

Kirstene Hair MP
Member of Parliament for Angus



HOUSE OF COMMONS
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Research into Arthritis treatment

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Thank you for contacting me about arthritis. I know this can be a very painful and debilitating condition.

I completely agree that aids and adaptations can greatly enhance the quality of life for people with arthritis. An independent review of the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG), which supports disabled people on low-incomes, has recently been completed. You may be pleased to know this review considered how the DFG may need to adapt to changing innovation and technology in the aids and adaptations market. The Department of Health and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is now analysing these recommendations, and I look forward to studying their conclusions.

Funding for the DFG has increased from £220 million in 2015 to 2016 to £431 million in 2017 to 2018, and will rise further to £505 million by 2019 to 2020. However, I recognise there is more to do. Clinical guidelines for arthritis currently highlight the importance of self-management, and to help patients manage their condition, and live as independently as possible.

I also know that the Department for Work and Pensions ensures that people with arthritis applying for Personal Independence Payments are able to specify whether they need specific aids to help them with daily, physical tasks - making sure that they get the right support to improve their quality of life while maintaining their independence.

Once again I thank you for taking the time to contact me on this issue. I look forward to the Department of Health concluding their analysis of the independent reviews' recommendations, and hopefully further progress on this issue can be made on this issue.

Kind regards,

Kirstene Hair MP
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