

P-05-771 Reconsider the closure of the Welsh Independent Living Grant and support disabled people to live independently, Correspondence – Petitioner to Chair, 04.03.20

Dear Ms Finch-Saunders

Many thanks for giving me the right to reply to the Deputy Minister for Health and Social Services latest statement regarding an update on independent care assessments for former recipients of the Welsh Independent Living Grant (WILG).

I wholeheartedly support the contents of this statement and believe the Welsh Government are doing all they can to safeguard independent living for disabled people. I particularly applaud the Deputy Minister for her review of the Direct Payments and CHC interface. I feel that this is an important development as it is key that private individuals are able to continue to employ the staff that they depend on, even if they are funded by a public body. I recognise that it will take time to review the interface, but it is vital that this issue is being addressed to help future generations.

At the moment, I am more concerned about the 'independent' assessment that ICS has supposedly written in relation to my future care and support plan. Despite the assessment going well, it has been recommended that I only receive 44.5 hours of support per week and be forced to wear incontinence pads throughout the night, even though I am not incontinent. This is a huge insult to me after spending so long campaigning for independent living and the rights of disabled people, especially since I have been receiving council approved 24/7 support since October 2019.

Worryingly, there appears to be a determined approach by the local council to thwart what was intended by the Welsh Government, for WILG recipients like myself, to receive the full support package they need. It seems that I am being punished for having the audacity to appeal against the local authority.

The Welsh Government is providing me with the support I need at this worrying time. I feel that it would be counter-productive to go into too much detail about my specific case at this moment in time. I am confident that this will be resolved, but I just felt that I should highlight the failings of local authorities. I would like to request that the Committee keep their investigations open until this matter finally reaches a conclusion.

We would like to thank the Petitions Committee for their help and assistance throughout the #SaveWILG campaign. Our fight to maintain independent living for disabled people with high care and support needs continues with the stubbornness of certain local authorities now standing in the way of achieving a level playing field.

Yours sincerely,

Nathan Lee Davies

#SaveWILG Campaign