



Craig Whittaker MP

CALDER VALLEY

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Personal Independence Payments and Young People with Cancer

Thank you for contacting me about Personal Independence Payments and young people with cancer.

83 per cent of people with cancer say that, in addition to all the other problems they must face, they are financially impacted by having the condition. While I can understand why you feel that support related to disability should be provided at the point of diagnosis, it is a long standing principle of disability support that it is payable after a person satisfies the disability eligibility conditions for three months. This is to ensure that PIP supports those with long term disabilities which fall under the definition used in the Equality Act 2010. Before it was replaced by PIP, Disability Living Allowance also had this rule. It affects all claimants, not just young people, and there are exceptions such as in the case of terminal cancer.

People over the age of 16 who are unable to work due to an illness or disability can claim Employment and Support Allowance which has both contributory and income-related strands. For cancer sufferers, the process of gathering evidence to help determine eligibility is carried out with a light touch. There is also a presumption that claimants receiving or recovering from cancer treatment will be placed in the Support Group.

More broadly, it is the case that the Government spends over £50 billion a year supporting people with disabilities and health conditions, more than ever before; this is around 2.5 per cent of GDP and over 6 per cent of all Government spending.

I hope this reassures you of my commitment to help those who receive the news of a cancer diagnosis.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Craig Whittaker'.

Craig Whittaker MP