



Department
for Work &
Pensions

Ministerial
Correspondence
Caxton House
Tothill Street
LONDON
SW1H 9DA

0207 340 4000

www.gov.uk

ministers@dwp.gov.uk

Iain Stewart MP
iain.stewart.mp@parliament.uk

Our ref: MC2021/49720

24 June 2021

Dear Iain,

As you may know, your email of 18 June to the Treasury on behalf of your constituents about financial support for unpaid carers has been forwarded to this Department. I am replying as the Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work.

This Government recognises and values the vital contribution made by carers in supporting some of the most vulnerable in society, including pensioners and those with disabilities. The support that carers provide has been even more vital during the COVID19 pandemic when other support services may have been reduced or even closed, and where the caring role became even harder due to the need to self-isolate or shield the person they are caring for.

The primary purpose of Carer's Allowance is to provide a measure of financial support and recognition for people who give up the opportunity of full-time employment in order to provide regular and substantial care for a severely disabled person. It is not, and was never intended to be, a payment for the services of caring, or intended to replace lost or forgone earnings in their entirety.

The level of Carer's Allowance is protected by uprating it each year in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The purpose of uprating is to ensure that the value of benefits stays in line with the general level of prices. Carer's Allowance is increased each April in line with inflation as

measured by the CPI for the previous September. Since 2010, the rate of Carer's Allowance has increased from £53.90 to £67.60 a week, providing an additional £700 a year for carers.

In addition to Carer's Allowance, carers on low incomes can claim income-related benefits, such as Universal Credit and Pension Credit. These benefits can be paid to carers at a higher rate than those without caring responsibilities through the carer element and the additional amount for carers respectively.

Carers on Universal Credit can receive around an additional £1,950 a year through the carer element. They may also benefit from the temporary £20 a week increase in the Universal Credit standard allowance. This Government has chosen to focus extra support on those carers who need it most. Between the existing carer-specific support, and the temporary COVID19 uplift, around 315,000 carer households receiving Universal Credit have benefitted from up to an extra £2,990 this financial year.

I hope your constituents will find this reply helpful.

Kind regards,



Justin Tomlinson MP
Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work