

Weekly Political Update

26 October 2018

For further information on any of the parliamentary terms used in this document, please click [here](#).

Employment

Click on link for source

<p><u>Oral question on steps taken by the Government to help people with disabilities into work</u></p>	<p>Andrew Jones MP (Conservatives, Harrogate and Knaresborough) has asked:</p> <p><i>“What steps the Government are taking to help people with disabilities into work”</i></p> <p>The Minister for Disabled People, Health and Work, Sarah Newton MP (Conservatives, Truro and Falmouth) responded:</p> <p><i>“We support disabled people into work through a wide range of initiatives, including our £500 million Work and Health programme and the £330 million personal support package, and Access to Work supported over 25,000 people last year. I had meetings all through the summer with our Work and Health Programme providers, including Reed in Partnership in Yorkshire, and I saw fantastic work being done to take a health and wellbeing approach to enable people back into work.”</i></p> <p>Andrew Jones MP then asked:</p> <p><i>“...Will the Minister join me in encouraging employers right across our country to sign up to this impressive initiative?”</i></p> <p>The Minister, Sarah Newton MP replied by stating:</p> <p><i>“...I am delighted to say that hundreds of employers are signing up every week to the Disability Confident scheme, with more than 8,300 having signed up in total...”</i></p> <p>To read in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>Oral question on the steps taken by the Government to assist disabled entrepreneurs</u></p>	<p>Rachel Maclean MP (Conservatives, Redditch) asked:</p> <p><i>“What steps the Government are taking to assist disabled entrepreneurs.”</i></p> <p>The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Esther McVey MP (Conservatives, Tatton) replied:</p> <p><i>“...Disabled people are more likely than others to be self-employed. Access to Work now has specialist self-employment teams to help disabled entrepreneurs, and the new enterprise allowance schemes help anyone who is claiming eligible benefits to move into self-employment.”</i></p> <p>Alex Burghart MP (Conservatives, Brentwood and Ongar) asked:</p>

	<p><i>“One of the very best ways of helping disabled entrepreneurs, and indeed all disabled people who are looking for work, is to get them access to the best assistive technology that can help them when they are in the workplace and also give them confidence while they are looking for that work. What steps is the Secretary of State taking to ensure that disabled people have those opportunities?”</i></p> <p>The Work and Pensions Secretary replied:</p> <p><i>“...we should be using technology even more. We should be making sure that it does assist disabled people. To that end, we are doing more through Access to Work and we should continue on that path.”</i></p> <p>To read in full please click on the link on the left.</p>
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Technology

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<p><u>Health and Social Care Questions – innovations and technology</u></p>	<p>Scott Mann MP (Conservatives, North Cornwall) and Julian Sturdy MP (Conservatives, York Outer) have asked the following questions:</p> <p><i>“What steps he is taking to introduce innovative technology into the NHS. [907208]”</i></p> <p><i>“What plans the Government have to improve access to innovative treatments and technologies in the NHS. [907222]”</i></p> <p>The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matt Hancock MP (Conservatives, West Suffolk) responded:</p> <p><i>“We are bringing a tech revolution to the NHS to improve patient outcomes and reduce waste. Today I am delighted to announce the selection of the first batch of products under the accelerated access collaborative, as well as funding for tech test beds to ensure that more patients get faster access to the most effective innovations.”</i></p> <p>Shadow Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Jonathan Ashworth MP (Labour, Leicester South) then asked:</p> <p><i>“If we have a “technological revolution”...surely that depends on capital investment... we have the lowest numbers of CT and MRI scanners on average in the OECD, hospitals are reliant on 1,700 pieces of out-of-date equipment, and the hospital repair bill now stands at £6 billion...”</i></p> <p>The Health and Social Care Secretary replied by stating:</p> <p><i>“...we are delivering modern technology in the national health service. That is underpinned by a record commitment of £20 billion extra for the NHS over the next five years, accompanied by a long-term plan that will show how we will support the NHS and make sure that it is guaranteed to be there for the long term.”</i></p>
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	To read Health and Social Care questions in full, please click on the link on the left.
<u>Health and Social Care Questions – preventative care</u>	<p>James Cleverly MP (Conservatives, Braintree) has asked the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care:</p> <p><i>“What steps he is taking to improve preventive care in the NHS”</i></p> <p>The Minister for Care, Caroline Dinenage MP (Conservatives, Gosport) responded:</p> <p><i>“Our NHS offers a range of world-leading preventive care services, but we can go further and faster. The Secretary of State has named prevention as one of his top three priorities, signalling a renewed focus on public health, community and mental health services.”</i></p> <p>James Cleverly MP then said:</p> <p><i>“... Specifically on preventive services, wearable tech, health tech and medical tech... that can relieve pressure on medical services. What more can be done to pursue this way of relieving pressure on the health service?”</i></p> <p>The Minister replied:</p> <p><i>“I completely agree that technology can really help in this way. I recently visited Hampshire County Council, which is using a range of gadgets including a really simple one involving a light bulb that comes on when someone gets out of bed in the night to go for a pee. That is ingenious, and it is helping to prevent avoidable falls.”</i></p>

