Source: UK House of Commons
Date: May 6, 2026
URL:
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-29/49218
Ref: http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster

[Written Answers]

Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

Ellie Chowns

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Green Paper entitled Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working Green Paper, published on 18 March 2025, if she will take steps to prevent people with (a) lifelong and severely disabling illnesses and (b) Myalgic Encephalomyelitis from having to undergo repeated reassessments.

Sir Stephen Timms

Our wide-ranging package of reforms to health and disability benefits, set out in the Pathways to Work Green Paper, will improve experiences of the system for those who need it. The functional impact and severity of a condition can significantly vary across individuals, so we are not planning to exempt specific conditions, but we are planning to reduce reassessments for those with the most severe conditions.

We aim to guarantee that for both new and existing Universal Credit claims, those with the most severe, life-long health conditions, who will never be able to work, will not need to be reassessed in the future. Our plans to improve experiences of Personal Independence Payment also include reducing assessments for this group. We are exploring ways we could use evidence from eligibility for other services to reduce the need for some people with very severe health conditions and disabilities to undergo a full PIP functional assessment.

Source: UK House of Commons
Date: May 8, 2025
URL:
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-04-29/49219
Ref: http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster

[Written Answers]

Personal Independence Payment: Chronic Illnesses

Ellie Chowns

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, with reference to the Green Paper entitled Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working, published on 18 March 2025, if she will make an assessment of the potential impact of the four-point minimum eligibility threshold on the ability of people with (a) fluctuating illnesses and (b) Myalgic Encephalomyelitis to claim PIP.

Sir Stephen Timms

Information on the impacts of the Pathways to Work Green Paper will be published in due course, and some information was published alongside the Spring Statement. These publications can be found in 'Pathways to Work: Reforming Benefits and Support to Get Britain Working Green Paper',

https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/pathways-to-work-reforming-benefits-and-support-to-get-britain-working-green-paper

A further programme of analysis to support development of the proposals in the Green Paper will be developed and undertaken in the coming months.

Source: UK House of Commons
Date: May 13, 2025
URL:
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-08/50877

https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-08/50878
Ref: http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster

[Written Answers]

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Health Services
Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Employment

Suella Braverman

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department has made an assessment of the adequacy of levels of support for people with myalgic encephalomyelitis.

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether his Department plans to increase support for people with myalgic encephalomyelitis who are employed.

Ashley Dalton

Occupational health as advisory support has a broad remit. It plays an important role in supporting employers to maintain and promote employee health and wellbeing through assessments of fitness for work, advice about reasonable adjustments, work ability or return to work plans, and signposting to treatment for specific conditions such as myalgic encephalomyelitis, also known as chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS).

Access to Work is a demand-led, personalised discretionary grant that supports the recruitment and retention of disabled people in sustainable paid employment. The tailored nature of the scheme allows customers to receive the appropriate grant and support based on their specific health and disability-related needs, including ME/CFS. Access to Work grants do not replace an employer's duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make reasonable adjustments.

The goal is to open up opportunities to good work and to support a healthier, more productive and inclusive nation, by helping more disabled people and people with health conditions like ME/CFS to get appropriate work, get on in that work, and to return to work as quickly as possible if they leave it. This supports the Government's priority of tackling economic inactivity, as set out in the Get Britain Working White Paper.

NHS England recently completed a ME/CFS stocktake, aimed at providing a nationwide overview of service delivery in commissioning and contracting, assessing access, activity, and outcomes. The findings confirmed the widely recognised challenges of significant variation in care delivery across England and a lack of comprehensive activity data.

We aim to publish our ME/CFS final delivery plan by the end of June 2025. The plan will focus on boosting research, improving attitudes and education, and bettering the lives of people with this debilitating disease. The responses to the interim delivery plan consultation, along with continued close engagement with other parts of the Government, the National Health Service, and external stakeholders, will inform the development of the final ME/CFS delivery plan.

Source: UK House of Commons
Date: May 14, 2025
URL:
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-06/50175
Ref: http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster

[Written Answers]

Personal Independence Payment: Chronic Illnesses

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what assessment her Department has made of the potential impact of her proposed changes to Personal Independence Payment on people with (a) Myalgic Encephalomyelitis and (b) other fluctuating illnesses.

