

Social Security Consultation with Dawn Kane, Martyn Connolly and Rae McCormick

Held on 9th June 2026

at The Carers Centre, Falkirk

Quick recap

This meeting was a presentation by Rae McCormick, Dawn Kane, and Martyn Connolly from Social Security Scotland about financial assistance benefits available to Carers and people with disabilities in Scotland. The presenters covered 18 total benefits delivered by Social Security Scotland, including disability benefits (Child Disability Payment, Adult Disability Payment, Pension Age Disability Payment, and Scottish Adult DLA) and Carer support benefits (Carer Support Payment, Scottish Carer Supplement, and Carer Additional Person Payment). They explained eligibility criteria, payment rates, and application processes, with particular focus on how applications are assessed without requiring face-to-face medical examinations. The discussion included detailed explanations of Special Rules for Terminal Illness, supporting information requirements, and processing times which have been longer than anticipated, especially for Carer support payments. Participants raised concerns about system delays, interactions with Universal Credit, and the impact on Carers when cared-for individuals enter care homes, with the presenters acknowledging these issues and explaining current efforts to improve processing times and address policy gaps.

Next steps

Dawn Kane

- Take feedback about the need for a recognition payment for older Carers and continue to consider consultation responses on this topic.

Martyn Connolly

- Take feedback regarding the sensitivity and process of the identity verification process, especially for vulnerable clients.

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Sharlene-Falkirk

- Follow up with Fiona Collie to arrange a date for Fiona to come and speak about public transport for wheelchair users.
- Feedback to social work teams that during the financial assessment Carers would like to be informed of the need for them to contact Social Security Scotland about changes in circumstances. Sharlene will feedback that Carers would like information (e.g., a leaflet or website content) about what happens financially when a cared-for person goes into a care home/residential care etc. (Sharlene has emailed).

Social Security Benefits Presentation

Sharlene opened the meeting and discussed upcoming events, including an NHS visit on June 18th 10- 12 noon with Karen Goudie NHS Nurse Director, Ross McGuffie NHS Chief Executive, and Yvonne Cairns Dementia and Delerium Lead, and a session with Sandra McAllister from Children's Services and Val from FDAMH on June 22nd 10-12 noon. Rae presented on financial assistance and social security benefits, focusing on disability benefits and unpaid Carer benefits, with Dawn and Martin providing expertise on Carer support policies. The presentation covered Social Security Scotland's 18 benefits, including Child Disability Payment, its eligibility criteria, and the decision-making process which does not require formal medical assessments.

Disability Benefits Review Process

Rae explained the process for reviewing disability benefits, noting that decisions are based on updated information rather than requiring additional medical assessments. Rae detailed the Adult Disability Payment system, which provides financial support for people aged 16 and under state pension age, with components for daily living and mobility, and outlined the Pension Age Disability Payment for those over state pension age. Rae also discussed the

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transition from Disability Living Allowance to Scottish Adult DLA, explaining that over 700,000 clients were successfully transferred without needing to reapply.

Terminal Illness Application Process

Rae explained the Special Rules for Terminal Illness process, which allows fast-tracked applications for clients with terminal illnesses through a BASRIS form completed by a registered doctor or nurse. Rae clarified that these applications are automatically awarded the highest benefit level with no qualifying periods or review requirements, and the definition of terminal illness does not require a specific timeline under Social Security Scotland's guidelines. Rae also discussed the process for collecting supporting information from professionals/external services, noting that requesting Social Security Scotland gather this information can significantly delay application outcomes, as professionals are given 28 days to respond to initial requests.

Scottish DLA and ADP Transition

Rae discussed the differences between Scottish Adult DLA and ADP, explaining that Scottish Adult DLA was created to bridge the gap between Disability Living Allowance and Adult Disability Payment for existing DLA clients. Those born before 8 April 1948 were automatically transferred onto Scottish Adult DLA, in line with DWP's commitment that the client could remain on the benefit for as long as they were eligible. While those born after 8 April 1948 were transferred to Scottish Adult DLA but also be given the choice to move to Adult Disability Payment (ADP) if they prefer.

Social Security Benefits Challenges

The discussion also covered concerns about processing times for Social Security Scotland claims, particularly for Carer support payments which are taking

significantly longer than expected due to complexity and reliance on other agencies.

Lyn for Citizens Advice discussed improvements needed in processing times for Carer applications, particularly highlighting delays in verification processes affecting older adults. Dawn explained that while the consultation in 2022 considered recognition payments for older Carers, the government first focused on delivering Carer support payment and other immediate changes before addressing longer-term policy developments. Dawn acknowledged ongoing issues with DWP's handling of Scottish Carer supplements and universal credit interactions, stating that these matters were raised with DWP and would continue to be addressed through ongoing conversations.

