



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

12th March 2021

New Complaint,

RE: SUPPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH TERMINAL ILLNESSES

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of support for people with terminal illnesses, with specific reference to the 'Scrap 6 Months' campaign; your comments upon which I have read with great interest and compassion.

When someone is facing the end of their life it is vital they get the support they need quickly. That's why the *Special Rules for Terminal Illness* (SRTI) provide simple and fast access to benefits for people with a terminal illness or limited life expectancy. The SRTI allow claimants who are unlikely to live longer than 6-months to claim under a fast-tracked process without the requirement for waiting periods or a face-to-face assessment, and in most cases to receive the highest rate of award.

The following benefits allow claims to be made under the SRTI: Personal Independence Payment, Employment & Support Allowance, Universal Credit, Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance. A claim made under the SRTI is generally supported by a short form, completed by a hospital consultant, GP, or specialist nurse.

I know supporting those nearing the end of their lives is a priority for the Government and the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) has conducted a wide ranging evaluation which considered the views of claimants and clinicians on how it supports those nearing the end of their lives. The evaluation covered three areas. First, hearing directly from claimants and charities about their first-hand experiences. Second, considering international evidence to find out what works in other nations and the support they provide. Finally, reviewing current DWP performance to better understand how the SRTI process operates and performs.

Having spoken with ministerial colleagues at the DWP, I understand that key themes arising from the evaluation include the desire to change the six-month rule, the need to improve consistency with other services, and the importance of raising awareness of the support that is available.

I know that my colleagues at the DWP and across the Government are committed to ensuring those nearing the end of their lives get the vital support they need and I will continue to follow this important matter closely. I have also raised your concerns with the appropriate Ministers, as per your request, during the discussions I have had with them.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you, then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,
Tom

TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE