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Social Justice and Social Security Committee
The Scottish Parliament
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Dear Collette

I would like to thank the Social Justice and Social Security Committee for the discussion on the draft Disability Assistance (Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance) Regulations 2025 on 21 November 2024. I hope this session was helpful in providing clarity on Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance (Scottish Adult DLA) and the journey for adults in Scotland who will see their Disability Living Allowance award transfer to Scottish Adult DLA in 2025.

During the session, Committee members raised concerns about the case transfer process for disability and carer benefits. I wanted to take this opportunity to reassure members that Case Transfer continues to go well.

As you know, our priority is to ensure safe and secure transfer for over 700,000 Scottish residents who will have their benefit awards transferred from the DWP to Social Security Scotland, across five different benefits. These transfers happen in stages following the launch of each new form of Scottish assistance and ensure clients continue to receive their vital social security payments without disruption.

The latest official statistics from Social Security Scotland show we have safely and securely transferred the benefit awards of more than 300,000 people from the Department for Work and Pensions to Social Security Scotland, amounting to over £1.7 billion in payments. Many more have completed transfer since the statistics were published. We have completed transferring the Disability Living Allowance for Children awards of children and young people in Scotland to Child Disability Payment, with over 47,000 awards transferred. More than 250,000 people have had their Personal Independence Payment awards safely and securely transferred to Adult Disability Payment as at 31 October 2024, more than three quarters (76%) of the total we expect to transfer. Between February and September 2024, over 4,500 carers have had their Carer's Allowance award transferred to Carer Support Payment. The transfer from Attendance Allowance to Pension Age Disability Payment and remaining Disability Living Allowance cases to Scottish Adult Disability Living Allowance will begin in 2025.

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We remain on track to meet our ambitious timescale of completing case transfer for everyone in Scotland by the end of 2025 and, most importantly, people have continued to receive the right payments of their transferring benefits at the right time throughout the process, in line with our case transfer principles.

As we enter the final year of the case transfer project, it is important to reflect on the monumental task that lay before us. Transferring over 700,000 social security awards to a new system without requiring an application is something that has never been attempted before in the United Kingdom. Our unique like-for-like transfer approach also means we are completing transfer safely and securely more quickly than other transitions administered by the Department for Work and Pensions. For example, the transition from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment and legacy benefits to Universal Credit began in 2013 and are both still ongoing. And because they require an application, there can be gaps in payment that result from the transition where people do not apply in the required timescales. In contrast our transfer of five separate benefits is due to complete in just over four years, no application is required and there is no disruption to people's payments.

The [case transfer evaluation report](#) published in July 2024 further highlights the clear successes in our case transfers to date. It found that:

- case transfer is generally well understood by clients
- the process is safe and secure, with clients receiving the right payments at the right time
- clients and support organisations feel that they are treated with dignity, fairness and respect and report that interactions with staff and the style of letters contribute to a sense of trust in Social Security Scotland
- support organisations are positive about the transparency of decision making.

We have made significant progress and I am grateful to my officials and those in the Department for Work and Pensions for their work to make this a success so far. We expect to transfer hundreds of thousands more cases in 2025, including over 60,000 DLA awards to Scottish Adult DLA, and I am confident we will continue to see the promise of a safe and secure transfer delivered.

I hope this information is helpful for the committee.

SHIRLEY-ANNE SOMERVILLE

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