

# Mo Stewart

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Phone:

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Date: 3rd May, 2019

<https://www.mostewartresearch.co.uk>  
[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Mo\\_Stewart/publications](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Mo_Stewart/publications)

Professor Dame Sally Davies  
DBE, FRS, FMedSci  
Chief Medical Officer  
Department of Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London SW1H 0EU

Priority Attention

[Dear Dame Sally]

Re: Preventable harm is government policy

Further to previous contact, I am writing to alert you to the identified increasing preventable harm created by the flawed assessment model adopted by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to restrict access to the Employment and Support Allowance, the Personal Independence Payment and, most recently, to Universal Credit.

You will recall that the commissioned research used by the DWP to justify the adoption of the Waddell-Aylward biopsychosocial (BPS) model for the work capability assessment (WCA) has failed all academic scrutiny (Shakespeare et al, 2016), that the brutality of the assessment system together with the excessive use of sanctions is negatively impacting on public mental health (Barr et al 2015; Webster, 2015), and that the assessment model was influenced by corporate America long ago; as this government enforced tyranny has been adopted by consecutive neoliberal governments who imported American social policies (Daguerre, 2004) for political ideology and for no other reason (Stewart, 2019).

Given that the infamous 'Freud Report', as used by the DWP to justify this tyranny, was discredited within weeks of being published as Freud had '*misinterpreted his own references*' (Dorling, 2007), then you will I'm sure realise that both government commissioned reports used to justify the adoption of the fatally flawed WCA have been discredited by independent academic excellence.

Professor Peter Dwyer has just completed a five year project, that involved six universities, which concluded that conditionality of social security benefits DOES NOT permit or encourage vast numbers of disabled people to find jobs, contrary to DWP rhetoric, and their key findings were that conditionality created a range of negative behaviour changes (Dwyer et al, 2018):

- counterproductive compliance
- increased poverty, and on occasions, destitution
- movements into survival crime
- exacerbated ill health and impairments

The referenced published papers will alert you to this unacceptable ongoing preventable harm adopted by the DWP, as those in greatest need now live in fear of the Department. The healthcare

professions are waiting for you to speak out against this ongoing preventable harm in your capacity as the Chief Medical Officer (CMO), and so are the chronically ill and disabled community who are being terrorised by their own government, on route to the demolition of the welfare state to be replaced with private healthcare insurance, as all planned a long time ago (Stewart, 2016). There may be *'Better Health Within Reach'*, as claimed in your 2018 annual report but not, I respectfully suggest, if chronically ill or disabled in C21st UK and in need of financial support from the state. Victims are, quite literally, killed by the state, which demonstrates a catastrophic indifference to human need: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/22/stephen-smith-benefits-system-dying>

In the ten years since the adoption of the WCA, a lot of detailed research evidence has been published and it seems to me that the CMO and colleagues should be aware of this disturbing evidence, that confirms the ongoing unnecessary preventable harm created by the social policy reforms of consecutive UK governments. Your colleagues may welcome access to this evidence which will be shared with them. Some of my colleagues have co-signed this letter, as listed below.

Links:

Blaming the victim, all over again: Waddell and Aylward's biopsychosocial (BPS) model of disability  
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0261018316649120>

'First, do no harm': are disability assessments associated with adverse trends in mental health? A longitudinal ecological study <https://jech.bmj.com/content/70/4/339>

Benefit sanctions: Britain's secret penal system  
<https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/resources/benefit-sanctions-britains-secret-penal-system>

Importing Workfare: Policy Transfer of Social and Labour Market policies from the USA to Britain under New Labour  
<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1467-9515.2004.00375.x>

Psychological tyranny masquerading as welfare reform  
<https://www.mostewartresearch.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Psychological-Tyranny-Masquerading-Welfare-Reform.pdf>

The Real Mental Health Bill  
[https://www.academia.edu/3720014/Dorling\\_Real\\_Mental\\_Health\\_Bill](https://www.academia.edu/3720014/Dorling_Real_Mental_Health_Bill)

Final findings report:  
Welfare Conditionality Project 2013-2018  
[http://www.welfareconditionality.ac.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2018/06/40475\\_WelfareConditionality\\_Report\\_complete-v3.pdf](http://www.welfareconditionality.ac.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2018/06/40475_WelfareConditionality_Report_complete-v3.pdf)

Cash Not Care: the planned demolition of the UK welfare state  
<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Cash-Not-Care-planned-demolition/dp/178507783X>

Yours, most sincerely

"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."

