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The Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms MP
Minister of State for Social Security and Disability
Department for Work and Pensions
Caxton House
Tothill Street
London SW1H 9DA

Private & Confidential

via email

Ref: MC2025/118873

Dear Sir Stephen

Re: [No one held to account](#)¹

Thank you for your letter of 27 January 2026, in response to my letter of 5 December 2025.

With respect, whilst I do welcome your kind invitation to keep you informed as to my research findings, I do wonder why such an invitation is routinely extended? Your correspondence invariably disregards the significance of all peer-reviewed published evidence previously provided, demonstrating what is the identified ongoing government-induced public health crisis² generated by the Department for Work and Pensions (the Department).

I further note that you advise that you intend to 'continue to monitor the evidence relating to the previous policy changes and learn the lessons from them.' I would therefore welcome evidence as to what 'monitoring' has been conducted, and how you intend to 'learn lessons,' given that there is growing evidence that welfare reforms have had major negative impacts on public health. Indeed, I would go further to advise that, by disregarding the findings by significant independent social policy research, the Department disregards all published evidence demonstrating the government-induced public health crisis² negatively impacting on the health, wellbeing and on the survival of many of those in greatest need.^{3,4,5} Consequently, no one is held to account¹ for this relentless and unnecessary government-induced suffering of those in greatest need, which the Department fails to acknowledge.

¹ [No one held to account](#)

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

³ [Dismantling the social safety net: social security reforms, disability and mental health challenges *BJPsych Bulletin* 44\(5\): 208-2012](#)

⁴ ['First, do no harm': are disability assessments associated with adverse trends in mental health? *J. Epidemiol Community Health* 2016; 70: 339-345](#)

⁵ [Impact of Universal Credit in North East England: a qualitative study of claimants and support staff *BMJ Open* 2019; 9:e29611](#)



Since our last contact I have had the opportunity to write to a number of senior officials who claim to be concerned with the wellbeing of service-users, without demonstrating any detailed evidence of the claimed support.⁶⁻⁹ I suggest that the (latest) Secretary of State for Work and Pensions needs to be alert to the human consequences of his constant and deeply disturbing **disinformation**.^{10,7}

Their anger and frustration only increased when new work and pensions secretary Pat McFadden claimed [in an interview](#) that there were currently “incentives” in the system for people to declare themselves unfit for work so they can “double their money”, and also claimed that people were “declaring themselves long-term sick”.

McFadden will have been aware that claimants cannot declare themselves “long term sick” but instead must go through the harsh work capability assessment in order to be found not fit for work, and he should have been aware that this system has [led to countless deaths](#).

Researcher and writer Sue Jones [responded on X/Twitter](#): “Progressive, incurable illnesses are not ‘perverse incentives’ you vicious man, and no amount of lying about people and inventing ‘incentives’ and motives will change the fact that many of us can no longer work, simply because we are too ill and disabled.”¹⁰

There is an identified and ongoing government induced public health crisis² negatively impacting on those in greatest need which successive administrations continue to disregard, as the Department dismiss the fact that the chronically ill and disabled community in need of financial support live in fear of making a claim for disability benefit. This is entirely due to relentless hostile political commentary,¹⁰ ongoing for the past eighteen years, demonstrating that the Department’s only concern remains ‘*Cash, Not Care*’¹¹ regardless of often fatal human consequences¹² for which the Department accept no responsibility. This is shameful.

The stated political ambition was to get 80% of the [working age] population into employment, including the disabled community. Those with the most ‘*complex and demanding problems*’ were to be encouraged to find work, using the private sector, regardless of predictable catastrophic human consequences. Clinical needs were disregarded, as all claims were based on a fiscal priority and nothing else. People were always destined to die. (p.21)¹²

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

⁶ [Letter to Lorraine Jackson CBE, Director Joint Work and Health Initiative](#)

⁷ [Letter to the Rt Hon Pat McFadden MP, DWP Secretary of State](#)

⁸ [Letter to Professor Sir Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer for England/Chief Medical Adviser for UK Gvt](#)

⁹ [Letter to Dr Gail Allsopp, DWP Chief Medical Adviser](#)

¹⁰ [Anger and frustration after DWP’s latest jobcentre announcement and McFadden’s ‘incentives’ comment](#)