The NHS

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<u>Health and Social Care Questions – value for money and efficiencies in the NHS</u>	<p>Damien Moore MP (Conservatives, Southport) and Alan Mak (Conservatives, Havant) have asked the following questions:</p> <p><i>“What steps he is taking to improve value for money and efficiency in the NHS. [907210]”</i></p> <p><i>“What steps he is taking to improve value for money and efficiency in the NHS. [907215]”</i></p> <p>The Minister for Health, Stephen Barclay MP (North East Cambridgeshire) responded:</p> <p><i>“Having committed an additional £20 billion in real terms, the Government are asking the NHS to deliver a long-term plan that includes continued improvements in productivity and efficiency, and we are reinvesting the savings in improved patient care.”</i></p> <p>To read more, please click on the link on the left.</p>
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<p><u>Public Accounts Committee report – the ‘interface between health and social care’</u></p>	<p>The Public Accounts Committee has published its 63rd report on the <i>‘Interface between health and social care.’</i> The report examines the interaction between the health and social care systems – recognising the importance of ‘joined-up working’.</p> <p>To read the report in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>
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Access to healthcare

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<p><u>Written question on Government steps to ensure hospital staff can support BSL interpreters to assist deaf patients</u></p>	<p>Luke Pollard MP (Labour, Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport) has asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps his Department is taking to ensure hospital staff can support British sign language interpreters to assist deaf patients.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Care, Caroline Dinenage MP (Conservatives, Gosport) responded:</p> <p><i>“Compliance with the Accessible Information Standard is a legal duty: organisations that provide National Health Service care or adult social care have been required to meet the Standard since August 2016. Compliance with the Standard is also a requirement of the NHS Standard Contract 2018/19. Commissioners must actively support compliance by organisations from which they commission services and they must also seek assurance from providers with regard to compliance. The Care Quality Commission, when inspecting providers, also looks at how services implement the Accessible Information Standard.”</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on what steps the Government is taking to ensure the availability and adequacy of health services provided to deafblind people</u></p>	<p>Shadow Minister for Public Health, Sharon Hodgson MP (Labour, Washington and Sunderland West) has asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to ensure the (a) availability and (b) adequacy of the health services provided to deafblind people.”</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Care, Caroline Dinenage MP (Conservatives, Gosport) responded:</p> <p><i>“NHS services must ensure that people with a sensory impairment receive information that they can access and understand, for example braille, and professional communication support, if they need it, to meet the Accessible Information Standard. The Care Quality Commission, when inspecting the quality of care delivered by providers looks at how services implement the Accessible Information Standard. Under the Children and Families Act 2014, children and young people who are deafblind may be eligible for special educational support, and health, education and social care services should work together to assess and plan to deliver this. The Care Quality Commission is inspecting all local areas over five years</i></p>

