

PETER GIBSON MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

February 2021

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for your email about terminal illness and benefits.

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 and 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 and 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 Special Rules for Terminal Illness process operates and performs.

Ministers at the DWP assure me 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 DWP and across 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.

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

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Gibson".

PETER GIBSON MP

Member of Parliament for Darlington

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