



July 2023

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about support for disabled people.

I understand anxieties around the cost of living, in particular the effect that rising costs are having on disabled people.

There are a number of benefits and additional payments available across the welfare system to help people unable to work due to ill health and disability including the Personal Independence Payment (PIP), and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA). Disability benefits were increased by 10.1% - in line with inflation - in April 2023.

I welcome the Chancellor's announcement during the Autumn Statement 2022 that, in addition to the £150 Disability Cost-of-Living Payment that reached six million people in 2022, a second such payment will be made in 2023.

Moreover, in addition to the £650 Cost-of-Living Payments made to the eight million households in receipt of means-tested benefits in 2022/23, a further such payment of £900 is being made in 2023/24. As in 2022, pensioners entitled to Winter Fuel Allowance will receive a further payment of £300 in 2023.

I also welcome the Government's decisive and unprecedented action on energy bills. The Government is maintaining the Energy Price Guarantee, which limits the amount you can be charged per unit of gas or electricity. The current price guarantee, set at £3,000, will support households between now and April 2024. Although energy prices are currently below the level at which EPG payments would be made, it will remain in force until the end of March 2024 to protect households from price spikes, putting in place a safety net for households up and down the country.

At a local level, the Chancellor announced in the Autumn Statement 2022 that the Government will provide £1 billion of extra funding by extending the Household Support Fund until March 2024.

I understand that some households with a disability or medical condition have higher than average energy costs. As you may be aware, certain services do include provision for patients to receive energy cost rebates, but these are unique to specific conditions. Further, I welcome that NHS England provides electricity refunds for users of certain medical equipment in the home, such as oxygen concentrators. If a



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patient is prescribed an oxygen concentrator as part of their home oxygen therapy, the provider will reimburse the patient for any electricity the machine uses at the standard rate for the electricity provider in that region. Clinical Commissioning Groups are best placed to support their local populace.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**