Carer Support Payment Overview

Rae presented information about Carer Support Payment, a new benefit in Scotland that replaced Carer's Allowance, providing £86.45 per week for eligible unpaid Carers aged 16 and over who care for someone receiving a qualifying disability benefit for at least 35 hours weekly. Rae outlined the eligibility criteria, including earnings limits and the rule that only one Carer can receive the payment when there's shared responsibility. The presentation also covered education rules for student Carers, explaining that part-time students aged 16+ and full-time students aged 16-19 can receive the payment, while full-time non-advanced education students aged 16-19 are not eligible due to existing parental support systems.

Scottish Carer Support Payment Changes

Rae explained changes to Carer support payments in Scotland, including the introduction of the Scottish Carer Supplement of £11.70 per week, paid weekly instead of twice yearly, and the new Carer Additional Person Payment of £10.40 per week for Carers supporting additional qualifying beneficiaries. Sharlene highlighted concerns from older Carers who feel excluded from additional benefits, particularly those caring for multiple family members without

receiving support payments. Rae acknowledged the frustrations of older Carers who are not receiving these benefits.

Carer Benefits Policy Challenges

Dawn explained that initial changes to Carer benefits in Scotland were made to ensure fairness when rolling out Carer Support Payments, preventing disparities between different groups of Carers. Dawn outlined the challenges of making further changes. Lyn emphasized that while incremental improvements are being made, particularly for working age and children, addressing the needs of older Carers requires careful policy development to maintain support without adverse consequences.

Young Carer Grant Information Session

Rae presented information about the Young Carer Grant, explaining that it provides a £405.10 payment annually for young Carers aged 16-19 who spend an average of 16 hours per week caring for someone receiving a disability benefit. Rae clarified that young Carers cannot receive both the Young Carer Grant and Carer Support Payment simultaneously and discussed the application process and eligibility criteria. The session also covered local delivery services, including support from client advisors and advocacy services, with participants sharing feedback about the verification process and positive experiences with benefit applications.

Slides from this consultation can be found here: <https://centralcarers.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/06/Social-Security-Scotland-May-2026.pptx>

Carers Views/Experiences

A Carer shared their experiences of the person that they care for being admitted to hospital, filling in the Social Security online forms, then these forms being sent to the wrong department, resulting in delays in payment, this caused additional stress to the Carer.

A Carer shared their experiences of asking for support from the social work team and receiving this once they were hospitalised, this Carer also felt strongly that they should have been in receipt of Carer Support Payment, however due to state pension they were not eligible.

During the meeting it became evident that our social work teams are not responsible for informing Social Security Scotland about someone going into a care home, this is the responsibility of the Carer. A Carer shared that they have a big bill to pay as they did not do this.

Lyn from Citizens Advice explained that Falkirk's Carers are often waiting 6 months for new benefits to come into place, this is causing financial hardship.

Carers were made aware that if information is required from external agencies (supporting documents) it is much quicker if the Carer gets this information themselves, as Social Security Scotland (SSS) have to allow the organisation 28days to retrieve this.

Lyn also discussed the verification process for Carers, this can be long, and some Carers are being visited in hospital as proof, Lyn stated that she did not agree with this process.

Many of the older Carers in the room stated that they are not feeling valued, due to being exempt from Carer Support Payment (CSP), one Carer commented, "will I just stop caring as I am no longer receiving the CSP, how much will that cost the government".

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It was apparent in the room that many Carers were confused about SSS and Department of Working Pensions and who does what.

Carers learned that Social Security Scotland have an advocacy service that is free to access.

Terminology in official letters can be confusing for Carers; simple language is best.

A Carer wondered why only one person can get the Carer Support Payment.

A Carer spoke about a younger person moving into supported living and how their needs to be more information about how finances are affected for both Carer and cared for person.

A Carer asked who made the decision to change the 2 payment a year to putting it weekly, and wondered why Carers weren't asked if that's what they wanted to do. Dawn explained the 2022 consultation covered this.

A few Carers spoke about their experiences of benefit disputes due to new payments, this is something that SSS are raising with DWP as Carers should not be losing benefits, this is a DWP error and not SSS.

A Carer asked why the £11:70 payment wasn't backdated; this was due to another payment starting this ensured Carers did not lose out financially.

A Carer commented "I like the young Carers grant. It definitely shows recognition of young people's work".

A Carer commented "people forget some young people give up their whole life to look after someone who needs 24 hours care".