The national carer organisations welcome the Social Security (Scotland) Bill. We believe it offers the opportunity to develop a system, linked with services and support across sectors, that has the potential to offer a more holistic approach. This response provides our view on the Bill at Stage 1 and includes Appendices from a range of consultation with carers which the national carer organisations undertook.

1. General Approach
The national carer organisations believe that there are pros and cons to the Scottish Government’s approach. We recognise the intention that containing benefits to individual regulations aligns with the phased implementation of the Scottish social security system as it develops within this Parliamentary session and beyond. This approach also allows for the Scottish Government to respond more quickly when circumstances change, for example, to introduce new payments, to respond to changes in the reserved benefit system, or to act if regulations are not working as intended.

We welcome the commitment that regulations will be affirmative, allowing Parliamentary scrutiny and debate. However, we note that the Scottish Government intends to develop these regulations with external help and, we believe that this offers the opportunity for the experience panels and wider networks of individuals and representative organisations to be a key part in both co-producing and scrutinising such regulations for unintended consequences before they are laid.

However, the flip side of the simplicity of change of regulations is a concern that this ease of change could in future offer the ability to reduce entitlement. This concern is borne out of experience of the UK benefit system where changes to personal independence payment were made which was detrimental to thousands of disabled people. This remains a real concern for carers, disabled people and representative organisations.

To ensure there is balance between primary and secondary legislation and to address concerns it is important that there is robust and independent scrutiny in place. This could include, for example, the establishment of a Scottish Social Security Advisory Committee to provide advice to Ministers and the Scottish Parliament as well as an ongoing role for the Social Security Committee and wider Parliament.

2. Principles

View on principles and this approach
The national carer organisations welcome the principles and further welcomes that these will be included in primary legislation.

We have some concern over principle 7. We agree that it is important that public services are efficient and good value, but for carers and those they care for, access to social security is a lifeline and vital to ensure that they are not further disadvantaged. Carers have identified this as a concern, with some carers stating a fear that value for money would be prioritised over other principles in a constrained fiscal environment.
We also agree with the view of the Poverty Alliance and others that an amendment should be made to principle 6 to reflect rights as well as needs. We recommend it should read “The Scottish Social Security should always be trying to improve. Any changes should put the rights and needs of those who require social security first.”

We also have one additional concern on the ‘determinants of enough money to live on’. Our question centres on who decides how much is enough and on what basis? We would draw your attention that the cost of living is higher for some groups than others, such as disabled people who face an increase in their cost of living due to expenditure necessitated by their disability or long term condition.

Finally, we are in agreement with the principles but would strongly argue that principles by their very nature are subjective and open to interpretation. We believe that their impact would be considerably strengthened by the inclusion of a set of standards sitting underneath each principle. Standards must be measurable and provide the means of accountability both for the individual and any regulatory body.

Are there other principles you would like to see included?
We agree with the view of the Poverty Alliance that the inclusion of an extra principle which recognises that social security is not only an investment in our people but is also a vital tool in tackling poverty. We therefore, in line with their suggestion, that this new principle should read “Social security has a role to play in the eradication of poverty in Scotland.” Social security is by no means the only tool but a vital one; recognised in principle that social security is itself a human right.

We would also argue for the inclusion of one additional principle: the law must ensure equity of access to the new social security system. We believe this is necessary as both research and direct experience of our member MECOPP working with BME communities highlights the additional difficulties they encounter in the current system. Barriers include lack of accessible information, lower levels of take up of certain benefits and higher levels of scrutiny.

We welcome the commitment to ensuring that people can access the system in a number of ways and that technology will be tempered with direct face to face contact. Many of the individuals MECOPP assist report significant difficulties with the current system where more and more benefits must now be applied for online. For people who have both limited English language and IT skills, this is proving to be an almost insurmountable barrier and one which prevents people from applying. We would also ask that the new staff in the Social Security Agency reflect the diversity of Scotland’s population. Participants at a focus group commented specifically on the value of having an agency that can provide them with unbiased information and that can support them in their preferred language.

4. Social Security Charter
We are in favour of the social security charter. However it is difficult at this point to understand how the contents of the charter will be achievable in practice. Carers welcomed a bold commitment to transparency, clear expectations and accountability, but there are also concerns around monitoring and scrutiny. Whilst we welcome the requirements to consult and co-produce with citizens, there is a need for wider external review and scrutiny of the charter, rather than simply a review from Ministers only. This could be a role for a Scottish Social Security Advisory Committee to provide advice to Ministers and the Scottish Parliament as well as an ongoing role for the Social Security Committee and wider Parliament.

We would also advocate that the annual report be supported by the publication of an action plan to address the findings of the report. We believe that this would create a climate of transparency and also provide a more robust system for accountability. Both full and summary versions of the annual report and proposed action plan should be widely available.

The Bill in its current form notes obligations regarding people using the system, but less on what the State’s obligations are to people and the consequences if they do not comply with these obligations. We feel that much more clarity is needed to ensure that citizens are able to achieve redress if the Charter and its principles are not met. We would also like to see timescales set out in the Charter for the processing of applicant claims, reviews and appeals.

5. Rules for Social Security
We have a number of comments in relations to the rules set out within the Bill.
(a) Determining Entitlement
We welcome the commitment that individuals will be able to apply for benefits in a number of ways and that Ministers. As was made clear in the earlier consultation on social security, individuals want a range of ways to apply, including face to face rather than an approach that is digital by default. We further welcome the commitment made that the private sector will have no role in new social security system in Scotland. However, we believe that the Bill should include this commitment to enshrine this in legislation.

(b) Challenging decisions
Our first area of concern relates to re-determination. We reflect the views of other organisations who are concerned that this approach in effect mirrors the current DWP mandatory reconsideration, which has resulted in delays including backlogs for tribunals. We have been reassured to some extent by the policy memorandum which outlines that clear timescales and (if these are not met) a right immediately to appeal to the First Tier Tribunal and of the commitment to set aside the decision and go through a new process of making a new decision. However, this setting aside of the original decision is a little more like the earlier DWP process of review in DLA. We welcome the commitment to allow individuals to submit further evidence at the redetermination phase.

In this respect, we support the view of the Child Poverty Action Group which recommends “an improvement to this proposed re-determination process, which would retain a re-determination in every case but require just one application to reach an independent appeal. This would mean people would not have to make another application if there was no change at the internal redetermination stage but would have the option to withdraw at that point if they chose.”

We also support the Child Poverty Action Group view that First-tier Tribunal power to determine entitlement should be able to consider those issues raised by the appeal and not be required to consider other issues. At present disability benefit appeals focus just on mobility difficulties, or just on daily living needs, and tribunals can choose to deal with just those particular aspects of the award that are at issue in the appeal. If they had to deal with all aspects in all cases, this places additional and unnecessary stress on individuals and their carers (who are often the main support for the person they care for.)

We would also note the fact that there is no information about timescales and time limits for decisions to be communicated to individuals (although there are timescales that individuals are required to meet). There is an imbalance here that counters the idea of a person-centred and rights-based approach. Many carers struggle to cope with the inflexibility of the current social security system and a new system that does not respect and empower citizens will not alleviate these issues.

