

Cabinet Secretary for Social Justice submission of 14 August 2023

PE1854/Q: Review the adult disability payment eligibility criteria for people with mobility needs

We have today published the independent analysis of responses to the consultation on the eligibility criteria for the mobility component of Adult Disability Payment. I enclose a copy of the consultation analysis for your awareness and information.

As you will be aware, the Scottish Government undertook a public consultation on the eligibility criteria for the mobility component of Adult Disability Payment. The consultation ran from 31 January 2023 to 25 April 2023 and received 210 responses from individuals and stakeholder organisations. Of these, 108 responses were received via a survey tool created, launched and promoted by MS Society Scotland. People with lived experience of Multiple Sclerosis were asked six questions, and their responses were automatically entered into Citizen Space. The tool automatically answered 'yes' to two further questions on behalf of respondents. Whilst some of these questions were different to the consultation questions, we have considered the responses as part of the consultation analysis.

We commissioned an independent research company, The Lines Between, to conduct the analysis of the consultation responses and we have published the analysis report as well as an Easy Read version of the report on the Scottish Government website. The report presents the findings of the consultation and explains the methodology used to analyse the responses. We have published the consultation responses, where permission has been given to do this, on Citizen Space.

This consultation did not set out or advocate a preferred Scottish Government position or policy. Instead, this consultation was an opportunity for the people of Scotland and our stakeholders to provide views on the evidence presented on the mobility component.

As set out in the consultation, our priority remains delivering the safe and secure transition of people's payments, before making any changes to the eligibility criteria.

To avoid the creation of a two-tier system, we have not introduced significant changes to the eligibility criteria at launch. It is our intention that any changes to the eligibility criteria should not be made before the case transfer process is complete.

However, as you will be aware, whilst the eligibility criteria have not been significantly changed, the Scottish Government has delivered a transformed and more positive experience for Adult Disability Payment.

The findings from the consultation will help to inform the independent review when it commences later this year. It remains vital that we get any decisions right for the people of Scotland. That includes reflecting carefully on the evidence and not taking decisions in isolation on the mobility component alone. Given the very real challenges facing us, it is right that we consider how affordable changes might be within the context of a largely fixed Scottish budget. I believe allowing the independent review the opportunity to consider all of the evidence holistically will ensure consistency and coherence in any recommendations for future improvements to Adult Disability Payment.

We are continuing to work through the details of the independent review and are taking the time needed to get decisions right. I will provide further details as soon as I am in a position to do so.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of those who participated in the consultation and welcome the continued input of disabled people and stakeholders as part of the review.

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/adult-disability-payment-consultation-mobility-component-analysis-responses/>

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