¹¹ [Cash Not Care: the planned demolition of the UK welfare state – New Generation Publishing, London 2016](#)

¹² [Killed By The State - social policy abused: the creation of preventable harm](#)



On a related subject, it is cause for serious concern to learn that the administration's one scheme introduced to support disabled workers is now working towards generating more preventable harm as the administration has adopted '*stealth cuts*' for **Access to Work** grants.¹³ In recent weeks, claimants of Access to Work have been advised that evidence provided via email will no longer be permitted, and advisers for claimants will no longer be identified by name. All evidence is required to be provided via the postal service, increasing costs for the Access to Work grant claimant, and delays as to how long it will take for any evidence to be received by an adviser, which will delay a decision. It is also cause for serious concern to learn that Access to Work grants have been significantly cut, or totally removed without warning, which has negatively impacted on successful businesses created by disabled people. Once again, the Department is giving out mixed messages by insisting that the chronically ill and disabled community must search for work, then reducing or removing the financial support provided. This is yet another example of the Department's determination to limit costs regardless of human consequences, and is totally unacceptable:¹³

"Josh Wintersgill has been running a successful business selling products to help wheelchair users travel for six years, but its future hangs in the balance.

He's been using the government's Access to Work scheme to help with some of the additional costs of running his company and is afraid that he may lose it after his one-on-one support was slashed by 80%.

The Business Disability Forum says businesses and their disabled employees are being 'set up to fail,' despite the government's ambitions to get 80% of disabled people into the workforce. ...

Josh needs physical support with most things throughout the day because of his disability. This includes travelling, overnight stays and packing and shipping customer orders. Without this support he says he would not be able to run his company.

The Access to Work grant was providing him with a support worker five days a week, but on reassessment, it was reduced to one day.

He said: 'They're basically with me all the time. They help me in every facet of helping me do my job and without them, I can't do any of that.'

Josh has appealed the decision and has not had any support since the start of July, when his grant ran out, despite no change in his personal circumstances. ...

Disabled people have told the BBC their awards have been significantly reduced, completely taken away and in some cases left them forced to shut their businesses and turn down job offers. ...

Josh says Access to Work helped him get into work and set up his own business, but is fearful of what will happen if that is taken away.

'It's scary to think that I'm a disabled entrepreneur, helping disabled people being deprived of doing that.'" (BBC News)¹³

¹³ ['I created a successful business thanks to a disability grant – but cuts will sink it'](#) - Nicola Fox, BBC News



Given that we benefit from some of the best academic experts in public health here in the UK, I suggest it is very unwise for the administration to continue to disregard their findings which, invariably, demonstrate the government-induced public health crisis impacting on those in greatest need as directly linked to UK welfare reform.¹⁴

Our findings suggest that the introduction of Universal Credit led to an increase in psychological distress, a measure of mental health difficulties, among those affected by the policy. Future changes to government welfare systems should be evaluated not only on a fiscal basis but on their potential to affect health and wellbeing.¹⁴

It's past time to end this well-documented government-induced suffering.

In keeping with all government correspondence, a copy of this letter will be reproduced on the Preventable Harm Project website.

Yours sincerely

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The Preventable Harm Project

"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’](#)
Editor [The Preventable Harm Project](#)
Researcher [Influences and Consequences](#)

Copied to: The Baroness Merron, PUSS for Patient Safety, Women’s Health & Mental Health DHSC
The Baroness Lister of Buttersett CBE, Co-chair APPG on Poverty & Inequality
The Rt Hon. the Baroness Chakrabarti CBE
Lord Alton, Chair Joint Committee on Human Rights
Sarah Owen MP, Chair Women and Equalities Committee
Dr Sophie Wickham, Faculty of Health & Life Sciences, University of Liverpool
Dr Jed Boardman, Consultant Psychiatrist/Senior Lecturer in Social Psychiatry
Peter Matejic, Chief Analyst Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Jacqueline Winstanley FRSA, Co-founder Access to Work Collective
Diane Lightfoot, CEO Business Disability Forum
Kamran Mallick, CEO Disability Rights UK

¹⁴ [Effects on mental health of a UK welfare reform, Universal Credit: a longitudinal controlled study](#)