(c) Overpayments
The Bill appears to allow the Social Security Agency to recover overpayments regardless, in some cases, whether or not the overpayment was the responsibility of the Agency. We believe strongly that if an error is made in the decision making process, then it should not be for an individual to have to repay. However, we would also note that even where the error is by the individual, consideration should be given to the complexity that many people will be facing in claiming benefits from both the Scottish Social Security Agency and the DWP. Equally, where a decision has been made to recover monies, this should be based on the financial circumstances and likelihood of hardship any recovery may have.

5. Benefits Schedules
We have in the main contained our comments to the schedule relating to assistance for carers. We look forward to further detail about the potential for change eligibility and rules for this assistance. Whilst we welcome the interim supplementary payment to top up Carers Allowance to the level of Carers Allowance, carers have been clear that they are keen to see more fundamental changes.

We echo the response from our fellow carer organisation, Carers Trust Scotland regarding Schedule1, P1, C2, S4 which contains details of regulations on more than one person providing care for another person. We appreciate the detail of the regulations is still to be fully considered, this Schedule should also contain details of eligibility for the carers’ assistance for those carers who are looking after more than one person. Currently, people with multiple caring roles, who may need significantly more support and are less likely to take up paid work, are either only entitled to the

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1 Section 29 of the Bill, as drafted, may require a tribunal to make a complete redetermination (if not simply upholding the decision under appeal).
current Carers Allowance benefit, or do not meet the criteria if they are looking after more than one person but do not exceed 35 hours per week in one of the caring roles only. This group of carers is significantly disadvantaged by the current rules on Carers Allowance and we urge the Committee to include this issue in the schedules.

Cash v in kind support

Across more than one schedule is the proposal that benefits could be paid in cash on in kind. Whilst we understand the motivation behind this flexibility i.e. to offer people the choice to choose in kind support instead of, or to replace part of, their cash payment. However, we are concerned over the wording of this section. For example, the carers’ assistance schedule this reads: “Carer’s assistance is assistance (which may or may not take the form of money)…” We believe that this should be amended to ensure that it is completely unequivocal that this is at the choice of the individual and that first and foremost benefits should be paid in cash with any choice to sacrifice any of this payment for an in kind benefit at a later date (e.g. as in the case of DLA/PIP to sacrifice some or all of the mobility element to lease a Motability car).

6. Short Term Assistance for people challenging decisions

Whilst we welcome the commitment to provide short term assistance to protect the incomes of those challenging a decision, we believe that this should be in the form of the benefit they are currently receiving i.e. PIP/DLA/AA. There are significant consequences for an individual and their carer if an existing benefit does not continue until the determination of an appeal is made. This includes other passported support and benefits but also, significantly, in our view, an impact on the benefits of carers. Carers receiving Carers Allowance or any underlying entitlement will cease to be entitled as soon as a person’s qualifying benefit is removed. This means that carers will see an immediate impact on their incomes and may be subject to a requirement to seek employment alongside their caring role.

We support the suggestion by Child Poverty Action Scotland that short term assistance can be improved by providing an automatic run-on of carers’ and/or disability assistance whenever an award ends or is reduced, regardless of whether the decision is challenged. This would give people time to adjust. It would also allow premiums and passports to continue – because it would be a continued entitlement to the same benefit. Time-limited run-ons of benefit already exists in the current system e.g. in carer’s allowance after the person receiving care dies.

7. Topping up benefits

We support the ability to top up reserved benefits and we welcome discussion on how this could be best used to reduce poverty amongst carers and those to whom they provide support.

8. Carers Allowance increase

We are of course in favour of increasing Carers Allowance and believe that this should happen as soon as possible. However, we would note that it may not be helpful to compare Carers Allowance with Jobseekers Allowance. JSA is intended to be a temporary payment that is provided until income is secured through paid employment. Carers Allowance is often received on a long-term basis because caring roles are long term and prevent carers from seeking or retaining full time employment. It is important that those carers who are unable to work because they are caring are provided with adequate income. Even at the rate of Jobseekers Allowance, Carers Allowance does not adequately recognise in financial terms the significant contribution that carers make to the life and economy of Scotland. This continues to be disappointment, given that it is an ‘earnings replacement benefit’ which even at the new rate would only recompense carers at the rate of £2.00 per hour based on a 35 hour caring week.

We know that caring can significantly affect carers’ finances: almost half of carers are struggling to pay utility bills and are struggling to make ends meet, cutting back on food and heating as a result. We welcome the intentions of the Scottish Government to explore a Scottish carer’s entitlement and urge the Committee to consider changes to the criteria outlined in the schedules to the Bill that can make positive changes for carers and their families. Equally, we believe there is a need to consider support within other devolved benefits, for example, in providing winter fuel and cold weather payments and access to funeral payments and in considering other elements of support which could assist in supporting carers’ incomes and wellbeing such as concessionary travel and access to employability schemes.

9. Discretionary Housing Payments

The development of the Bill and social security agency provides an opportunity to review systems and processes and identify any barriers that exist in enabling people to claim discretionary housing payments. This includes ensuring equity and a consistent approach across each of the 32 local authorities in Scotland.
10. Additional Comments
The Bill does not appear to make a commitment to uprating. We believe that this should be enshrined in legislation with a duty to increase assistance, at a minimum, annually in line with inflation. We believe that this should be linked to the retail price index not consumer price index. As the Committee will be aware, whilst both measure inflation, CPI leaves out the costs of people's homes. It cannot be assumed that individuals are in receipt of other financial support through the benefit system (devolved or reserved) to cover such costs, and rises in mortgage payments, rents and council tax may have a significant impact on incomes.

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Additional Pages

Appendix A
Message Boards
Coalition of Carers in Scotland meetings

Appendix B
Carer Survey
Appendix A
Message Boards - Coalition of Carers in Scotland meetings

What is your view on the approach taken by the Scottish Government that the social security system will be based on 7 key principles?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I strongly Agree</th>
<th>I agree</th>
<th>I disagree</th>
<th>I strongly disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>8</td>
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Comments:
- I agree but the principles have no legal force

What is your view on the approach taken by the Scottish Government that they will develop a social security charter?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I strongly Agree</th>
<th>I agree</th>
<th>I disagree</th>
<th>I strongly disagree</th>
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Are you satisfied with the proposed timescales and approach for developing a social security system in Scotland?

<table>
<thead>
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<th>I am satisfied</th>
<th>I am not satisfied</th>
<th>I am strongly dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
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Comments:
- Understand the reasons but disability benefits will be tackled last

How confident are you that the Scottish Government will be able to deliver on their proposals for developing a social security system?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I AM VERY CONFIDENT</th>
<th>I AM CONFIDENT</th>
<th>I AM NOT CONFIDENT</th>
<th>I AM EXTREMELY UNCONFIDENT</th>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
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Comments:
- The transition to ILF was smooth – this is bigger, but need it to be speedier
- Process is too lengthy - nothing is actually changing, all that's changing is that carers will receive a top up in line with other benefits, it's an insult

The Bill proposes that Carer's Allowance should be increased as soon as possible to the level of jobseeker's allowance (from £62.10 to £73.10 a week) What are your views on this proposal?

