Minister for Disabled People  
4th Floor  
Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
LONDON  
SW1H 9DA  
www.dwp.gov.uk

Jim Shannon MP  

11th March 2015

Dear Jim,

Department for Work and Pensions (DWP): Supporting vulnerable young people

During the 24th February debate on Mental Health and Unemployment, I said I would respond to a query you raised about how DWP supports vulnerable young people and works in partnership with the Prince’s Trust.

The DWP and The Prince’s Trust have worked in partnership since 2007 with the purpose of increasing the numbers of young people into sustainable employment. This is achieved through closer joint working between both organisations, by helping Jobcentre Plus’ claimants aged 16-30 to access The Prince’s Trust programmes and retain their benefit where they continue to meet existing benefit regulations and legislation.

Together, we aim to ensure that Jobcentre Plus customers can benefit from The Prince’s Trust offer, including The Prince’s Trust’s relationships with employers, enabling smooth transitions to the labour market. DWP has published adviser guidance and products on The Prince’s Trust provision and claimant referral to it. The partnership and guidance to frontline staff in both organisations is regularly reviewed by both organisations to accurately reflect changes of policy and legislation, and changes in The Prince’s Trust provision.

With the Department of Health, we jointly commissioned work to look at how we can achieve better employment and health prospects for people with common mental health problems who are in and out of work.

Based on the recommendations from that work, we took forward a number of voluntary pilots to explore the most promising approaches. The Psychological Wellbeing and Work pilots will contribute to a better evidence base for action, and will inform our thinking about next steps not only for government but for all who have a role to play including employers, commissioners, service providers and individuals.
As employability and skills policy is a devolved matter, the Department is working closely with the Devolved Governments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and the Devolved Governments will ensure that claimants will have access to appropriate tailored support.

I will place a copy of this letter in the House of Commons Library.

Your ever

Mark Harper MP

Minister of State for Disabled People