



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Response for Back to Work Schemes and Mental Health

Thank you for contacting me about back to work support and mental health.

As an established champion of mental health issues, Mind raises a number of important issues about how we can best support those with mental health difficulties in the workplace.

I know that this is a Government priority. The Access to Work Mental Health Support Service has been established to help individuals with a mental health condition who are absent from work or finding work difficult. In 2014/15, the number of people with a mental health condition supported by the scheme rose by 16 per cent.

In addition, Access to Work has specialist adviser teams focused on assisting customers with mental health conditions. These teams receive additional training, which includes input from suppliers, disability charities and other disability led groups.

Jobcentre Plus is on hand to offer a range of support including Mental Health and Wellbeing Partnership Managers and Work Psychologists. I am pleased it has released an Employment and Wellbeing toolkit, which offers practical support to advisers to help them work with claimants affected by mental health problems.

A new Fit for Work service is also being launched to support people off sick for four weeks or more, including many with a mental health condition, to help them return to work. I am assured that the Department for Work and Pensions will continue to work alongside the Department of Health to pilot different approaches to support people with mental health problems in returning to work.

Finally, to ensure timely access to treatment, the Government is introducing maximum waiting times for accessing talking therapies.

I hope this provides some reassurance. Thank you again for taking the time to raise this important issue with me.

Kind regards,

Edward Timpson MP