- Don't think Carer's Allowance should be seen as an income replacement benefit (5 thumbs up)
- Carers should receive at least minimum wage (2 thumbs up)
- Carer’s Allowance should not be means tested
- Carers Allowance should not be taken into account when receiving funding from local authority
- Local authorities already reducing money advice services – advice very sparse in many areas
- Other benefits should not be reduced by the amount of Carer's Allowance awarded
- Need to stop Carer's Allowance being taken off disability benefit – as ultimately no increase to household benefit
- Need to look at carers getting Carer's Allowance continued when they become pensionable age – they are still carers
- Working carers need to be able to earn more without benefit being stopped (3 thumbs up)
- Young carers who have sole responsibility for caring should have access to vouchers/monies in the form of an allowance (1 thumbs up)
- Challenges for carers working with two different benefit systems – Scottish and UK
- Will additional Carer’s Allowance costs come from money to implement the Carers Act? (2 thumbs up)
- Will young carers 16+ have to have a young carers statement to access YCA? – if yes/no what are the links between the 2 (2 thumbs up)
- Inability to extricate Carer’s Allowance from associated receipt of AA/PIP etc is unsatisfactory and will not help increase take up for fear of negative financial impact on the person/people cared for
- As a carer you should not have to live off your husband’s DLA
- Need to involve carers and cared for at every stage – benefit changes are very worrying for people
- Need clarification around transition
- Agree with the increased allowance but would like to see more carers eligible
- Earnings limit and Carers Allowance needs to equal a living wage so that carers can reduce caring without financial hardship
- Ensuring eligibility criteria re income and studying will help carers meet aspirations
- Taking 4 ½ years is too long for many carers
- Carers receiving state pension should still get carers allowance whilst caring – You are still a carer and its harder

The Bill proposes that the social security system will be based on 7 principles. What are your views on these principles?

- Efficient = price. Effective would be better = how well it delivers
- All sounding very positive and vast improvement
- Respect for the dignity of individuals is at the heart of the Scottish social security system (2 thumbs up)
- Surely these are not new?
- Culture shift claimants are not scroungers or out to defraud – they are in need
- Absolutely essential
- The Scottish social security system will be designed with the people of Scotland, and based on evidence – (1 thumbs up)
- Please ensure that people are treated with respect
- The Scottish social security system should always be trying to improve. Any changes should put the needs of those who require social security first – (1 thumbs up)
- Agree with the principles and hope they translate into practice
- Principles are good and aspirational but very concerned this will not translate into practice Will reality match this rhetoric and place the vulnerable at the centre and improve their quality of life

The Bill proposes that there will be a publicly available social security charter. Is there anything specific you would like to see in the Charter?

- Client involvement in induction/training for agency staff which will be crucial in ensuring a rights based approach (4 thumbs up)
- Respect and dignity built-in requirement (1 thumbs up)
- Clear criteria and guidelines for people - current system may be too intimidating – people scared of over payments

7
• Promote a positive image of people needing support and using benefits as statutory payments not being leeches
• Agency should be accountable to ‘Advisory Group’ made up of experts including carers (1 thumbs up)
• The Scottish Government will actively seek to change attitudes and stigma of people who claim benefits
• An accountability framework to measure success of implementation

Do you have any other comments you wish to add? Is there anything additional the government should be considering?
• How will we know if the system is working – virtual portal for stories to be shared
• The IT infrastructure should be provided by Scottish companies to keep as much money in Scotland as possible – we have the expertise
• How will the social security agency ensure equitable access to staff and support across rural areas?
• The Scottish Government has a role in making sure that people are given the social security assistance they are eligible for.
• No wonder millions of people don’t claim, it’s so complicated a system – hope when and if it changes, it’s plain English
• Can carers/claimants be central to co-produce workforce development for new workforce
• Social Security – how much is all this costing? – too lengthy
• I like the idea of media work being developed through local CABs – Use local network/3rd sector (info and support for people to access)
• How will any enhancements be paid for? (1 thumbs up)
• Local social security workers must be part of local anti-poverty/financial inclusion network
• Workforce Learning and Development is needed for the range of workers who will support people through their journey as claimants
• The new staff delivering Scotland’s service will be in every LA – It is hard to make contact with LA staff – how will it be easier for Scotland’s staff? Stop as soon as possible re-assessments of DLA to PIP Severely disabled people are not likely to improve
• Understand by collecting data how scrimping on benefits / repeat assessments / causes mental health issues, family breakdown, homelessness and hospital admissions and huge costs for IJBs and misery
• Put the person at the centre. Review – re-assessment only those without progressive conditions. Make the system work around the needs of those with fluctuating conditions, mental health issues, learning disabilities and autism with some understanding of these conditions
• Remove the need for a 2 stage process in appealing any decisions. Appeal should consist of – arbitration – ombudsman process
• Cares Allowance stops if funeral benefit is granted – this needs to stop
• There is no more money. Keeping promises will result in services in other areas being cut – people need to understand this People with severe and enduring mental health problems should have their DLA transferred automatically to PIP – Their illness isn’t going to change or improve
• Scottish Government must use open platforms and should tender to Scottish companies only – multinationals by their nature will overprice, under-perform and walk away from failure
• Separate application forms for PIP for people with physical disabilities and people with severe and enduring mental health problems
• Don’t penalise people who can’t access Wi-Fi and mobile phone signal
• How will this affect ethnic minorities, EU members living in Scotland less than 5 years
• Young carers statements link to your carer’s allowance
• PIP payments for people with long term mental health problems should be continued without having to be recalled every so often (1 thumbs up)
• Would save money on appeals if people with long term mental health problems were left alone with their PIP (1 thumbs up)

August 2017
Appendix 2
Carers Survey

The Bill proposes that Carers Allowance is increased as soon as possible to the level of Jobseekers Allowance. What are your thoughts on this proposal?

