

Can users find out how to send a fit note from the Employment and Support Allowance 'How to apply' page?

Is the content on GOV.UK about sending a fit note easy to understand?

Error messages when photo or scan rejected

Are they understood?

How many times would users try again if sending their photo or scan failed?

What other options would they try?

What we found

Findings: GOV.UK

After scrolling and searching, all users did eventually find the 'Send your fit note' section on the GOV.UK page.

One participant who has had never had a relationship with DWP was confused with terminology.
"The ESA form. That's not the sick note, right?".

Participants expected a blue link at the top of the page taking them to the relevant information.

Once found, the content about how to send a fit note was easily understood. Users knew to click on the link to get to the service.
Caveat, all users were digitally proficient.

Recommendation: make it more obvious where to find the information on what to do with a fit note.

Findings: users' devices

Not all digitally proficient people like to use a mobile device to access the internet. Some have previously but choose not to anymore. Some, for medical reasons do not.

Those who use a laptop and webcam advised they would try to take an image of their fit note using their webcam.

"I'd try to use the webcam on my laptop"

"Some people might use a detachable webcam."

Image upload

It wasn't immediately obvious to some whether the file upload had worked.

One user suggested adding a 'tick' mark next to the file name of the upload to show it was attached and ready to upload.

Recommendation: Design a success message that appears on the 'Save and upload your fit note' page - but be clear that they have to enter further information to complete the process.

Phone/tablet – error messages

Some users did not notice the error messages immediately.

Once seen, most assumed it was the technology that had failed rather than their image not being good enough.

"What's the specific problem with the photo? I could make the same error again"

Recommendation: Be more explicit in the messaging. Investigate the possibility of intelligent error messaging.

Phone/tablet – error messages

One participant said the phrase 'This hasn't worked.' in the error message "comes across as a bit angry!".

Recommendation: Rewrite the content of this message e.g. 'We're having problems with the photo you're trying to send.'

All participants advised that they would try again with another phone before resorting to using the post.

Desktop/laptop journey

Most participants said that they would attempt to take a photo with the webcam on their laptops.

This would mean holding the fit note in the air in front of the webcam instead of on a flat surface.

Recommendation: Further research/testing with a laptop webcam to fully understand the chances of taking a good enough photo.

Desktop/laptop – error messages

Users didn't understand why an uploaded image would fail. Some would just accept the error and take another photo and upload again others would want more information as they assumed it to be a technical problem.

"I'd try and upload a different file format or reduce the size of the file or image quality" (assuming it might be too large).

Recommendation: Investigate the possibility of intelligent error messages to avoid incorrect assumptions being made about why the photo or upload is failing.

Desktop/laptop: photo or scan?

Some users would attempt a photo upload before using a scanner.

They think that scanning a photo would be more complicated.

Guidance on how to take a photo

Everyone understood the written guidance for taking a photo or uploading a scan.

There was a mix of opinion on whether the drawings or images showing good/bad photo examples were most useful. Most liked the photo image but would want to see examples on how they should hold their device ie a mix of both help pages.

Recommendations:

- Prototype a combination of drawings and photos and do further user research

- Exaggerate the cropped photo example

Error messages

All participants understood that 'try again' meant either taking another photo (phone) or uploading another photo or scan (computer). They did not understand why they were getting that message.

Some do not see that the address to send the fit note is being displayed within the message.

Error messages (continued)

Participants said they would retry at least 2 or 3 times to take a good enough photo, some would persevere more. Sending the fit note through the post was considered a last resort.

"I'd keep taking another photo until it works!"
"I'd try a different phone, I wouldn't trust the post"

Recommendation: Allow users as many attempts as they're prepared to try. Don't force them to leave the service after a few unsuccessful attempts.

Error messages: quotes

"I'd try again"
"I'd take another picture"
"I'd take a better picture"
"I'd try a different phone"

General comments

"It feels like I'm getting somewhere."

"I used to have to ring [DWP] and chase it up."

"That's better." [than sending it in or taking to a jobcentre]

"It's fairly straightforward."

Other suggestions

Could the fit note be sent directly from the doctors?

Could you just scan scan a QR code on the sick note?

Is there a way people could take into a Post Office - like the passport check and send service?

Thanks!

Any questions?