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Your ref:

Our ref: MC2025/39783

30 June 2025

Dear Sir ,

Thank you for your recent correspondence of 28 April in relation to Health and Disability. I am replying as the Minister for Social Security and Disability.

As the Secretary of State set out in her letter dated 26 June 2025, we have listened to colleagues who supported the principle of reform but were worried about the impact of the pace of change for individuals already in receipt of support.

We have always said we are determined to reform the social security system so that it is fair, provides dignity and respect for those unable to work, supports those who can, and is sustainable so that it is there for generations to come.

We will make two changes to strengthen the Bill.

Firstly, we recognise the proposed changes have been a source of uncertainty and anxiety and we will therefore ensure that individuals currently in receipt Personal Independence Payment (PIP) will stay within the current system.

Secondly, we will adjust the pathway of Universal Credit payment rates to ensure that all existing recipients of the Universal Credit health element, any new claimant meeting the severe conditions criteria, and those who

qualify under Special Rules for End of Life (SREL) have their incomes fully protected in real terms.

We want to ensure that disabled people and those with health impairments are at the heart of our reforms. I will take forward a ministerial review of the PIP assessment to ensure that the benefit is fair and fit for the future.

At the heart of this review will be coproduction with disabled people, the organisations that represent them, and MPs so their views and voices are heard. The review will then report to the Secretary of State.

These commitments sit alongside our raising of the standard rate of the Universal Credit, the first permanent real-terms increase in the headline rate of out of work benefits since the 1980s, the protection of the incomes of the most vulnerable who will no longer be reassessed, and the introduction of “right to try”.

Our aims are to target funding for those most in need and make sure the system is sustainable for the future to support generations to come.

We believe those who can work, should be supported to do so, and those who cannot, should be protected. We will front load more of the additional funding generated by these reforms for back to work support for sick and disabled people.

This is a fair package that will preserve the social security system for those who need it by putting it on a sustainable footing, support people back into work, protect those who cannot work and reduce anxiety for those currently in the system.

I would like to reiterate my thanks to colleagues for engaging with us on these important reforms.

With all best wishes,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Timms', with a horizontal line above the name.

Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms MP
Minister of State for Social Security and Disability