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10th February 2011

DLA Reform Team,
1st Floor,
Caxton House,
Tothill Street,
LONDON SW1H 9NA

Rec'd
15/2/11

Dear Sirs,

Re: Response To Public Consultation Regarding Disability Living Allowance Reform

I am responding to your consultation document as an individual, who has been disabled since 1967 and in receipt of the Disability Living Allowance (higher rate for mobility and middle rate for care), since its inception, on an indefinite basis.

1. Mobility:-

Transport, either by car including adaptation: accessible public transport
Access to buildings – work/study/shopping/leisure and social activities

Access to information:-

Noting needs of people with visual and hearing impairments

Lack of affordable, available and appropriate assistance in the home

Availability of aids and adaptations

Inadequate provision and maintenance of systems such as "loop" in public places.

2. DLA should remain the same, not means-tested, not taxed and not restricted to a particular age group and can be awarded for an indefinite period.

3. Transport costs – maintaining and running a car including costs of adaptations of controls etc. – taxis and minicabs.
Care – additional care in the home both local authority and private provision; domestic help etc.
Extra costs to participate in social and leisure activities, for example some theatres do not offer reduced ticket prices for disabled people and some travel companies require able-bodied companions.
4. There is no reason to assume this. Without specifying the criteria for each of the two rates, it is not possible to list the disadvantages and problems.
5. Yes. Otherwise the timescale required to assess every individual claim is likely to tax resources beyond any manageable level.
6. No response.
7. You cannot: too many factors involved.
8. Most aids and adaptations are unlikely to alter substantially the problems and barriers listed in Q.1.
9. No response
10. So far we have no definitions of "ability".
11. The practical implications, e.g. timescale/suitably qualified personnel do not appear to have been taken into account.
12. Again, need awareness of practical constraints.

No there should not be different types of review: impossible to set appropriate criteria.
13. No response
14. Yes, if you can
15. I doubt if there is an easy answer to this.
16. A wide variety of methods. An option, but NOT a requirement, to use PIP.

17. No response.
18. Very important but lack of clarity and understanding can limit such access.
19. It would have considerable negative implications. This "passport" should be maintained and circumstances clarified.
20. Where feasible and fair, this should be explored.
21. No response.
22. With reference Section 2 of The New Benefit: Our Proposals, what will stay the same? ~~X~~
Points 8 and 9 - I hope there is no question that these will remain the same.
Point 10 - the provision for individuals in receipt of DLA or PIP before age 65 to continue to receive this after 65 should definitely be included.

I look forward to your response to my comments.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

* 22 ref - Executive Summary Pt 19

Surprised that DLA can be viewed as a barrier to work. In my own case it contributed to both the costs of travel and essential adaptations to my car.

Many disabled people would have been unable to pursue studies, enhancing their opportunities for employment, without the financial support of DLA for travel and equipment.

[Redacted]