Martin Luther-King Jr

Mo Stewart

Fellow, the Centre for Welfare Reform

Author of *'Cash Not Care: the planned demolition of the UK welfare state'*. London, New Generation Publishing, 2016

## Co-signatures

Professor Peter Dwyer, University of York  
Dr Simon Duffy, Director, Centre for Welfare Reform  
Dr Anne Daguerre, University of Middlesex  
Dr Kayleigh Garthwaite, University of Birmingham  
Professor Tanya Titchkosky, Dpt of Social Justice Education, University of Toronto  
Dr Marion Hersh, University of Glasgow  
Dr Maria Burghs, De Montfort University  
Dr Lisa Stafford, School of Public Health & Social Work, Queensland, Australia  
Dr Stephen Weatherhead, University of Liverpool  
Dr Liz Ellis, Centre for Health Science  
Dr Lucy Series, University of Cardiff  
Stephanie Headon, University of Bolton  
Eri Mountbatten, Centre for Welfare Reform  
Jim Elderwoodward OBE, Centre for Welfare Reform  
Laura Welti, Bristol Disability Equality Forum

## References

Blaming the victim, all over again: Waddell and Aylward's biopsychosocial model of disability  
Tom Shakespeare, Nicholas Watson, Ola Abu Alghaib, *Critical Social Policy* 2017, Vol. 37(1): 22-41

'First, do no harm': are disability assessments associated with adverse trends in mental health?  
A longitudinal ecological study

B Barr, D Taylor-Robinson, D Stuckler, R Loopstra, A Reeves and M Whitehead  
*Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* 2016, Vol. 70(4): 339-345

Benefit sanctions: Britain's secret penal system  
David Webster, *Centre for Crime and Justice Studies*, 26 January 2015

Importing Workfare: Policy Transfer of Social and Labour Market Policies from the USA to Britain  
under New Labour  
Anne Daguerre, *Social & Policy Administration* 2004, Vol. 38(1): 41-56

Psychological tyranny masquerading as welfare reform  
Mo Stewart  
*The Journal of Critical Psychology, Counselling and Psychotherapy* 2019, Vol. 19 (1): 26-35

The Real Mental Health Bill  
Danny Dorling, *Journal of Public Mental Health* 2007, Vol. 6 (3): 6-13

Final findings report, Welfare Conditionality Project 2013 – 2018  
Peter Dwyer et al, *Welfare Conditionality Project*, June 2018

Cash Not Care: the planned demolition of the UK welfare state  
Mo Stewart  
London, New Generation Publishing, 2016  
ISBN: 978-1-78507-783-8 (pbk)

Health 2040 - Better Health Within Reach  
Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer, 2018

Copied to:

Professor Michael Parker, University of Oxford  
Professor Danny Dorling, University of Oxford  
Professor Mark Caulfield, University of London  
Professor Sir Munir Pirohamed, University of Liverpool  
Professor Simon Capewell, University of Liverpool  
Dr Frank Atherton, CMO Wales  
Dr Catherine Calderwood, CMO Scotland  
Dr Michael McBride, CMO Health, Social Services & Public Policy, N Ireland  
Dr Harriet Boulding, Kings College London  
Dr Jonathan Pearson-Stuttard, Imperial College London  
Dr Ultan McDermott, Sanger Institute Alumni  
Professor Patrick Chinery, University of Cambridge  
Professor Martyn McKee, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
Dr Lucinda Hiam, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
Professor Christopher Whitty, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
Professor Dame Theresa Marteau DBE, University of Cambridge  
Professor Harry Rutter, University of Bath  
Professor Majid Ezzati, Imperial College London  
Professor Jonathan Grant, Kings College London  
Dr Claudia Langenberg, University of Cambridge  
Dr Dominic King, Imperial College London  
Dr Tim Elwell-Sutton, The Health Foundation  
Dr Jo Bibby, The Health Foundation  
David Finch, The Resolution Foundation  
Tom Kibassi, Institute of Public Policy Research  
Stephanie Headen, University of Bolton  
Dr Junaid Bajwa, Imperial College London  
Orla Murphy, Dpt of Health & Social Care

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Professor Sir Michael Marmot, Institute of Health Equity  
Sir Stephen Sedley, Faculty of Law, University of Oxford  
Professor Tom Shakespeare, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine  
Professor Peter Beresford, University of Essex  
Professor Nicholas Watson, University of Glasgow  
Professor Peter Dwyer, University of York  
Professor Clare Bambra, University of Newcastle  
Dr Simon Duffy, Centre for Welfare Reform  
Dr Tanya Titchkosky, University of Toronto, Canada  
Dr Kayleigh Garthwaite, University of Birmingham  
Dr Anne Daguerre, University of Middlesex  
Dr China Mills, City University London  
Dr Marion Hersh, University of Glasgow  
Dr Maria Burghs, De Montfort University  
Dr Stephen Weatherhead, University of Liverpool  
Dr Liz Ellis, Centre for Health Science  
Dr Lucy Series, University of Cardiff  
Dr Ben Barr, University of Liverpool  
Dr Mandy Cheetham, University of Teeside  
Dr Suzanne Moffatt, University of Newcastle  
Dr Michelle Addison, University of Newcastle  
Dr Lisa Stafford, Queensland University of Technology, Australia  
Dr Chris Grover, University of Lancaster  
Eri Mountbatten, Centre for Welfare Reform