

## The danger of politicians with medical opinions but no medical knowledge

There is a big difference between a political leader justifying an unpopular policy and a political leader fighting to survive.<sup>1,2</sup> When fighting to survive, all bets are off and there are no limits to the extreme claims political leaders are happy to make, especially in front of a TV audience with a potential large number of viewers.<sup>1,2</sup>

So, the political conference season has come and gone for another year and, at every one except the Green Party conference, politicians of various political persuasions continue to demonise the chronically ill and disabled community who are not in paid employment. Kemi Badenoch leads the field for the Conservative Party in relentless assaults on the long-term chronically ill and disabled community who survive on disability benefit.<sup>2</sup>

'... we will restrict benefit to those with the most severe mental health conditions, not anxiety or mild depression. Yes, these challenges are real and people should get support, but they cannot be treated as a reason for a lifetime off work. And third, we will restrict Motability vehicles to people with serious disabilities. Those cars are not for people with ADHD. These are the first steps of a radical reform of our welfare system. We will return it to its founding principle that support only goes to those that really need it. ... I stand for a society where ... the vulnerable are supported, but where freeloaders are told where to get off.'<sup>2</sup>

This political passtime threatening disability benefit claimants has been ongoing for the past 15 years but, as the numbers of deaths linked to increasingly extreme social policy reforms increase,<sup>3-5</sup> so does the hostile political rhetoric and propaganda once again threatening the integrity of disability benefit claimants who are deemed to be unfit to work by every clinical opinion but not, it seems, by political opinion.

Speaking from the dispatch box, be it at a conference or in the House of Commons, every political leader since Blair has made an increasing effort to demonise those in greatest need whose physical survival is dependent upon the welfare state. Neoliberal politics decided they weren't worthy of such support, guided by social policies adopted using a fiscal priority whilst disregarding health and wellbeing. People were always destined to die when, covertly, *killed by the State*<sup>5</sup> with no one held to account.

The dismissal of '*anxiety*,' suggesting that it is a minor mental health condition demonstrates the dangers of politicians with lots of opinion regarding medical matters but who demonstrate no medical knowledge. Someone should alert Kemi Badenoch to the fact that anxiety '*can be a critical mental health problem, especially when it is severe, prolonged, or interferes with daily life, leading to serious consequences like social isolation, depression, substance use and, in severe cases, increased risk of suicide.*'<sup>6</sup> That's why chronically ill people are awarded long-term disability benefit when UNABLE to work and, often, unable to leave the house, but a medical qualification is needed to make that judgement. Degrees in Law and Engineering awarded to the Leader of the Opposition appear to come to the wrong biased conclusion. ...

As for Motability cars, Kemi Badenoch needs to be much better informed. Motability cars are not awarded depending on diagnosis but are accessed via the award of a disability benefit. People with ADHD, or any other diagnosis, who are awarded the Enhanced Rate of the Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP) can choose to use the income to lease a Motability car. There is no reason for hostile political ridicule since the benefit claimant is personally funding the lease of the car with the awarded benefit, and someone should alert the Shadow Secretary for Work and Pensions that Motability cars are not *'free'*.

Such severe ADHD claimants living with so many limitations that one of the most difficult disability assessments in the western world has deemed them to be entitled to PIP could argue that they, too, *'really need it'* and should not be publicly challenged by hostile, right-leaning politicians for using their PIP benefit for the purposes for which it was intended.

October 2025

<sup>1</sup> [Full speech: Starmer delivers pitch to voters and attacks Farage at Liverpool conference | ITV News - YouTube](#)

<sup>2</sup> [LIVE: Kemi Badenoch's Keynote Speech at Conservative Party Conference 2025 - YouTube](#)

<sup>3</sup> [The public health crisis created in UK social policy reforms. \*Justice, Power and Resistance\* 6\(2\): 217-228  
DOI: 10.1332/GQDH4178](#)

<sup>4</sup> [An Independent Advisory Panel on DWP-Related Deaths](#)

<sup>5</sup> [Killed by the State?: Social Policy Abused](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Anxiety can be a critical mental health problem](#)