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Mr Morgan McSweeney
Chief of Staff
The Prime Minister's Office
10 Downing Street
London
SW1A 2AA

Private & Confidential

Dear Mr McSweeney

Re: The public health crisis created by UK social policy reforms¹
[Justice, Power and Resistance 6\(2\): 217-228](#)

I write in my capacity as the research lead for the Preventable Harm Project,² to alert you to the identified ongoing and relentless government induced public health crisis, for which no-one is held to account. The above link to my last research paper, published in 2023, will alert you to the human suffering induced by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) which is being continued by the recently elected Labour administration.

To justify the adoption of harsh and unnecessary austerity measures, which were introduced without ethical approval, the Coalition administration elected in 2010 vehemently challenged the integrity of the chronically ill and disabled community and routinely accused disability benefit claimants of fraud, while failing to produce evidence to support their claims. Their often hostile rhetoric encouraged a 213 percent increase in prosecuted disability hate crimes, and successive administrations disregarded the thousands of deaths directly linked to the Work Capability Assessment, which was adopted using a discredited and dangerous biopsychosocial model of assessment to restrict access to long-term disability benefit. Influenced by corporate America since 1992, the UK social policy reforms guaranteed that many of those in greatest need were destined to die when, covertly, killed by the State.¹

Despite a change in government, it should be remembered that it was the last Labour administration led by Gordon Brown (2007-2010) who introduced the fatally flawed and very dangerous Work Capability Assessment (WCA) in 2008 to limit access to the Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) long-term disability benefit.¹ The WCA was adopted following

¹ [The public health crisis created by UK social policy reforms: Justice, Power and Resistance Volume 6 Issue 2 \(2023\)](#)

² [The Preventable Harm Project](#)



discredited research,³ commissioned in 2005 by the Blair administration, which justified the future adoption of the WCA. This assessment is demonstrably dangerous given that it disregards all clinical need, and the Waddell-Aylward biopsychosocial (BPS) model of assessment as adopted for the WCA failed all academic scrutiny.⁴ Hence, the assessment model employed to assess the chronically ill and disabled community was guaranteed to cause preventable harm because clinical need is disregarded, and a public health crisis was always inevitable.⁵ This human suffering is now 'the norm' in the UK and must end.

Whilst the political attacks relating to the chronically ill and disabled community who are **unable** to work was extended and ruthlessly employed by the Coalition and successive Conservative administrations, you should be alert to the fact that Liz Kendall MP, the latest DWP Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, continues to intimidate those in greatest need and to generate fear for those who have already suffered so much.⁶ Indeed, Liz Kendall demonstrates with every comment she makes that she is continuing with this government induced persecution of those in greatest need. Thousands of chronically ill and disabled people have died when 'killed by the state'⁷ with no-one held to account. It seems no-one in government is remotely concerned or even alert to this ongoing government induced public health crisis since the adoption of neoliberal politics,⁸ which is devoted to a reduction of welfare costs regardless of dire human consequences. Perhaps, therefore, you could please alert the Prime Minister to this identified and relentless government induced public health crisis, which is directly linked to the hostile ideology identified within the DWP.⁹

We have demonstrated how ordinary workers have been encouraged to implement social security reforms which are frequently experienced as cruel and inhumane. ... In so doing, we have highlighted the pivotal role played by the (re)intensification of stigmatising welfare narratives and a number of social security reforms that changed the operational logic of Britain's employment service under Coalition rule. These facilitated the production and delivery of institutional violence on the front-line of service delivery.⁹

There are increasing concerns identified by Liz Kendall's relentless commentary whilst, at the same time, continuing with what is a demonstrable total disregard for those in greatest need. Like her predecessors she fails to mention, or to acknowledge, the fact that there are many catastrophically ill people in receipt of disability benefit who will never, ever, be well enough to consider paid employment. **This continued persecution of those in greatest need by the DWP is relentless, totally unacceptable and unjustifiable.^{1,5,6-9}

¹ [The public health crisis created by UK social policy reforms in: Justice, Power and Resistance 6, 2: 217-228](#)

³ [The Scientific and Conceptual Basis of Incapacity Benefits](#)

⁴ [Blaming the victim, all over again: Waddell and Aylward's biopsychosocial \(BPS\) model of disability](#)

⁵ ['First, do no harm': are disability assessments associated with adverse trends in mental health? A longitudinal ecological study | Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health](#)

⁶ [Anger and confusion over Kendall's comments on sending work coaches into mental health hospitals – DNS](#)

⁷ [Killed By The State? Social Policy Abused](#)

⁸ [The Creation Of Thatcher's Dark Legacy](#)

⁹ [Violent bureaucracy: A critical analysis of the British public employment service](#)



Please be advised that there is not, nor has there ever been, any evidence of a vast amount of disability benefit fraud, with the biggest problem with benefit costs relating to the high level of DWP errors.¹⁰

However, despite the increased moral panic over the amount and calibre of people receiving sickness benefits, evidence from the DWP suggests that fraud levels are, in fact, very low. The latest available figures from the DWP state that the fraud rate for sickness benefits is just 0.5 per cent, meaning that 99.5 per cent of claimants are not fraudulent, with figures for official error actually higher than the level of fraud at 1.7 per cent. By focusing on this issue as if it were one of the most important features of the system is completely unbalanced and thus manufactures an entirely flawed impression of sick and disabled people receiving benefits.¹⁰

Furthermore, it should please be remembered that DWP figures released in May 2024 identified that the level of fraud for Personal Independence Payment was **zero**,¹¹ so why does this relentless DWP persecution of those in greatest need continue? It is very well known that if a significant lie is told often enough, for long enough, people will believe it. This is the basis of all propaganda, and has been successfully adopted by the DWP since 2008, which Sir Iain Duncan Smith - the previous Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for the Coalition administration - excelled at, using this brutality in his attempt to create the required social re-engineering to remove the past psychological security of the welfare state. He succeeded. Those in greatest need now live in fear of the DWP. This brutal DWP tyranny must be stopped.

Please alert the Prime Minister to this ongoing government induced public health crisis.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mo Stewart', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mo Stewart

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



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

Producer [The Preventable Harm Project](#)

Editor [Influences and Consequences](#)

¹⁰ [Fear of Brown Envelope: Exploring Welfare Reform with Long-Term Sickness Benefit Recipients](#)

¹¹ [DWP silent over whether Sunak was wrong to say PIP was being exploited, as fraud falls to zero – Disability News Service](#)

Enclosures:

- The Creation of Thatcher's Dark Legacy
- The Public Health Crisis Created by UK Social Policy Reforms