Sir Stephen Timms

In January 2025, there were around 25,000 working age claimants in England and Wales that have their main disability recorded as Myalgic Encephalomyelitis, excluding those treated under Special Rules for End of Life. Around 12,000 received less than 4 points across all daily living descriptors. The primary health conditions recorded on the PIP computer system are not classified according to whether they are fluctuating or not, therefore information can only be given for specified conditions.

The Personal Independence Payment (PIP) assessment looks at how a long-term health condition or disability impacts on daily life across 12 activities, taking into account fluctuations over a 12-month period. The activities are grouped into two components, daily living and mobility, and within each activity a descriptor must be chosen to score an individual depending on whether an individual can complete the activity, the manner in which they do it, and whether they can complete each activity safely, to an acceptable standard, repeatedly and in a reasonable time period.

The assessment is designed to reflect the impact of variations in an individual's needs for all health conditions, not only those which more typically fluctuate. Health conditions may be physical, sensory, mental, intellectual or cognitive, or any combination of these, and the assessment is designed to take a comprehensive approach to disability, reflecting the needs arising from the full range of impairments.

Health professionals are expected to be mindful of the fact that many conditions fluctuate, producing symptoms that vary in intensity from mild to severe, and are instructed not to base their opinion solely on the situation as observed at the assessment. Health Professionals also have access to Condition Insight Reports (CIRs)/EBM Protocols which are developed specifically to enable them to gain further insight into clinical and functional information, relating to specific conditions.

Source: UK House of Commons
Date: May 19, 2025
URL:
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-07/50482
Ref: http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster

[Written Answers]

Chronic Illnesses: Health Services

Andrew Gwynne

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue delivery plan will include (a) advice and (b) provisions for (i) long covid, (ii) fibromyalgia and (iii) other conditions that cause fatigue.

Ashley Dalton

We are committed to improving care and support for people with myalgic encephalomyelitis, also known as chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS). We recognise how devastating the symptoms can be, and the significant impact they can have on patients and their families.

As such, the ME/CFS final delivery plan focuses on ME/CFS only, and will not cover advice or the provision of services for related conditions, although some of the content may be applicable or relevant to other conditions that cause fatigue.

Source: UK House of Commons
Date: May 19, 2025
URL:
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-14/52543
Ref: http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster

[Written Answers]

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Health Services

David Taylor

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, when he plans to publish his Department's final delivery plan on myalgic encephalomyelitis.

Ashley Dalton

We aim to publish our myalgic encephalomyelitis, also known as chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS), final delivery plan by the end of June 2025.

The plan will focus on boosting research, improving attitudes and education, and bettering the lives of the people with this debilitating disease. The responses to the interim delivery plan consultation, along with continued close engagement with other parts of the Government, the National Health Service, and external stakeholders, will inform the development of the final ME/CFS delivery plan.

Source: UK House of Commons
Date: May 19, 2025
URL:
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-12/51681
Ref: http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster

[Written Answers]

Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations

Ellie Chowns

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, pursuant to the Answer of 6 May 2025 to Question 49218 on Social Security Benefits: Medical Examinations, whether her Department plans to (a) make an assessment of the potential merits of exploring more tailored mechanisms to reduce the frequency of assessments for people with (i) Myalgic Encephalomyelitis and (ii) other clearly documented, severe and long-term health conditions where improvement is unlikely and (b) involve (A) people with lived experience and (B) relevant charities in the (1) development and (2) implementation of such mechanisms.

Sir Stephen Timms

As stated in our response to Question 49218, we are not planning to exempt specific conditions, but we are planning to reduce reassessments for those with the most severe conditions.

We aim to do this in Universal Credit through guaranteeing that for both new and existing claims, those with the most severe, life-long health conditions, who will never be able to work, will not need to be reassessed in the future. In PIP, we are exploring ways we could use evidence from other services to reduce the need for some people with very severe conditions to undergo a full functional assessment.

