

## **WELFARE REFORM COMMITTEE**

### **THE FUTURE DELIVERY OF SOCIAL SECURITY IN SCOTLAND**

#### **WRITTEN SUBMISSION RECEIVED FROM ANONYMOUS 3**

I have worked in the public sector and for organisation within the third sector. I can see how the UK legislation is not suitable and I do not agree to the model. I have witnessed under the current changes to ESA and PIP the negligence of these assessments in identifying and recognising specific, but for the individuals debilitating symptoms/resulting factors of their condition.

There are inherent problems with the current assessment strategy. Some individuals whilst appearing cognitively aware for the assessment are not fully aware of the impact to themselves. I have spoken with a number of people with a range of conditions who are extremely positive people. In order to get through a day it is a constant challenge to remain so. I feel that third party information should be taken into account as it would be more likely for these individuals who are incorrectly scored. Positivity is a trait that should be encouraged and commended not discriminated against.

Medical information that this current system would require from doctors would be too time consuming for practitioners as it is overly complicated. Frequently though a doctor's opinion is required (within an ideal system). Admittedly certain conditions can be assessed by physiotherapist or nurses. Currently symptoms associated with mental health conditions, epilepsy, neuralgia are completed from my experience by physiotherapists (this could differ across the country). Although categorisation of conditions of physical and mental ill health is not ideal, a solution must be reached in order to fairly and humanly treat people who are applying for these benefits. There is a greater chance of these applicants being considered as vulnerable adults and human rights should come into play. Words should not be put into people's mouths on the basis that the examiner understands the scoring system. Decisions should then be independently checked, in the hope that a clear and transparent system can be developed.

For individuals seeking work, again, personalisation is required, at least to the extent that individual circumstances and protected characteristics are taken into account. A one size fits all approach is out of the question. The tailoring of practices to include positive psychology in a way that each person can relate to should be considered. I feel that as this is a relatively new field of psychology that this could be done in the broadest sense at the moment with future developments as research and practices are analysed. Some people may engage with this and for others it may take more time, if ever. I feel that understanding some basic concepts of human brain function, in particular in relation to emotions could only promote positive mental health. I cannot stress enough how this should be done to promote positivity and overall happiness. For the introduction of this it may not be in the work domain that individual make reference too. A holistic approach would save money in the long run. Promoting positive behaviours for future job seeking would be recommended - to

help people gain understanding in how to continually develop within the workforce and sustain employment status.

The current system where blame is placed on the individual does not work. A social model is therefore proposed. Clear and consistent practices adopted. Explaining what is going to take effect before it is delivered and sticking to the outline.

A clear transparent and fair system would be continually evolving – participatory data could be fed back into the new system to ensure that it was bearing equality measures over time. If this was part of the initial proposal then changes made could be explained. Communication channel between the people and parliament would be enhanced.