- Good idea. Soon as possible
- Good idea x 2
- I feel this should be increased immediately as a young carer myself and trying my best to work I would say I am becoming more ill than the person I am caring for as it is a demanding role caring and working
- I agree with an increase in the weekly rate, though I am concerned that as a full-time carer and in receipt of Carers Allowance as well as Income Support that any increase might affect other benefits I already receive.
- Very good idea
- About time - what a struggle we face with our finances
- A step in the right direction, but in reality CA should be more than JSA. Bear in mind JSA is paid to persons out of work, whereas CA is being paid to Carers who work extremely hard and save the Government millions.
- Shocking we should get back the £30 that we Carers have lost on ESA because we had to go onto universal credit what a total disgrace so do the right thing as we get a pittance as it is .
- The increase will only help if not on any other means tested benefit (income support) as any increase in carers allowance is deducted if over the allowed level of benefit you could lose income support only benefits those who are working
- It is valid and needed, many carers have to give up their work to provide care, thus losing income and in many cases becoming isolated. No carer should be struggling to cope with needs because they are caring. Their income should be sufficient.
- At least there is an increase to meet jobseekers allowance; however carers are doing a job, should have minimum wage. Lots of carers don't even get carers allowance, and if they do the money is deducted from other benefits they claim
- A welcome start to supporting the role. But I would hope that this is just the first move in supporting the role of carers.
- This is a step in the right direction, but still does not adequately reflect the time, energy and impact linked to a caring role, particularly for someone caring 40+ hours a week and providing significant levels of personal and emotional care.
- Yes, if the carer needs the extra income this should be provided.
- I agree completely, that such an increase be given to all "unpaid" carers
- At 4p an hour, it's not really something worth fighting for. So few carers are entitled to carers allowance anyway, money, time and effort would be better spend directing more powers to carers respite. That's what they want, need and deserve.
- Money is not what carers want it is services and decent care when they need it not a time wasting battle every time they need help. Considering the amount carers' save the government increasing to £73.10 is not enough!!
- I still feel £73.10 a week is not enough the carers allowance benefit amount should be in line with national minimum wage.
- It is a step in the right direction. Carers are provided thousands of hours of care in the community for very little personal reward. Many carers end up in debt due to taking on a caring role.
- OK but how will it affect those on means-tested benefits; will they "benefit" or will increase be clawed back by DWP?
- This is a good start of an increase if more is to follow, but not all carers are being paid i.e. when carers reach pension age their allowance stops although their caring role continues, this is discriminating.
- "If anything I think it should be increased by even more especially if you are doing full time care and have had to give up your job to do so.
- One other thing I would add is that the upper level of income you are allowed before you can claim carers allowance is too high. It should be a sliding level so that if you are earning just a wee bit more than the current upper limit you still receive a certain percentage which then gets less the more you earn until a certain point (to be fairly determined) where you earn too much to claim - i.e. you earn enough that you don't need to claim because that is why we claim - because we need to, not because we want to. We as carers are saving the government a massive amount of money. Our vital role in society should be shown the correct level of respect and the government should acknowledge that most of us who are carers are either having to quit our jobs or work far less so our income and/or our potential income is far less than it would be otherwise. That is why we claim it. Not because we think we should be paid to look after our loved ones, but because we need it."
- this would be most welcome
- I wish it was £73 per week, my wife’s health issues are taking a great deal more to deal with, as she now has to use a walking aid to be able to get around and sometimes needs to be helped to undress.
- Only if they stop means testing it. Because until they do you don’t gain as they just take it from your benefits. So you would therefore not have any more money than you already have and don’t become better off. However you do become worse off as it allows them to drop the high rate disabled premium top up as you will no longer have enough on benefits to get this money. You need to do a lot more homework before putting this forward as your putting people even more at risk. Carers Allowance does not get counted when it comes to the premium top up for disabilities payments.
- Not near enough of a rise. If the carer was to give up caring and went back to work it would cost the government a lot more money.
- The criteria are too strict and raise not enough.
- It is an improvement, but still a pittance. A carer often can’t work, so to be linked with jobseekers seems wrong.
- In principle this seems a fair idea. However, personally I want to know if the amount I earn will stay the same and still be able to claim carers allowance or will I be able to earn more and still claim it? This concern has not been addressed in anything I’ve read about it so far
- It should be more. It’s better than no rise. Tax Credits should be protected around this. Should Carers Allowance not at least be in line with state pension rates?
- Yes it should be increased.
- "I think it should be increased"
- Can Scotland afford to do this? If so why has it not already been done or in the process of, secondly if Scotland cannot afford it then it is a moot point and cannot happen
- I agree that this should happen
- Agree to a rise however unlike the majority on jobseekers most of us will never be able to enter part or full time work due to our care responsibilities. The jobseekers allowance is viewed as temporary payment and at a level to try encouraging those to actively seek work.
- The weekly amount for a carer who does not have the opinion to pursue entering the workplace to bring in more money would still be far below that sustainable to live with rising energy and food costs."
- How about paying the living wage for the actual number of hours that unpaid carers work caring? They will have the information via the carers support plan (see principle 5 below).
- I think that carers should receive more than jobseekers as they are mostly unable to work and they save the government a lot of money providing essentially free care
• I think it’s a step in the right direction, but would prefer to see a minimum standard of living / income for a carer
• Some carers who look after vulnerable people at the moment that get £62.10 a week have it fully removed from their partners Income Support or ESA. Your proposal for those people will yield the same result as they will gain nothing. Westminster gave Scotland the power only to take it back another way.
• An increase is welcome but may have an adverse effect on other Benefits in payment along with other "passported" Benefits.
• A good first step but carers of all ages should be able to enjoy a decent standard of living. Many pensioners do work and collect their pension but if caring is a pensioner’s work she / he cannot get carers’ allowance, work
• This is long overdue. I wholeheartedly support this.
• Does not include Carers who reach State pension age
• A good move but should be more and carers allowance is open to abuse
• Much needed. Carer’s give up so much and should be on the same par with people looking for a job
• Good that it is more than before. Shame that it remains as low as it does. The Green Party’s idea of a 50% uplift is the one I support. Risk of confusion with job-seeking - an equivalence that does not make sense as carers eligible for carer's allowance are not seeking a job. They already have one.
• I think that this is an excellent idea as many carers suffer loss of earnings due to having to give up employment to look after a loved one
• Yes. Carers save the country billions and yet many are living on the breadline.
• This is an excellent idea but it’s not great to compare jobseekers allowance to carers allowance - no one is meant to be on jobseekers for a long time, carers can be living on carers allowance, income support and hardly anything else for years and years with no opportunity to get a job or any other way of earning money... it has to be enough to live on, not just survive.
• It's good but not enough; it should be at least £150 per week. The cost of living has risen and we have not taken the course of action to remove ourselves from the workplace and the system should recognise that fact and pay us something that will allow us to live not just survive.
• It is still not enough, they have a criteria of 35 hours care a week, who works those hours for £62.10 to £73.10 which equals £1.77 to £2.08 it's a joke, I have used all my savings and have nothing to fall back on should something break down I am not making ends meet so because I am doing the government a favour and looking after my mother I am in poverty because of it, they should be ashamed of themselves. The least they can do is give us the equivalent of the living wage. As soon as I can find employment I am returning to work so I can have a decent standard of living and leaving the government and councils to look after my mother, why should I suffer to save the government money?
• Agree
• It should be more
• Insufficient
• I think it’s time the Carers allowance is increase as you are on call 24 / 7 to the person you are caring for.
• Not enough a living wage
• I agree that carers allowance should be raised but for those unable to work due to full time caring responsibilities ,it should be higher as many carers live in poverty and hardship
• It should be more
• It is not nearly enough; carers are not unemployed - they often work up to twenty-four hours a day in their caring role, and many have had to give up well-paid jobs to care for family members, saving the government millions. Time for the Living Wage for carers.
• Fully agree as the current level is not realistic to live on.
• It's a start but carers are already working some 24/7
• This is an insult to Carers. By matching to level of JSA, it implies that Carers are workless and they’re not. Indeed, some do balance work and care...often ensuring that they are not entitled to CA because the earnings threshold is too low.
1. If the Gov’t truly values Carers, it would seem to do far more than this...and more broadly, look at the challenges in public services which force Carers to have to give up work to care and which isolate those we care for.”

