Improvements to support for carers set out in Scottish Government paper

Carer’s Allowance will increase from summer 2018, with a Young Carer Grant introduced from autumn 2019

A recently published Scottish Government paper has set out plans for improving support to carers. This is one of a series of papers on the Social Security Bill and includes further detail on the commitment to increase Carer’s Allowance to the level of Jobseeker’s Allowance.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) will continue to pay Carer’s Allowance (CA), and Scottish Government will pay the difference between CA and Jobseeker’s Allowance as a six month lump sum, called the Carer’s Allowance Supplement. This is to allow carers to receive additional money before the Scottish social security agency is fully up and running.

The supplement will be paid to people who are living in Scotland and in receipt of Carer’s Allowance on the qualifying dates – two dates per year which will be chosen by Ministers. This is a temporary measure until Scottish Government takes over full control of Carer’s Allowance – which will then be paid at the higher rate, incorporating the supplement.

Further commitments in the paper are the introduction of a Young Carer Grant in autumn 2019 – a payment of £300 per year for 16 and 17 year olds (and 18 year olds who are still at school) caring for an average of 16 hours per week and not eligible for Carer’s Allowance – and increased support for people caring for more than one disabled child, by April 2021.

The Social Security Bill has been designed to be as simple, accessible and easy to understand as possible. More detail will be in regulations which will be published at a later date. The aim of this is to contrast with the DWP legislation which can be very difficult to understand and interpret. The Bill is currently undergoing the Stage 1 scrutiny process in the Scottish Parliament.

The paper on support for carers has been published to share and get feedback on more of the detail of the Bill – alongside other papers, including on disability benefits and redeterminations and appeals. You can read the full paper on the Scottish Government website and send feedback to socialsecurity@gov.scot.