	<p><i>to assess the quality of these local arrangements for special educational need (in addition to the routine inspection of providers of health and social care)."</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on Government steps to ensure availability and adequacy of health services for patients with Usher Syndrome</u></p>	<p>Shadow Minister for Public Health, Sharon Hodgson MP (Labour, Washington and Sunderland West) has asked:</p> <p><i>"The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, what steps the Government is taking to ensure the (a) availability and (b) adequacy of health services for patients with Usher Syndrome."</i></p> <p>Minister of State for Care, Caroline Dinéage MP (Conservatives, Gosport) responded:</p> <p><i>"Patients with Usher syndrome have a wide range of needs, with many services being commissioned by local clinical commissioning groups (CCGs). NHS England commissions more specialist services such as cochlear implants (which are suitable for some patients with Usher syndrome). NHS England also commissions the complex genetic analysis associated with Usher syndrome. Whilst NHS England is considering a number of new interventions for some patients with retinitis pigmentosa, some of these interventions are not suitable for patients who are also deaf or have selective frequency hearing loss because they prevent the hearing of device alarms and alerts. CCGs are also responsible for working with their local communities to understand the needs of the local populations and make decisions about how best to commission services that meet those needs, in partnership with other local commissioners and organisations and taking into account any relevant guidance."</i></p>

Disability benefits

Click on link for source

<p><u>Urgent question on the roll-out of Universal Credit</u></p>	<p>Work and Pensions Select Committee Chair, Frank Field MP (Independent, Birkenhead) has asked the following urgent question to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions:</p> <p><i>"...if she will make a statement on her Department's proposed changes to the roll-out of universal credit."</i></p> <p>The Minister for Employment, Alok Sharma MP (Conservatives, Reading West) responded:</p> <p><i>"...When it comes to the roll-out, we have long said that we will take a slow and measured approach to managing migration, which is why we will continue to take a test-and-learn approach, acting on feedback and improving the system as it rolls out.</i></p> <p><i>Universal credit will be in every jobcentre in the country by December 2018. People making new claims to our benefits system now apply for universal credit, rather than being put on the old system. Next year we will start the wider process of moving people from the old benefits system on to universal credit.</i></p>
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The process will begin later next year in a measured way, with no more than 10,000 people moved over, to ensure that the system is working well for claimants and to make any necessary adaptations as we go. We have said for a long time that the managed migration process will take place from 2019 to 2023.”

Frank Field MP, then went on to ask additional questions:

“Will the Government commit themselves to ensuring that everybody who is transferred from the existing benefits on to universal credit is not made worse off, does not lack income and does not face hunger or destitution? First, to that end, will the Minister guarantee that existing benefit payments will continue to claimants until they pick up universal credit?

Secondly, on debt recovery ... Will the Minister guarantee to the House that nobody will face a situation where their debt repayments cancel out their benefit payments?

Thirdly, will the Minister implement the Select Committee’s recommendations to ensure that those brave people who have chosen self-employment to try to free themselves from poverty are encouraged, not discouraged?

Fourthly, for mothers already on universal credit who find work, will he guarantee that their childcare payments will be made up front, and not a month in arrears..?

The Minister’s replied by saying:

“...He raised the overall issue of managed migration. As he knows, we have made our draft proposals available to the Social Security Advisory Committee; they have been public and people can see them. We have received recommendations from the SSAC and in due course we will publish our feedback on those. As for ensuring the position of anyone currently on benefits when they are transferred across, we have made it very clear that transitional protection is in place for those individuals. We have also said that the 500,000 people on severe disability premium will be protected. As he knows, earlier this year we also implemented £1.5 billion of extra support... On debt recovery... as he knows, maximum deductions are currently 40% of the standard allowance. On self-employment, we are indeed helping people; as he knows, from 2017 we introduced a new enterprise allowance, and we are making sure that we are giving support to people to help them develop their business plans and to grow their businesses... He will of course know that up to 85% of childcare costs are recoverable under universal credit, and that is an important improvement that has been made...”

