

I understand the concerns you have raised regarding changes to disability welfare. I want to be clear that the Government's plans will not result in any immediate changes to anyone's benefits.

These reforms have been designed to protect those who need support most and I welcome that those with lifelong health conditions, who will never be able to work, will no longer face future reassessments. These people will be eligible for a new Universal Credit premium, giving them the financial security they deserve. Existing claimants will also have their health top-up protected, and it is right that Personal Independence Payments will continue to rise with inflation.

I was elected on a pledge to put the voices of disabled people at the heart of policy. I stand by that. The Government's plans were developed through engagement with disabled people and a public consultation has been launched to guide the reforms going forward. I urge any disabled person or representative organisation to contribute their views to this.

I want to see a social security system that gets decisions right the first time and focuses on what people can do, not just what they cannot. That is why I welcome the Pathways to Work plan, which includes a record £1 billion investment in tailored employment support for disabled people. This comes alongside efforts to break down barriers to work and create healthier, more inclusive workplaces. Disabled people deserve the same opportunities as anybody else.

The plan will also increase the UC standard allowance above inflation for the first time. Crucially, the "Right to Try" guarantee will ensure going back to work itself will never lead to a reassessment, giving people the confidence to take on new opportunities. The broken Work Capability Assessment will be scrapped. This will simplify the process for attaining health-related benefits into one single assessment and end binary categorisations of can and cannot work, helping people who can work to access support to do so.

You ask specifically about the changes to PIP, which may mean some current recipients lose the right to claim some or all of that benefit. I am concerned that disabled residents have an adequate income to allow them to live with dignity and so I am happy to raise your concerns with the government and to represent as best I can the interests of disabled people in Hammersmith and Chiswick.

Thank you for your email, and if you have any further questions or if you think I can be of any help with your own case, then don't hesitate to get in touch and I'll do what I can to assist.

Kind regards,

Andy Slaughter

Labour MP for Hammersmith and Chiswick