

3.10 Deputy S.Y. Mézec of the Minister for Social Security regarding the financial support available to 18 to 25 year olds who live with their parents and who have a diagnosed mental illness: [1(133)]

What financial support, if any, is available to 18 to 25 year-old persons who live with their parents and who have a diagnosed mental illness that prevents them from becoming financially independent through work; have not made any social security contributions; and do not qualify for one of the higher levels of personal care award?

Deputy S.J. Pinel (The Minister for Social Security):

I have previously answered a very similar oral question during the sitting of Monday, 26th September 2016. I explained that a young person who qualifies for one of the higher levels of the personal care award is entitled to make their own income support claim while for those with less serious conditions, financial assistance through the income support scheme is available, providing that they are a member of a low-income household. Alongside financial assistance, Back to Work offer specialist assistance to help people into work. Where long-term illness or disability represents a significant barrier to employment, we have dedicated specialists who have specific experience of working with mental health and other conditions and can support the management of such conditions. We also work closely with colleagues in the health service and the Jersey Employment Trust to determine the best approach for the individual customer. The support is available as needed and is not restricted to people with personal care awards.

3.10.1 Deputy S.Y. Mézec:

A supplementary? Is the Minister aware that there are individuals who do suffer very badly from serious mental illnesses but for whatever reason do not qualify for the personal care award, who, because of their age and the fact that their families are just over the threshold for income support, are not able to receive any support whatsoever, are entirely dependent on their parents who may not be very wealthy, or only just above that threshold for income support, who are left completely unsupported by the State? Does she not agree that scope for who is supported by Social Security should be increased and that there needs to be a re-look at the criteria for what sort of mental illnesses are able to apply for that personal care award?

Deputy S.J. Pinel:

As I have said, it is people applying for help through income support otherwise we would not necessarily know about them. But I do perceive that as this is the second time the Deputy has asked this particular question that if he has a constituent with a personal issue then perhaps he would like to speak to me or the department privately at a later time.

[11:00]