To read the question in full, please click on the link on the left.

In addition, there has been a lot of recent parliamentary activity on the roll out of Universal Credit – with a number of MPs asking questions in the Chamber. These questions follow calls to halt the roll-out of the benefit amid concerns that it would leave people “worse off”. The roll-out will transfer claimants of six benefits – including Employment and Support Allowance which supports people who are ill or disabled, to one universal entitlement.

Opposition Day
Debate –
Universal Credit

An opposition day debate on Universal Credit also took place this week. Margaret Greenwood MP (Labour, Wirral West) moved a humble address motion, requiring the Government to lay before Parliament any briefing papers provided to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, on the roll-out of Universal Credit.

She stated:

“Overall, 3.2 million families with children could lose around £50 a week. People are worried, but there is no clarity... Being forced to manage on a low income... means tough choices for the families affected. The DWP’s own survey of claimants published in June showed that nearly half of new universal credit claimants are falling behind with bills. Even six months later, four in 10 are still struggling to cope financially...”

She continued:

“For more than a year now, those of us...have been calling on the Government to address ... the insistence on digital by default when many people trying to make a claim are either not able to use IT or do not have access to it; the monthly payment in arrears when so many people on low incomes are used to being paid fortnightly or even weekly; its inability to cope with fluctuating income that is part and parcel of life on low-paid, insecure work or self-employment...”

“...the online journal in which people have to record the jobs that they have spent 35 hours a week applying for, but which work coaches often struggle to find the time to monitor; and the five-week wait for a payment at the start of a claim. According to the latest Government figures, 17% of claims were not paid in full and on time, and one person in 10 did not receive any payment at all. Groups such as carers or parents who need help with childcare are more likely than others to have to wait for their first payment. The latest figures show that only a third of people who are ill or disabled were paid on time...”

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Esther McVey MP (Conservatives, Tatton) responded by stating:

“... I have changed the system to provide extra support for those with severe disabilities, vulnerable young 18 to 21-year-olds and kinship carers. I am also working with colleagues to identify areas where we can make more improvements...”

In response to the following question from John Redwood MP (Conservatives, Wokingham):

“Given that it is crucial that there is enough incentive for people to get into work, will she confirm that one of the improvements is to lower the rate of withdrawal so that it is more worth while to work, and will she push for that to be improved further?”

The Work and Pensions Secretary, Esther McVey MP stated:

	<p><i>“...under the legacy benefits there were punitive tax rates of over 90%. We have now brought that down to 63%... we should aim to get that taper rate down even further.</i></p> <p><i>We also took the unusual step, earlier this year, of publishing a summary of the universal credit business case, which explained the economic case for universal credit, showing that it will help 200,000 more people into work when fully rolled out, and empower people to work 113 million extra hours.</i></p> <p>To read the debate in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>Public Accounts Committee – report into Universal Credit</u></p>	<p>The Public Accounts Committee has published its 64th report into Universal Credit which examines how implementation of the benefit is impacting claimants.</p> <p>To read the report in full, please click on the link on the left.</p>
<p><u>Written questions on Personal Independence Payment applications made by deaf people aged 16 to 25</u></p>	<p>Former Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Debbie Abrahams MP (Labour, Oldham East and Saddleworth) has asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many applications her Department has received from deaf people aged 16 to 25 for personal independence payments in the last 12 months; and (a) what the outcome of each claim was and (b) how many of those applicants have requested a mandatory reconsideration or appealed to the social security tribunal.”</i></p> <p>Layla Moran MP (Liberal Democrats, Oxford West and Abingdon) has also asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, what the outcome was of all applications that deaf people aged 16 to 25 made for personal independence payment; how many of those people (a) requested a mandatory reconsideration or (b) appealed to the social security tribunal; and what the outcome was of those (i) reconsiderations and (ii) appeals in the last year for which figures are available.”</i></p> <p>The Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Sarah Newton MP (Conservatives, Truro and Falmouth) provided the same response to both questions:</p> <p><i>“Holding answer received on 17 October 2018</i></p> <p><i>In the application process, claimants’ main disabling condition is only recorded for collation by the Department at assessment. It is not recorded at the point of application. The Department does not therefore hold data on the number of all applicants or outcome of all applications to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) for people with a primary disability of deafness or hearing impairment. For those who have undergone a PIP assessment, information on the number of initial decisions in 2017/18, and mandatory reconsiderations and appeals, for people aged 16 to 25 with a main disabling condition of a hearing disorder are shown in the table below.</i></p>

