Timms Review

Stopping unnecessary PIP reassessments for people living with terminal illness and progressive, life-limiting conditions

Briefing for Parliamentarians, July 2026

Question for the government

- How will the government work to reduce the stress, cost and burden that PIP reassessments present for people living with terminal illness and progressive, life-limiting conditions?

The impact of terminal illness and progressive, life-limiting conditions on financial security

- The last months, weeks and days of someone's life should be a time to focus on what really matters: making memories with family and friends and living as well as you can.
- For people with a terminal or progressive life-limiting condition, too often financial pressures add unnecessary worry and strain to what is already a difficult time.
- A terminal diagnosis or a long-term illness is associated with increased costs, such as higher energy bills due to increased energy consumption, as well as the costs of care, medication and therapies.
- Rising costs can have a physical impact – a cold home can cause additional pain, exacerbate respiratory conditions, increase the risk of hypertension, increase stress and anxiety and lead to unsafe home environments due to damp and mould.
- For working-age people, the benefits system provides around half of their household income in the last year of life. This proportion increases over the last five years of their life, which relates to reduced income from work due to health and caring responsibilities.

Why the PIP reassessment process isn't working for people living with terminal illness and progressive, life-limiting conditions

- The "Special Rules for End of Life" allow individuals who are nearing the end of life to access fast-tracked, higher-rate financial support through the benefit system.
- While few people who have been awarded PIP under Special Rules will live for 3 years – at which point a Special Rules claim can be reviewed – we know from the government's response to a parliamentary question that it can and does happen.
- We consider this an unacceptable and unnecessary strain on people with a terminal illness, who should have assured and constant financial support until they die, so they can focus on the things that really matter – being as well as they can be and spending time with those who matter most to them.
- There are also people with progressive life-limiting illnesses who may not qualify for the Special Rules, or may not be recognised as such because their PIP claim pre-dates the point at which they received a prognosis that they were likely to live for less than 12 months, but who are forced to endure damaging and unnecessary reassessments for their PIP.
- According to Marie Curie's analysis of Stat-Xplore, between February 2025 and January 2026, 38% of people whose main condition is Parkinsons, 16% of people whose main condition is

Dementia and 9% of people whose main condition is Motor Neurone Disease – all conditions that are progressive and life-limiting - were put on fixed-term PIP awards.

- This is contrary to the PIP assessment guide which says it's appropriate to recommend an ongoing award to those with progressive conditions on the higher rate of each component.
- What's more, for this same time-period, only 2% of PIP awards where the recipients' main condition is Dementia, Parkinson's, or Motor Neurone Disease were decreased at an award review. This demonstrates the lack of value in the department reassessing people whose conditions are sadly only going to worsen. Especially when, as the latest figures show, each PIP assessment costs £282. The department should stop giving those with progressive life-limiting conditions fixed length PIP awards.
- The Timms Review is a vital opportunity to ensure those living with terminal and progressive life-limiting conditions are supported to live as well as they can, for as long as they can, by ending costly and often stressful and overwhelming reassessments.

Policy solution

- When it has been decided that someone's condition is terminal, they should have fast-tracked access to a lifetime award of the higher rate of PIP Daily Living and Mobility, enabling support with the additional costs that can come with that prognosis until the end of their life.
- Anyone who does not access PIP via the Special Rules, but who has a progressive life-limiting illness and is on the highest award rates for both Daily Living and Mobility, should also be exempt from fixed-length awards.
- For people with progressive life-limiting conditions who are on the lower rates of PIP Daily Living and/or Mobility, compulsory reassessments should be replaced with 'light-touch' reviews to check whether they have become eligible for a higher award.

For more information or to arrange a meeting to discuss the contents of this briefing, please contact: parliament@mariecurie.org.uk