

T: 0300 244 4000  
E: [scottish.ministers@gov.scot](mailto:scottish.ministers@gov.scot)

Natalie Don MSP  
Convener  
Social Justice and Social Security Committee  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

By email to: [sjss.committee@parliament.scot](mailto:sjss.committee@parliament.scot)

27 March 2023

Dear Natalie,

### **Publication of the Scottish Government response to the Carer Support Payment (formerly known Scottish Carer's Assistance) consultation**

I wrote to members of the Social Justice and Social Security Committee earlier this month on 3 March to advise that the Carer's Assistance (Carer Support Payment) (Scotland) Regulations 2023 had been referred for scrutiny to the Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCoSS).

Further to my previous letter, I am pleased to announce that today we have published our formal response to the Carer Support Payment (formerly Scottish Carer's Assistance) consultation ([www.gov.scot/publications/social-security-scottish-carers-assistance-consultation-scottish-government-response/](http://www.gov.scot/publications/social-security-scottish-carers-assistance-consultation-scottish-government-response/)). This publication follows our public consultation between February to May 2022 which set out proposals for our replacement benefit for Carer's Allowance in Scotland, and the subsequent publication of the independent analysis of consultation responses which followed.

Our response sets out the confirmed changes we will make to Carer Support Payment following consideration of the consultation feedback and extensive engagement with unpaid carers and stakeholders. It sets out a number of improvements we will make at launch, notably improving links to wider support, the reduction of the past presence test to carers to receive support sooner when moving to Scotland from outside the Common Travel Area, and changes to the education rules so that more carers can access Carer Support Payment and study full-time, reducing barriers to education.

It also reaffirms our commitment to introducing extra support for those with multiple caring roles through a Carer's Additional Person Payment, and to extending support to carers after the loss of a cared for person. To protect the benefits of carers in Scotland who are already receiving Carer's Allowance, and ensure they are treated fairly, avoiding a 'two-tier' system, we will make these changes as soon as possible after case transfer is complete.

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We are also continuing to consider the feedback on proposals for further improvements that could be made in the future, based on what we have heard from the consultation response, carers and support organisations.

In the meantime, we are continuing to work with carers and support organisations to deliver this important new benefit in pilot from the end of this year, with a national launch in spring 2024. Scottish Ministers look forward to discussing this further with the Committee through engagement on the Carer Support Payment regulations in due course.

Best regards,



**BEN MACPHERSON**

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