Initial decisions, mandatory reconsiderations and appeals

	<i>Number</i>
Initial Decisions	
<i>Total</i>	<i>1,450</i>
<i>Awarded</i>	<i>620</i>
<i>Disallowed</i>	<i>830</i>
<i>Withdrawn</i>	<i>#</i>
Mandatory Reconsiderations	
<i>Registrations</i>	<i>410</i>
<i>Clearances</i>	<i>400</i>
<i>New Decision - Award Changed</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>New Decision - Award Unchanged</i>	<i>340</i>
<i>Decision Not Revised</i>	<i>0</i>
<i>Withdrawn/ Cancelled</i>	<i>#</i>
Appeals	
<i>Receipts</i>	<i>160</i>
<i>Clearances</i>	<i>60</i>
<i>Decision overturned</i>	<i>40</i>
<i>Decision maintained</i>	<i>20</i>

Data has been rounded to the nearest 10. Components may not sum to totals due to rounding.

'#' fewer than 5 decisions in this category.

	<p><i>The data relates to initial PIP decisions in 2017/18 and any MRs and appeals relating to those initial decisions recorded up to June 2018 (the latest published data on appeals). Claimants who have received benefit decisions more recently may not yet have had time to complete the claimant journey and progress to appeal.</i></p> <p><i>PIP data includes normal rules and special rules for the terminally ill claimants, and is for both new claims and DLA reassessment claims.</i></p> <p><i>Data is based on primary disabling condition as recorded on the PIP computer system. Claimants may often have multiple disabling conditions upon which the decision is based but only the primary condition is shown in these statistics.</i></p> <p><i>Appeals data is taken from the DWP PIP computer system's management information. Therefore this appeals data may differ from that held by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service for various reasons such as delays in data recording and other methodological differences in collating and preparing statistics.</i></p> <p><i>Some decisions which are changed at mandatory reconsideration, and where the claimant continues to appeal for a higher PIP award, are then changed again at tribunal appeal. Therefore the number of people who had a decision changed at mandatory reconsideration and the number of people who had a decision changed at tribunal appeal cannot be added together.</i></p> <p><i>Decisions overturned at appeal may include a number of appeals that have been lapsed (which is where DWP changed the decision after an appeal was lodged but before it was heard at Tribunal)."</i></p>
<p><u>Written questions on the number of people, with a primary disability of deafness or hearing loss aged 16 to 25, applied for Personal Independence Payments</u></p>	<p>Former Shadow Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, Debbie Abrahams MP (Labour, Oldham East and Saddleworth) has asked:</p> <p><i>"The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with a primary disability of deafness or hearing impairment aged between 16 to 25 applied for personal independence payment in the last 12 months."</i></p> <p>Layla Moran MP (Liberal Democrats, Oxford West and Abingdon) has also asked:</p> <p><i>"The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, how many people with a primary disability of deafness or hearing impairment aged 16 to 25 applied for personal independence payments in the latest year for which figures are available."</i></p> <p>The Minister of State for Disabled People, Health and Work, Sarah Newton MP (Conservatives, Truro and Falmouth) provided the same response to both questions:</p> <p><i>"In the application process, claimants' main disabling condition is only recorded for collation by the Department at assessment. It is not recorded at the point of application. The Department does not therefore hold data on the number of applicants to Personal Independence Payment (PIP) with a primary disability of deafness or hearing impairment."</i></p>

