

Social Security Scotland submission of 29 March 2023

PE1913/G: Fast-track future Adult Disability Payment applications for people undergoing cancer treatment

Separate Fast Tracking for People with Cancer

As the committee is aware from The Scottish Government's previous submission of 1 December 2022, the Scottish Government's approach is to provide a person-centred service and not prioritise any single condition or type of disability above any other. This is the fairest way to provide our social security service and ensure that individual access to benefits is managed equitably. The enhanced procedures the Scottish Government is putting in place will significantly broaden fast tracked payments to people with cancer. Therefore the Scottish Government does not support an additional fast track procedure specifically for people with cancer. Everyone deserves the best possible service that can be provided and that is what we intend to provide, no matter what their illness or condition.

I would like to reassure you that Social Security Scotland does have a dedicated and very knowledgeable team working exclusively on Special Rules for Terminal Illness cases.

Social Security Scotland fast-tracks applications from clients with a terminal illness and seeks to make payments within 7 days.

Processing Times

In terms of applications made under normal rules, Social Security Scotland is committed to processing our clients' applications in a timely manner, whilst allowing sufficient time to ensure we have all the information we need to get decisions right first time. There are no plans at present to introduce targets as no two applications for disability benefits are the same, and some can be more complex than others. At the moment, the majority of people will receive a decision within four months, although processing times vary from a few weeks to six months in a small proportion of very complex cases. When decisions are taking

a long time, this is largely because people have asked us to gather supporting information on their behalf. It takes time to collect the information, but allows robust decision-making. If someone is eligible, we will always calculate the payment from the date that the person first applied.

Our Charter

Our Charter” and the Charter Measurement Framework were co-designed by people with lived experience of the benefits system. The Charter Measurement Framework is a crucial way of holding Social Security Scotland accountable for delivering the promises in “Our Charter” – including demonstrating dignity, fairness and respect in all our actions. The Framework measures some of the most important indicators of Social Security Scotland’s performance, notably how our clients experience our services, which is fundamental to our human rights-based approach.