



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

November 2018

Dear Constituent,

Thank you for contacting me about people with cancer who claim Universal Credit (UC).

I believe it is crucial that people who suffer from health conditions such as cancer should receive as much support as possible to help reduce stress and anxiety.

I realise that there are people who may struggle with access to the benefits system, which is why £200 million has been invested in Universal Support. From April 2019 it will be delivered by the independent charity Citizens Advice, to support people with every step of making a new UC claim. All Jobcentres across the UK have free Wi-Fi and there are more than 8,000 computers available to support customers with making their claim online. If someone cannot get online then there is a Freephone UC helpline.

There are safeguards in place to ensure people with a terminal illness can access UC more quickly. Any household that needs it will be able to access a full month's payment as an advance within five days of applying and the repayment period will be increased to 16 months from 2021. If someone is in immediate need, then their payment would be fast tracked, so that they receive it on the same day. The initial seven-day waiting period has been removed so that entitlement to UC starts on the first day of the application.

There is also the Special Rules for Terminal Illness procedure, which allows people with terminal illnesses to be fast-tracked without the need for a face-to-face assessment.

I hope this reassures you of the protections in place for people with cancer and other health conditions, and I will continue to support improvements when necessary.

Thank you again for taking the time to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris'.

**CHRIS HEATON-HARRIS MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR DAVENTRY**

Tel: 020 7219 7048 Fax: 020 7219 1375
Email: chris.heatonharris.mp@parliament.uk
Website: www.heatonharris.com