2. It's good that it is being increased, but it is still not enough, especially if a carer has to leave employment. Will it be kept in line with inflation?

3. Redresses some of the imbalance

2. What is your view on the seven principles proposed for the Scottish social security system?

All can only force good outcomes

I don’t believe it delivers value for money I pay and contribute a lot to income tax and I am an unpaid carer I don’t receive and I not eligible for any Scottish social security my friend is in assistance of ESA and PIP and Housing costs and the truth is they are finically more better off than me who is working

The principles as stated seem very well intentioned and socially responsible. My concern would be how these principles are applied in practice having heard some very disturbing stories of people being treated extremely inhumanely by examiners when claiming benefits such as ESA or PIP. The use of companies such as Atos to carry out these roles is something I find alarming, especially when several support organisations have said publicly that the numbers of people being forced through the appeals process when claiming such benefits is an indication that the system isn’t fit for purpose.

These principles seem very reasonable.

People rely on social security benefits for many different reasons and no one person experience of disability, or ill health is the same. The benefits should recognise the individuals needs and the impact on their daily living not assume that everyone will fit in a tick box form

About time we had some of these points really addressed

The Scottish Social Security system needs to look at the link with wages, no benefit should pay more than the wage a person could earn when employed. Universal basic income should be a serious consideration and would be simpler and potentially more cost effective to administer. Present system top heavy, expensive and complex.

Take the money from the methadone programme an give it to unpaid Carers getting beyond a joke now as we save the Scottish government £12 BILLION a year

I think I will be a good move and will then be more reviews on benefits issued instead of the outdated structure we have at present

I agree entirely. No one should feel less in value to society than another person, we all have value. Having sufficient income preserves dignity and self-worth.

I agree with the principles and hope that they are carried out by everyone involved. Carers are often treated like scroungers and the general public should also be aware of how valuable carers are to society

Laudable. Despite the fiscal attack on those claiming Social Security, it is the de-humanising of the process and denial of dignity that has hurt many most

Good

There is nothing to dispute in these principles - as always, they represent aspiration and an ideal that would be welcomed. However, the reality is that there is insufficient money available already, and the 'value for money' element is likely to end up a higher priority/key decision-making factor.
I think social security should be individual; people should be supported to get the right benefits and any other support.

I find it difficult to accept that the present social security system is efficient. Paid carers are mainly excellent, but the overall system not communitive, nor efficient

Yes, seem fine. But just words until evidence is seen

Principles are fine but like any other government department, will it be value for money and for the people receiving it. I don't think so another expensive system to set up and cost us all a fortune. The beneficiaries will be the Consultants and computer companies employed to implement it, not to mention the jobs and salaries that will created within Scottish Government to administer it.

All looks and sounds promising on paper but will they deliver and follow through? I reserve judgement until and if this does get implemented.

I like these proposals. It is a person centred approach to the carer, which is already given to the cared for by social services when assessing care needs.

The last point may be the most critical! If efficiency and value for money perpetuates social injustice then too high a price to pay! Need more and better trained benefits staff.

This is all very well for those carers who are entitled but again carers who are not eligible i.e. pensioners have other benefits forfeited such as Council Tax rebates.

It is a very good beginning. I especially like the respect and continuing to improve aспект.

Sounds good especially people being treated with dignity!

How does this invest on people? I really would like to know this.

Human right... no such thing and no I don't accept it should be a human right.

There is no respect or dignity and never will be the system does not allow for that. The means testing the constant breathing down one neck and some of the many stupid check that done.

The Scottish government has always had a role to play but getting them do that seriously and in a way that respect to some degree they have never done.

On what evidence.... They mean test it with a point system and they don't accept evidence given only what they want to accept and when they want to accept it. I agree there is a need for this to be done and therefore it needs to be done in a way that much fairer than now.

Improving..... There always room for improvement and one of the ways of doing this is to ensure that benefits never fall below a set rate base line looking at the country rate of inflation and incoming and outgoings. Always talk with people as quite often you find they are agree with maybe a little tweak here and there.

Delivery..... Efficient and delivers is two words the Government don't understand or refuse to understand. For this to be done the government need to look at the process of claiming. Not everyone has access to internet to fill in a form or can afford the cost of a call to make a claim. This needs to be looked at as everything is based on technology within the system and that has off putting as was paper work. A balance need to be found and claim made easier and a simple format for those with learning issues and disabilities as sometimes they don't have anyone to claim on their behalf. Value for money.... Yes it does need to be value for money so therefore get it right from day one and the service as near to efficient as possible would help but even that will not always happen as problems do occur so holding someone accountable and given them more than a telling off is needed. Kick them out of the Job. What about making people who are carers or long term unemployed or sick part of that process. Four on a panel board then a change of people and repeating this as you get fresh blood so to speak and things to become stale and rusty and breaks down.... New eye, new ideas, new vision or improving vision

If dignity is so important I would expect disability assessments to be altered.

The principles are good. But my son disabled and can never work, was forced to get 3 sick certificates to get job seekers.

PIP is a ghastly system; staffs on end of phone are not trained. Ours has been very slow, and there needs to be a way to ally it to the original DLA when it was granted indefinitely!" This unfortunately still does not go far enough towards achieving this. Caring for someone with high level disability, lack of sleep, lack of social, leisure and work opportunities from caring is not the same as
someone looking for a job, carers never get to leave their job, not all carers get respite and not all people with disability will accept respite, even at that, caring situations that are 24/7 = 4 weeks of respite a year does not give an adequate break