In the Green Paper, we also promised to review the PIP assessment to make sure that it is fit for the future. I shall lead the review in close consultation with disabled people, disabled people's organisations, and other experts. To get this right, I am bringing together stakeholders to agree the scope and timing of the review. I will then publish Terms of Reference for the review in due course.

Source: UK House of Commons
Date: May 19, 2025
URL:
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-07/50482
Ref: http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster

[Written Answers]

Chronic Illnesses: Health Services

Andrew Gwynne

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether the myalgic encephalomyelitis/chronic fatigue delivery plan will include (a) advice and (b) provisions for (i) long covid, (ii) fibromyalgia and (iii) other conditions that cause fatigue.

Ashley Dalton

We are committed to improving care and support for people with myalgic encephalomyelitis, also known as chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS). We recognise how devastating the symptoms can be, and the significant impact they can have on patients and their families.

As such, the ME/CFS final delivery plan focuses on ME/CFS only, and will not cover advice or the provision of services for related conditions, although some of the content may be applicable or relevant to other conditions that cause fatigue.

Source: UK House of Commons
Date: May 21, 2025
URL:
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-07/50689
Ref: http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster

[Written Answers]

Chronic Fatigue Syndrome: Yeovil

Adam Dance

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps he is taking to help improve support for people with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis in Yeovil constituency.

Ashley Dalton

NHS England is responsible for allocating funding to integrated care boards (ICBs), including the Somerset ICB which covers the Yeovil constituency, and ICBs are in turn responsible for commissioning specialist myalgic encephalomyelitis, also known as chronic fatigue syndrome (ME/CFS), services to meet the needs of their population, subject to local prioritisation and funding.

The process of commissioning services should take into account best practice guidance such as the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence's (NICE) guidance on ME/CFS diagnosis and management, published in October 2021. The NICE's guidelines provide recommendations on the principles of care for people with severe ME/CFS, including hospital care, and adapting a multidisciplinary approach involving access to a range of health and social care professionals based on needs.

At a national level, we aim to publish the ME/CFS final delivery plan by the end of June 2025. The plan will focus on boosting research, improving attitudes and education, and bettering the lives of the people with this debilitating disease. The responses to the interim delivery plan consultation, along with continued close engagement with the Government, the National Health Service, and external stakeholders, will inform the development of the final ME/CFS delivery plan.

Source: UK House of Commons
Date: May 23, 2025
URL:
https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2025-05-14/52508

Ref: http://www.me-net.combidom.com/meweb/web1.4.htm#westminster

[Written Answers]

Employment: Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

Dr Al Pinkerton

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps her Department is taking to protect people with Myalgic Encephalomyelitis from discrimination by employers in Surrey.

Sir Stephen Timms

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'. The Act defines 'long-term' as having lasted, or likely to last for at least 12 months, or likely to last for the rest of the life of the person. 'Substantial' is defined as more than minor or trivial.

Where an employee has an impairment, which falls within the definition outlined above, the Act makes it unlawful for their employer or someone they are seeking work from, to discriminate against them because of their disability. This would include the failure to make a reasonable adjustment as well as less favourable treatment.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission and Acas have published comprehensive guidance for employers on their obligations to disabled employees and job applicants under the 2010 Act and Acas provides a helpline for people who think they have experienced discrimination at work.

The Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas) provides authoritative and impartial advice free to employees or employers in relation to employment discrimination issues via their website. and telephone helpline 0300 123 1100 or text relay service 18001 0300 123 1100. You can access the website here:

http://www.acas.org.uk
Acas also provides employees and employers with Early Conciliation to help them resolve/settle their workplace dispute without going to court.

Source: Sussex & Kent ME/CFS Society
Date: May 31, 2025
URL: http://www.measussex.org.uk

[Press release]

Sian Berry MP patron to Sussex & Kent ME/CFS Society

Sussex & Kent ME/CFS Society patron Green Party MP and former co-leader Sian Berry has proposed a cross-party motion in Parliament calling for a welfare system based on dignity and respect, and for the Government to stop scapegoating Disabled people.

Please write to your MP and ask them to support Early Day Motion 949:
https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/cross-party-motion-against-benefit-cuts-write-your-mp

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