



National Audit Office

Comptroller and Auditor General
Gareth Davies

The UK's independent public spending
watchdog

Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms MP
Chair, Work and Pensions Committee
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA
By email: WORKPENCOM@parliament.uk>

Date 17 May 2024

Dear Sir Stephen

CARER'S ALLOWANCE

Thank you for your letter of 8 May about Carer's Allowance. You asked if we could set out the latest information on DWP's Carer's Allowance, Verified Earnings and Pensions alerts service and overpayment levels, further to our investigation in 2019.

I have been following the recent debate on Carer's Allowance and, given the continuing concerns about the administration of this benefit, I agree that there would be value in us undertaking some further work on this area.

I have therefore asked Laura Brackwell, who leads our work on work and pensions issues, to liaise with your Clerk to explore what would be most useful to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

GARETH DAVIES



Work and Pensions Committee

08 May 2024

Gareth Davies

Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office
(By e-mail only)

Dear Gareth,

Carer's Allowance

This year we have held two evidence-sessions on [Carer's Allowance](#), in part looking at progress made since the [NAO's 2019 investigation report](#) into this matter and our [predecessor's report](#). That evidence, alongside [correspondence](#) last year with the Department and information provided in response to parliamentary questions (see, for example, recent PQ responses, UINs [23249](#), [23251](#), [23252](#) and [23253](#)), has led the Committee to conclude that problems remain with Carer's Allowance.

The Committee would be grateful if you could set out the latest information the NAO has from the Department on Carer's Allowance, the Verified Earnings and Pensions alerts service and overpayment levels.

We appreciate the NAO has limited resources, but we think a further investigation is merited, given the scale of the problem, the lack of progress made since 2019 and the cost to the taxpayer of a system that fails to prevent or rectify overpayments.

As is usual practice with the Committee's correspondence, we will be publishing this letter and your response on the Committee's website.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Sir Stephen Timms MP
Chair, Work and Pensions Committee