Social Care

Click on link for source

Opposition Day Debate – Social Care Funding

An opposition day debate on social care funding took place this week. Shadow Minister for Mental Health and Social Care, Barbara Keeley MP (Labour, Worsley and Eccles South) moved the following motion which notes that local authority funding restrictions have:

“...resulted in a social care funding crisis; further notes that 1.4 million older people have unmet social care needs; notes that Government grant funding for local services is set to be cut by a further £1.3 billion in 2019-20, further exacerbating the crisis; recognises with concern the increasing funding gap for social care; further recognises that proposals from the Government to invest £240 million will not close that gap; and calls on the Government to close the funding gap for social care this year and for the rest of the Parliament.”

She continued:

“...The Care Quality Commission has said that in some parts of the country the social care system has now reached the tipping point that they warned of two years ago.

The response...was to announce that £240 million would be given to councils to deliver packages of home care to people this winter. That is nowhere near what is needed. The social care funding gap is already over £1 billion this year...”

The Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, Matthew Hancock MP (Conservatives, West Suffolk) responded:

“...Our population is ageing. More people are living longer and, as a society, we must address the challenge that that creates for social care. To put that into context, over the next 25 years, the number of people aged 75 and over is set to double and the number of people aged 85 will rise by more still. Of course, this is good news.... but with such successes come new challenges. For instance, we are seeing a rise in dementia and in age-related conditions, with 70% of people in residential care homes now suffering with dementia...”

“...Of course, social care is not only a challenge of old age. The number of people of working age with care needs is also growing. Many of us in this House will know the pain and difficulty of helping a loved one who needs constant care or faces dementia. Such pressures bring long-term challenges, and we must ensure that both the NHS and our social care system can respond to the challenges we face.”

“...I will now turn to the long-term funding pressures. The lifetime care costs of a 65-year-old today are about £45,000 on average, but those total average costs that people face are not distributed evenly. Some people face no care costs at all, whereas the care costs for someone with dementia who lives into their 90s can run into hundreds of thousands of pounds. As a society, that is the challenge we face, yet right now there is no way to predict or insure this potential financial burden. We are committed to ensuring that everyone has access to the care and support they need. However, as has always been the case, that must be based on the principle of shared responsibility. With

	<p><i>sensible planning, people should not have to fear the risk of losing everything. The adult social care Green Paper, which will be published later this year, will bring forward a range of ideas to address the long-term challenge. We want to learn from what has been proven to work, with one example being the auto-enrolment pension reforms, which have been taken forward on a cross-party basis over a decade. The rate of opting out has been remarkably low, and this has put in place the foundations for the strengthening of our pensions system over time. The Green Paper will propose a range of options and ideas, learning from both the UK and from around the world..."</i></p> <p>To read more on the debate, please click on the link on the left.</p>
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Transport

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<p><u>Written question on whether assistive technology for BSL users is to be included in the aviation strategy</u></p>	<p>Bill Esterton MP (Labour, Sefton Central) asked:</p> <p><i>"The Secretary of State for Transport, whether assistive technology for users of British Sign Language is planned to be part of the aviation strategy."</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, Jesse Norman MP (Conservatives, Hereford and South Herefordshire) responded:</p> <p><i>"The Government has put passengers at the centre of the development of the Aviation Strategy. The Government recognises that it is important for the needs of all passengers, including those with less obvious disabilities such as hearing loss, to be addressed by airlines. Assistance for passengers with this and other hidden disabilities will be considered as part of the work on the strategy."</i></p>
<p><u>Written question on whether disability inclusive rail services will be included in future rail franchise agreements</u></p>	<p>Laura Smith MP (Labour, Crewe and Nantwich) has asked:</p> <p><i>"The Secretary of State for Transport, if he will take steps to ensure that provisions for disability inclusive rail services are included in future rail franchise agreements to enable disabled people to travel for (a) work and (b) pleasure."</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport, Nusrat Ghani MP (Conservatives, Wealdon) responded:</p> <p><i>"Our vision is for disabled people to have the same access to transport as everyone else, being able to travel confidently, easily and without extra cost. The Inclusive Transport Strategy, launched in July 2018, is the next step in our ambition to deliver accessible transport.</i></p> <p><i>In future rail franchise competition processes we will require bidders to provide enhanced services for those with accessibility needs including enhanced disability and equality awareness training for staff."</i></p>

