

Dear Sir,

The continuing rollout of Universal Credit, ignoring the protests from claimants that it is causing hardship, and reduced payouts to disabled people, is yet another indication of the contempt that the disadvantaged, sick and disabled people are held by the government.

I have tried to speak to the Universal Credit offices but after being on hold for 55 minutes several times I had to give up.

Claimants not only have to claim online but also manage their account online. What happens with people who can't afford computers or smartphones and can't afford the Internet?

Many people of the older generations have no IT skills because these were not taught in schools then. What about people who are housebound and can't access the Internet by going to the library or Internet cafes etc? How many people will therefore be unable to claim and fall through the net supposedly in place to protect those who are most vulnerable and in need of assistance?

Universal Credit comes at a time when sick and disabled people have already been severely penalised by social care cuts. Personally, I am being driven to despair by these cuts which mean that not only am I struggling with not enough hours with my carer, there is no provision for enough assistance to go out, even to my local High Street. I have been housebound for four years and I don't know how much longer I can survive like this.

Perhaps the government is trying to force us all to commit suicide and therefore ease the "burden" that they consider us to be.

It is obvious that sick and disabled people are not deemed worthy of consideration and compassion by this government nor to have the right to lead fulfilling lives. This attitude is also exhibited by many in local government, some staff of whom have told me that I should just be grateful that I get anything.

As a benefit claimant I am made to feel unworthy, patronised, marginalised and undermined. I don't want to be pitied, I want to be enabled with the appropriate resources to lead a fulfilling life and considered a valuable part of society.

Yours faithfully,

Efrosyni Hobbs.