

RADAR NEWS RELEASE
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‘NO-ONE SHOULD BE LABELLED UNEMPLOYABLE,’ SAYS RADAR

RADAR, the UK’s leading disability rights organisation, has welcomed plans for a new Incapacity Benefit system outlined by the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions in advance of the Green Paper on Welfare Reform published today, but urged the Government to avoid creating a two-tiered system.

Kate Nash, Chief Executive of RADAR, said, “This Green Paper represents a positive opportunity to build a support structure that enables people to make the most of the opportunities open to them. It is a recognition that there are genuine barriers to employment faced by disabled people, and genuine change is required to overcome them.”

RADAR is pleased with the commitment made by the Government to extend the successful Pathways to Work programme to the entire country, and are hoping that this will be followed up by the further promotion of the Access to Work scheme.

Kate said, “We hope that the new reforms will incentivise disabled people to attend regular support interviews, as they will come to represent a key opportunity to discuss their options and consider ways to ensure their needs are met to assist them back into work.”

“Because Pathways to Work has proved itself so effective, lack of participation is not a problem. The fact that ongoing Pathways to Work interviews are compulsory has therefore become irrelevant.”

“If these new reforms are successful, there should be no need to sanction disabled people for non-attendance. Disabled people want to work.”

RADAR is urging the Government to avoid a two-tier approach to providing support for disabled people looking for work, and believes that no-one should be excluded from the opportunity to receive support and advice about accessing the world of work.

“Old fashioned medical distinctions about who ‘can’ and ‘cannot’ work no longer have any place in our society. No-one should be labelled as ‘unemployable’. All disabled people have a contribution to make to society whether it be through full time, part time, paid or voluntary work.”

RADAR is also urging the Government to avoid demonising disabled people by focusing on the marginal issue of fraud. DWP expenditure on fraud accounts for less than 1% of the DWP's overall expenditure on benefits, and RADAR is keen to ensure that the Government remains focused on the key challenge of establishing a support structure to enable disabled people to get work.

"RADAR is committed to working in partnership with the Government to improve the system. Disabled people have a right to work, and over a million people on Incapacity Benefit have indicated that they want to work. But we must ensure that the debate is framed positively in a way that respects the contribution disabled people make to society through various avenues including non-paid work. This is no time for dog-whistle politics."

RADAR will release a detailed response to the Green Paper shortly.

Notes for editors:

¹ RADAR is a national non-governmental disability organisation working for the rights of disabled people, from the broadest range of cultural, racial and social backgrounds, irrespective of their impairment. Although RADAR works with organisations of all types (of and for disabled people) RADAR itself is an organisation of disabled people.

² RADAR's vision is about pushing out the boundaries of the expected; a vision of a world where human difference is routinely anticipated, expertly accommodated and positively celebrated.

For further information please contact:

Erin O'Brien

RADAR

12 City Forum

250 City Road

London, EC1V 8AF

Tel: 020 7566 0119 / 0797 1410 983

erin.obrien@radar.org.uk