



# Mo Stewart Research

Fellow, Centre for Welfare Reform  
Research Lead, Preventable Harm Project

Phone: xxxxx xxxxxx

Text: xxxxxxxxxxxx

Email:

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[The Preventable Harm Project](#)

The Rt Hon Victoria Atkins MP  
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care  
Department of Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria Street  
London  
SW1H 0EU

via email

Dear Secretary of State

Re: The public health crisis created by UK social policy reforms<sup>1</sup>  
[Justice, Power and Resistance 6\(2\): 217-228](#)

Congratulations on your appointment as the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

At the request of some of your colleagues who are familiar with my published research, I write in my capacity as the research lead for the Preventable Harm Project<sup>2</sup> (2009-2019) to alert you to the above paper,<sup>1</sup> which identifies the public health crisis created by successive social policy reforms which negatively impacted on the health, wellbeing and survival of many chronically ill and disabled people who are unfit for work.<sup>3,4,5</sup>

Whilst the cause of the crisis is directly linked to social policy 'reforms' adopted via the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), which negatively impacted on those in greatest need, the human consequences created an identified public health crisis<sup>1</sup> which I believe you need to be alerted to as this imposed human suffering has generated a greater demand on the NHS and related services. Indeed, the adoption of social policies using a fiscal priority whilst disregarding health and wellbeing guaranteed human suffering on a vast scale.<sup>6</sup>

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## Notes

1 [The public health crisis created by the UK social policy reforms](#)

2 [The Preventable Harm Project](#)

3 ['First, do no harm': are disability benefits associated with adverse trends in mental health? A longitudinal ecological study.](#)

4 [Dismantling the social safety net: social security reforms, disability and mental health conditions](#)

5 [Preventable harm: creating a mental health crisis](#)

6 [Thousands have died after being found fit for work, DWP figures show.](#)



May I please remind you that the definition of ‘preventable harm’ is ‘the presence of an identifiable, modifiable cause of harm’<sup>7</sup> as created by the introduction by the DWP of the fatally flawed Work Capability Assessment (WCA) that disregards all clinical need, and was adopted to limit access to long-term disability benefit which is now linked to a public health crisis.<sup>1</sup>

It remains cause for serious concern that those in greatest need are suffering due to the adoption of a totally discredited assessment model,<sup>8</sup> and this identified ongoing government induced public health crisis is disregarded by successive administrations; with claims to justify social policy reforms and severe austerity measures relating to fraudulent disability benefit service-users which are demonstrably totally unfounded.<sup>9</sup>

Whilst the flawed WCA and social policies are the responsibility of the DWP, it is hoped that the identified public health crisis generated by the adoption of this assessment will now be acknowledged by the Department for Health and Social Care, and the latest threat to those in greatest need by the DWP will be challenged by the Department as it is destined to cause more preventable harm<sup>1</sup> and is causing serious concern within the medical community.<sup>10</sup>

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Mo Stewart'.

**Mo Stewart**

Fellow, Centre for Welfare Reform  
Research Lead, Preventable Harm Project



“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.”  
Martin Luther-King Jr

Copied to: Wes Streeting, Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Social Care  
Daisy Cooper, Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Health and Social Care  
Dr Jed Boardman, Consultant Psychiatrist, London

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#### Notes

- 1 [The public health crisis created by the UK social policy reforms](#)
- 7 [What price preventable harm in healthcare? A systematic review of definitions](#)
- 8 [Blaming the victim all over again: Waddell and Aylward’s biopsychosocial \(BPS\) model of disability](#)
- 9 [Fear of the Brown Envelope: Exploring Welfare Reform with Long-Term Sickness Benefit Recipients](#)
- 10 [Leading Psychiatrists say benefits overhaul risks disabled people’s mental health](#)