- I agree with all the above.
- I agree with most of these statements, but do not know how efficient it is.
- It's all a bit vague, it's political spin with no real meaning, reform should be top down NOT bottom up and it should be clear and simple. This means nothing at all.
- I agree with the first six of these statements but am not too sure about the last one
- Would agree with the principles. Would require clear leadership and management strategy to pull these approaches through.
- It should be measured on a regular basis by empirical means and with feedback from users.
- would be god if they stick to it
- I think they are great principles, but I feel that benefit claimants will still get looked down on by the right wing voters until we deal with the "benefit scrounger" mentality.
- There certainly needs to be a lot more respect for everyone including carers. If cares were to strike it would be like losing the Nurses, Fire service and police combined.
- The principles seem sound and admirable. Can they be enforced in law?
- I agree with all 7 points but are carers not humans? Surely they have rights too and their many hours of caring often well in excess of most workers saves the public purse a huge sum of money.
- I agree. The U.K. Government's policy on sanctions does not work. It punishes vulnerable people and robs them of their dignity. It plunges children into poverty.
- Would much prefer payment of an unconditional Basic Income
- A good idea as long as it doesn't support people who have no intention of working
- What 'evidence' will this be based on? How will you make sure people are given the 'assistance they are eligible for' if they have additional needs or social anxiety / mental health issues?
- Generally speaking, I welcome them - especially the emphasis on human rights and respect. I would modify 4 of the above. Number 1: I would modify so it reads "Social security is an excellent investment in all the people of Scotland". The insertion of "excellent" is suggested to emphasise that it is unquestionably a good thing. "All" is to declare unequivocally that the entire nation benefits from an effective social security system - not just those who are in receipt of money or other resources. Number 4 is too vague - "A role" is a sentiment which, in the wrong hands, could be used to justify a bare minimum involvement. Could it be instead "the major role"? Number 6: What is wrong with saying "system should always be improving"? Eliminate "trying to" - "trying" is weak. Granted, national catastrophe could result in regression, but in that eventuality there should be a specific agreement that this principle has to be, temporarily, set aside. Number 7: Efficient, value for money systems are not necessarily effective systems. We need efficacy at the heart of a new system. To read "is efficient and effective and delivers value for money" etc.
- The last point is not true as many people slip under the net. Also social security should always try to be improved. The other 6 principles would be okay if applied correctly
- Good in theory but let's see it in practice. I'm not sure the farmers would agree wholly with the efficiency aspect!
- A social security system based on evidence is good, as there is plenty of evidence that the current system is not working well for many people. Scottish Government seems to be committed to this approach. How will these principles be enshrined in practice, though? What will be the driver to keep this going for years and years until the system is bedded in, how will we know it's working well for all individuals? The relationship a benefit claimant has with the benefits agency is so personal, so dependent on their own circumstances, that it will be impossible to check whether these principles are actually being sustained at an individual level. That'll be reliant on good feedback and complaints processes
- I agree with all of the statements above.
- I am not quick sure how social security is an investment apart from the fact it makes people lazy, I do 35 hours a week for my pittance. It has nothing to do with being able to access human rights. They certainly do not respect individuals who claim it; they treat you with disrespect and make you feel worthless. The
new universal credit leaves you 6 weeks without money if you have no dependents or are not vulnerable I think that could be a human rights violation. Based on what evidence and how that evidence will help to design a system. As previously stated the new universal credits is an embarrassing failure and leaves people who are not deemed in need vulnerable. I certainly would question the last principle which I have thought out this, maybe that is why there is a charity now aimed at Scottish children as parents struggle to make ends meet with growing children, let down a bit like the carers.

- Ok in so far as they go.
- Such a huge amount of damage needs to be repaired in this system.
- Theoretically fine but concerns whether these will be translated into practice. How will this be done!!
- But when it comes to the practical side of these principles how will they be carried out to the people that really need it?
- Don’t value the work carers do more Financial help
- it all looks good on paper but 73 pound a week is not value for money many unpaid carers save the government millions of pounds a year on care costs , it does not respect the dignity in order to qualify for carers allowance you have to care full time hours the benefit works out to be a couple of pounds an hour , a couple of pounds when a person is unable to work due to caring responsibility , giving the most vulnerable in society a quality and meaningful life in some cases giving personal care , hands on 24 hours a day
- Hope these principles can be carried out, especially for carers, as they are often treated as scroungers. Postal system to DWP is a shambles so anything to improve this will be good
- I totally agree; no-one should be devalued because they are unable to work.
- People have a right to be allowed to live there life as required. Access to benefits should be much simpler and less traumatic for those in need and relevant benefits signposted to support families in need.
- As a carer I feel the statements quite condescending. Some carers work all hours of the day for carer’s allowance. We are seen as carers no job and no self-worth. All your statements don’t cover all the work that carers do. The money that they actually save.
- There should be a principle and commitment which focuses on the right to a decent income.
- Principles are good provided they are adhered to, especially the one around dignity of individuals. Agree with the approach but not sure how it will translate into positive action.
- Dignity and respect at the heart of these – all makes sense

**Are there any other principles you would like to see?**

- More for the income tax payers
- Perhaps an principle which sets out an ongoing input from organisations such as Carers Scotland who are constantly in-touch with those providing care on a day-to-day basis, and who are able to help inform and reflect the needs of people in a caring role.
- Get the human side of any proposals on our benefits we are saving thousands of pounds in our role as carers
- Minimum wage for unpaid carers
- More advice there are millions of unclaimed and needed benefits per year due to the fact people are unaware hopefully with the Scottish Government taking over thing will be made more clearer
- I think those quoted are comprehensive.
- I would like to see the principal of a reversal of any cuts imposed on disabled claimants to be reversed and previous DLA benefit awards re-instated.
• Stop continual assessments of those on disability benefits
• People also need guidance as well as financial support.
• Mental wellbeing should be supported
• Information on other resources and help for individual.
• Much more communitive with those unpaid and family carers, on whom many rely
• More principals about carers as there is not one principle about carers and more rights for carers and the cared for.
• I can’t emphasise enough a carer is a carer not matter what age.
• I would like to see the following spelled out even though it would fall under the principle of respect for the dignity of individuals, I still think it is a huge issue that needs to be highlighted - the current system is all about what you can’t do as a disabled person/carer, it is very negative in its culture. The Scottish Social System should strive to be about what we can do, both us disabled people and carers and the rest of society. The emphasis should be positive instead of negative.
• Yes. If a person who works and gets carers allowance too, if they get paid a premium for e.g. working on Boxing Day, I would like to make sure that the carer isn’t penalised for it. I was paid a £22 premium payment for working on Boxing Day (a normal work day for me) and LOST a whole 4 weeks allowance of CA.
• Additional respect by allowing carers who are able to juggle their situation and a paid job being able to earn more than £110 before losing their entitlement to carers allowance payment, this amount should be increased to £200 at least
• It is a simple and fair system which is accountable to both the government and the people it serves.
• I would like to have a social security system in place, which has more training in those on the autistic spectrum
• A time limit for applications to be processed
• Different benefit departments will have a duty to work together to ensure timely assistance.
• People who give up work to become full time carers will no longer have to attend job centre interviews which are demeaning.
• No mention of poverty. Social security's foundational principles should include something to the effect that the purpose of social security is to ensure that no-one in our nation lives in poverty, which, by definition, is a state of manifest insecurity. If social security does not guard against people being in poverty, what "security" does it truly afford? Yes, I am fully aware of the issue of defining poverty, but a secure, mature Scottish society must have a social security system that simply must, for reasons of justice, explicitly address poverty.
• Better conversations with people, and actually listening to what people are saying, also better training for Social Workers.
• Perhaps people should be given they assistance they 'need' and are not just 'eligible' for. Not always the same thing.
• No, these ones need to be reviewed after a time though to make sure they work
• That staff are trained appropriately/and are accountable to uphold these principles - maintaining the dignity, human rights, accessibility, constantly improving and responding to feedback from its users. Also that efficiency and value for money are core to service delivery.
• GPs and consultants should be able to support disability benefits - there should be no need for inexperienced non-medical staff to make assessments
• Adequate benefit for those who are unpaid carers
• Heating allowance for unpaid carers
• Cold weather payments for unpaid carers
• More help financially for those caring for adults as they do not qualify for working tax or child tax credits "
• Maybe to put carers’ needs first equal with those who receive disability benefits.
• See above. If we truly value disabled people and Carers, we need to ensure they are not in poverty and give the right to live a decent life. Allied to employment and other supports.
• No disadvantage caused by remoteness and rurality.
Do you agree with the Charter?

