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[The Preventable Harm Project](#)

Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Private & Confidential

via email

Dear Steve

Re: The public health crisis created by UK social policy reforms¹

[Justice, Power and Resistance 6\(2\): 217-228](#)

In the recent past I have kept you informed and updated as to the identified public health crisis created by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the fatally flawed Work Capability Assessment (WCA), which was adopted to limit access to disability benefit and which negatively impacts on the health, wellbeing and, very often, on the survival of those in greatest need.¹

Letters to you in the past from a DWP Minister² claiming to respond to my concerns have disregarded all published evidence of the preventable harm created by the DWP enforced assessments and continued with standard DWP rhetoric. This rhetoric is, frankly, sounding like a worn out record as the commentary demonstrates the DWP's total failure to acknowledge peer-reviewed published research¹ whilst ministers continue to demonise those in greatest need by their often shameful commentary.

Despite Sir Iain Duncan Smith no longer being in the Cabinet, he continues to attack the chronically ill and disabled community via the press, where he still claims that '*the Government must get people languishing on sickness benefit back to work*,'³ demonstrating his continued hostility based on prejudice and ideology, not facts.

1 The public health crisis created by UK social policy reforms

[Justice, Power and Resistance 6\(2\): 217-228](#)

2 Inadequate letter to Steve Barclay from DWP Minister

[Response to Mo Stewart's concerns](#)

3 Stop sick people from languishing on benefits

[Ian Duncan Smith – The Telegraph, 24th May 2023](#)



Sadly, the latest verbal attack in the press against those in greatest need was from an unexpected source, namely the recently appointed Chief Secretary to the Treasury, whose disturbing commentary⁴ demonstrated that this was another minister who was very poorly briefed as to the reality of the chronically ill and disabled community who are unfit for work.

Hundreds of thousands of people will be told to look for work that they can do from home or face having their benefits cut by £4,680 a year, under plans that were first reported by the Times.

Laura Trott, chief secretary to the Treasury, told Sky News: 'Of course there should be support for people to help them into work but ultimately there is a duty on citizens if they are able to go out to work they should. ...

There was strong criticism from charities. Ayla Ozman, the director of policy and campaigns at the anti-poverty charity Z2K, described the plans as 'rushed and ill-thought-out.'

'There is no evidence to support the idea that there are fully remote jobs available that are suitable for these groups,' she said.

'This is simply a cut for those of us who become seriously ill or disabled in the future and need the support of social security, and risks worsening people's health and pushing them further from work.'⁴

This latest DWP threat to those in greatest need assumes and presumes that the disabled community can all use a computer when forced to work from home, demonstrating once again the DWP's lack of awareness of those in greatest need.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mo Stewart'.

Mo Stewart

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

Author ['Cash Not Care: the planned demolition of the UK welfare state'](#)

Producer [The Preventable Harm Project](#)

Editor [Influences and Consequences](#)

4 Disabled people must work from home to do 'their duty', says UK minister
[The Guardian, 21st November 2023](#)