Education

Click on link for source

<p><u>Written question on what assessment has been made of the adequacy of funding available to local authorities for specialist education services for deaf children</u></p>	<p>Thelma Walker MP (Labour, Colne Valley) has asked:</p> <p><i>“The Secretary of State for Education, what recent assessment he has made of the adequacy of funding available to local authorities for specialist education services for deaf children.”</i></p> <p>Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education, Nadhim Zahawi (Conservatives, Stratford on Avon) responded:</p> <p><i>“We want children with special educational needs and disabilities to be able to reach their full potential.</i></p> <p><i>Nationally, high needs funding has risen by £1 billion since 2013-14, to just under £6 billion in 2018-19. Allocations for individual local authorities can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/dedicated-schools-grant-dsg-2018-to-2019.</i></p> <p><i>However, we recognise that costs have increased which is why we are providing extensive support to schools to deliver the best value possible with available resources. This includes a high needs benchmarking tool to allow local authorities to compare their spending in this area.</i></p> <p><i>We are monitoring the impact of our national funding formula on high needs and are keeping the overall level of funding under review.”</i></p>
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Parliamentary terms

Early Day Motion (EDM)

Early Day Motions are formal motions for debate submitted by MPs in the House of Commons. There is usually no time available to actually debate an EDM, but they are useful for drawing attention to specific events or campaigns and demonstrating the extent of parliamentary support for a particular cause or point of view. MPs register their support by signing individual motions.

Oral Parliamentary Question (OPQ) and Written Parliamentary Question (WPQ)

Parliamentary Questions are used by both MPs and Peers to question Ministers in the House of Commons and the House of Lords. They are used to seek information, and Ministers are obliged to explain and defend the work, policy, decisions and actions of their departments, oral questions can also be used to make political points. Parliamentary questions are a vital tool in holding the Government to account. The Prime Minister answers oral questions from the House of Commons every Wednesday at midday.

Debates

Both the House of Commons and the House of Lords hold debates in which Members discuss government policy, proposed new laws and current issues. All debates are recorded in a publication called 'Hansard' which is available online or in print.

All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG)

All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) are informal groups composed of politicians from all political parties. They provide an opportunity for cross-party discussion and co-operation on particular issues. All-party groups sometimes act as useful pressure groups for specific causes helping to keep the Government, the opposition and MPs informed of parliamentary and outside opinion.

Select Committees

House of Commons Select Committees exist to scrutinise the work of government departments. Most committees have about 11 members and reflect the relative size of each party in the Commons. They conduct enquiries on a specific issue, and gather evidence from expert witnesses. Findings are reported to the Commons, printed, and published on the Parliament website. The Government then usually has 60 days to reply to the committee's recommendations.

Written ministerial statements

Government ministers can make written statements to announce:

- The publication of reports by government agencies
- Findings of reviews and inquiries and the government's response
- Financial and statistical information
- Procedure and policy initiatives of government departments

Private Members' Bills

Private Members' Bills allow backbench MPs or Peers to introduce their own legislation. There are three types of Private Members' Bills introduced into the House of Commons:

- **Ballot Bills:** A ballot is held at the beginning of each parliamentary year the 20 MPs whose names come out top are allowed to introduce legislation on a subject of their choice.
- **Ten Minute Rule Bills:** The sponsoring MP is given a slot in which they may make a speech lasting up to 10 minutes in support of his or her bill
- **Presentation Bill:** a Member is not able to speak in support of it and it stands almost no chance of becoming law