- This is a good thing as it sets out the responsibility of the Scottish Government and provides some recourse for those who may feel they are being failed or let down by the system.
- Given also that it will be reviewed regularly is good as the demands and needs of the caring role do sometimes change.
- Yes it gives responsibility to everyone. Social security should not be a passive process it should engage with its clients.
- Yes while I except we need some control on benefits we seem to be going backwards on how we support the most vulnerable and people needing to care.
- Yes, the charter should be the starting point but the basis for improvement and accountability in the future.
- Yes including ones on methadone programme.
- Yes I agree but as I already wrote to local council re, increased carers allowance to same level as job seekers allowance with concerns to losing income support then loss of free services such as dentist glasses etc. if not on income support.
- Yes, it gives structure and boundary; people will have a clear understanding of their rights and obligations.
- Yes, as it should make it clear to the public what to expect.
- Yes. Charters are easy. Implementing them is the difficult part.
- Good idea, enables providers to be held to account of they don't deliver on guidelines and gives people a clear idea of what to expect.
- In principle, yes, however, in practice will this actually make any difference?!
- As long as it is easy and clear to read and free of jargon.
- It also needs to be short so people read it.
- Surely the charter just needs reviewed by the people using it.
- The thought of a Charter sounds good, but who will oversee it, and check those overseeing it... surely not another quango of overpaid, underperforming pen pushers!
- A charter for whom? I cannot help feeling that this charter will be more beneficial to the government that the people. Will those who claim benefits actually understand what is expected of them as documents are often not that easy to understand? It has to be written simple for everyone to understand.
- Again sounds and looks great on paper but I will reserve judgement until I see results if any.
- Yes I agree with the idea of the Charter, it will give carers an idea of the value of their contribution to Scotland’s economy.
- Great in principle!
- This is good as the public should be aware of what the Scottish Government is doing.
- Yes. It will be a good way to make sure that the system is improving what needs to be improved and seeing what works and to make sure that everyone keeps doing their best to meet their responsibilities.
- Not fully... Charters being used a lot these days but increasingly you’re finding it does not get followed or adhered too. Staff at local level have poor training or just don't care so won’t be bothered with a charter. DWP job centre staff should work with those it effect to get a clearer understanding of what that should be and why and that way it come from both side of the fence.
- Waste of money, does not mean anything.
It's an aim! What will the real difference mean to those needing it?
Yes, depending on how it is worded
Yes. Individuals claiming should ensure they meet the correct criteria.
I agree there should be a charter and that everyone should abide by the rules. That way it is open and fair. Not sure that the government should do a report on their own charter, but do not know enough about these things.
No. It’s a way of keeping government offices busy researching and writing meaningless reports, the money is better spent operationally.
Yes x 4
Yes people deserve to know how the money is allocated"
Yes as stated above it would or should give strategies on how principles will transpire to practice. Clear expectations for those claiming also mitigates confusion.
Yes, all potential and actual claimants need to understand the principles.
It should promote the value of carers and make it clear how much we save the country by providing ongoing support.
I agree with it because it sounds open and transparent.
I agree. All government actions should be transparent and accountable.
In principle but all governments are able to manipulate figures
Yes, it gives clarity and reassurance of expectations on both sides.
Yes - as long as it is distinguished by clarity (and not legalese) - and as long as its production and application takes illiteracy and lack of comprehension into account and therefore, ensures support is given to people to enable them to understand it. An effective charter will allow everyone in Scotland to know what to expect and the annual report should enable accountability to be wired in from the offset.
Yes I agree with a charter, lets people know what to expect and how claimants are also responsible, plus if a report is produced people will see the Scottish Government is doing what it has promised
It creates transparency if everyone knows what is expected of them. I totally agree with the 'two way street' approach. Benefits should not be 'right' as some people think but there to support when there are no other options. We have to pay for all of this remember!
It seems reasonable. Making sure the principles are put into practice is important; I would like to see how this will be guaranteed in every local area. especially if local authorities are providing the face to face services, we already know there can be discrepancies there so there needs to be good training
I doubt there will be much interest in it, most of the people who claim benefits are happy to do the minimum required to get their money, whereas carers work for their money and normally a lot more than 35 hours a week.
A giant it’s how this will be played out in people’s lives
Yes, hopefully it will make things clearer for anyone claiming benefits
Yes; it is a standard that ensures the best outcome for benefits recipients and their carers.
Yea I agree. People claiming benefits should be accountable to a point however the format should be respectful of their needs, situation and circumstances.
Carers are already jumping through hoops make it easier for them. They have enough to worry about.
I don’t. I think this is too reminiscent of the current Claimant’s Charter which often underpins the punitive nature of the U.K. System.
Agree, but again it all seems like paperwork exercise. Just wish they would get on and provide the social security to those who need it.
Sounds good – let’s see!

Is there anything specific you would like to see in the Charter?
• More benefits for being in employment and reduction on tax
• Recognition of the contribution Carers make to society, and a pledge to provide better support when the caring role ends... Financial and emotional support.
• Minimum wage for carers
• A possible return of the primacy of medical evidence leading the case for provision.
• Stop continual assessments of those on disability benefits-it harms their mental health and that of those supporting them greatly
• A draft copy of it, in plain English, sent to a serious number of paid and unpaid carers, for comment and approval
• I’d like to see more provision being made for self-employed people who run small businesses. Particularly if they become ill.
• A commitment to monitor and maintain the mental health of carers, particularly if the cared for has a terminal diagnosis or requires a large amount of support from the carer.
• I would have to see the first Charter before adding anything to it.
• Better communication material as that very poor just now. I am sight impaired and getting something I can read is impossible. For me it needs to be large print on yellow or green background and that just does not happen. Even when people write to me they send me small print that I cannot read. The various other formats need to be address as well and when dealing with DWP in person the staff should be able to sign for deaf or and deaf blind and maybe speak at least on other language as then there investment in staff and there no longer long delays in getting the claim made or the help you need while they wait on them finding someone who can come in and do this as the current wait time is up to 3 months. The charter should include investment in staff and their skills so that they can better help people and in doing so they will reap the reward as long term investment will mean less money being spent on paying someone £250.00 per hour to come and do that job and that then allows the charter to provide another of it goals in that it save money which could be better used else were,
• Simple, fair and accountable
• A clear indication of how the system is run and how the money available is spent
• More benefit for people who are carers
• Minimum income for long term carers of severely disabled children / young adults
• That all genuine claimants have enough money to live on
• Cross-refer to and harmonising with other charters (any existing or prospective) - especially, for my viewpoint any charter to do with the Carers Act. We need charters to be mutually re-enforcing and not contradictory.
• I personally would like to see more care for elderly people and their opinions taken into account
• SMART approach
• Carers being taken out of the social security system and given a wage for the work they do and the money they save the government being doing it.
• If you’re declared disabled by a NHS doctor then it shouldn’t be overturned by a person that’s only qualified to do the medical.
• Maybe all medicals for claiming any disabilities should only be done by doctors or people qualified in that field on illness.”
• Living wage for carers as we save the government £80 BILLION per year
• recognition for the contribution that carers make to the economy every year, so that the general public will have awareness
• Rights and entitlements for carers.
• Brining back of lifetime awards for degenerative conditions as by the very nature they will never get better.
• Give them an employed status. Make all carers feel like they are worth something.
• A right to speedy appeals and resolution of issues which affect Claimants and their families.
• All social security staff deliver their work in a fair, honest way and with respect for an individual regardless of their situation.
• Access through chosen channel e.g. face to face.

What are your thoughts on the proposals in the Bill for some of the devolved benefits?

• I feel the above is money wasted as the Disability Assistance. I work and applied for the PIP I have medical conditions but because I work, I believe the DWP refused.
• Having followed with interest the course of events since the Smith Commission first reported I’m very pleased to see things coming together for Scotland in taking responsibility for these important benefits. I feel it’s a good thing. A move in the right direction.
• We have been cut to the bone the human cost to peoples finance should be documented not glossed over
• I think personally it will remain same as Westminster just that it is now the Scottish governments job as opposed to Westminster in the budget allocated by Westminster
• These are the essential benefits to maintain dignity. I have some concerns about the assessments to entitlement, based on my knowledge of the current system.
• The DLA to PIP should be stopped and those already transferred should be returned to their previous awards.
• These need to be individually assessed. Like carers allowance it may be that both people are reducing their income to care for a person or persons. They may need other help with adapting there live so they also do not become unwell. Other helps with money worries and the future should be addressed.
• I don’t know what the detailed proposals are, but the provision of the benefits must be approved by professionals in the business and not biased politicians
• I like this idea. It will make sense to have the Scottish Parliament dealing with the needs and benefits of the Scottish people. Hopefully allowances may be able to be made to accommodate the needs of carers and cared for in rural areas.
• The devil is in the detail; without the detail it’s all aspirational. As a professional then volunteer benefits adviser since 1991, I have met thousands of claimants who have suffered due the “detail” of social security legislation being applied too rigidly by poorly trained and at times uncaring DWP staff.
• I would hope those currently entitled to these benefits don’t have to go through any further processes.
• Do they have the knowledge to do this or the understanding? Keeping it on one agency is better than it been spread all over the place providing it is fairly and correctly and no a quick step for the government to remove payments from people
• ESA should be included.
• If PIP has been already granted, families should not be put through the wringer again, with a NEW form!
• Carers Allowance increase good but not good enough
• Not sure about this one especially when we don’t know how it will work.
The Scottish government would spend its time and resources better if it got the economy moving again rather than being concerned with benefits which are run from Westminster anyway. Yes I understand devolution. This is a waste of time and money.

Knowledge on how these would work would be required. As long as government safeguarded current help.

Scrap the universal benefit, and the PIP stick with the current (and currently assessed) benefits

Benefits should be easier to access by the people who need them

A carer’s card would be useful, possibly giving free bus travel as although I can drop my daughters off at clubs / day centres etc. and travel for free with their C+1 card, I then have today my own transport back.

Removing all the well intentioned words, carers are basically working for far less than minimum wage and are on zero hour contracts. Also carers have many years of experience which would be a bonus in the private sector. This something for nothing seems to be acceptable when it comes to the abuse and exploitation of the home carer workforce.

The carer not only subsidises the taxpayer with their free labour but are also funding higher electrical bills for the many pieces of equipment they may require for their needs which would be normally picked up by the taxpayer in Hospital or a care home etc. In Hospital do they only use Electric and Gas at the winter time and do they just get an allowance?

Electricity & Gas allowance all year round for someone who is being looked after in the community and is fully at home. If care is moving out of Hospitals etc., and into the community then certain costs do not disappear overnight that were there before.

Why carers assistance? Why not carers remuneration?

I believe that these should remain universal benefits and should not be means tested. I welcome that the Scottish Government will have more autonomy regarding benefits.

These are all worthwhile

Hopefully there will be a better join in the cross over from DLA to PIP

Re the schedule for carers’ assistance, I am wary about the way in which the provisions are worded. The use of "may" allows determinations via regulations to go in various directions from the restrictive and parsimonious to the liberating and generous. I would want an able lawyer to sift these to ensure the schedules will not allow an unscrupulous, unsympathetic regulator to set conditions which carers find draconian.

Unless everything is correctly explained there will be a lot of concern for people also I would like the waiting times for answers to be swifter not like just now 2/3 months wait

People must accept more responsibility.

Sure start maternity grants - I agree to a point.

How will this deal with people claiming benefits that are reserved to Westminster and those devolved to Holyrood?

I certainly hope that there will be no reduction in any of the current payments.

Concerns about how principles will be put into practice

There is no Disability Living Allowance & no one has been allowed to apply for it since 1st June 2016, anyone claiming Personal Living Allowance is try to live on that and that alone which means if you need any mobility aids scooter, wheelchair, bathroom aids, then it has to come out of PIP where lots are still on both. It leaves you deciding heat your home or eat food in a lot of cases.

Carers’ benefits should have been increased long before this.

Please don’t over complicate the application process and ensure a common-sense approach is introduced.

Should have been done sooner

Are they still going to use private assessor companies to assess suitability for a benefit? If so then that is wrong.

Is there anything else you want to tell us about this Bill?
I feel there should be a provision for carers to qualify for the concessionary travel pass as although those being cared for are able to gain a pass, oftentimes carers are left to fund bus fares and train fares for shopping and other trips out of their own finances. Some provision for this should also be available for carers.

Need control of universal credit before it gets out of hand

Is welcome, urgent and needs to be a priority. The disabled and their carers have been hardest hit and are desperate for respite.

Every time our government produces a bill, it seems to create more pen pushing jobs, with more overpaid managers than serious workers. Don't let this "Bill" be yet another one

In the end, it will come down to political will, listening to expert groups (CPAG etc.) and resources! I fear that expectations are higher than what will be delivered; what is inherited from DWP in 2018 will be a resource-strapped mess!

I hope carers are kept informed of the Bill and its progress.

Only that it is very important that people who have to use the system are treated as individuals and their individual and sometimes unique situations be treated as such and not be forced into over-generalised boxes to make things "easier".

The bill has only looked at some stuff not all stuff and therefore fall short of its target

You are proposing to further complicate and already complex benefit system. This is needless and pointless

Users should be involved in the detailed planning, guidance notes should be issued to relevant agencies EARLY not 2 days before enactment.

My daughters are severely mentally disabled; who 100% will need care 24/7 for the rest of their lives. This is NEVER going to change or improve, yet they have to go through constant reassessments, its stressful and a waste of money.

No. I want to thank all involved for conducting this survey and hope that its results provide you with useful intelligence.

The Bill has to sure that it is for everyone and not just the select few.

Overpayments - if this is the fault of the issuing office/government and the client has done nothing wrong then write it off as a bad debt rather than expect the client to pay back in full. Perhaps if there are financial penalties for mistakes less will occur!

About respondents to this survey

![Survey Results]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am a carer</td>
<td>84.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a former carer</td>
<td>10.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I represent a carer</td>
<td>10.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a disability o...</td>
<td>23.44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify)</td>
<td>7.81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Who do you care for?

- Disabled child (18 and under): 13.33%
- Disabled adult child: 35.00%
- Parent or parent in law: 31.67%
- Sibling: 8.33%
- Other friend or relative: 38.33%

How many hours do you care for?

- Under 20: 11.86%
- 20 - 34: 6.78%
- 35 or more: 81.36%