

## GENERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN 2019

# Candidates pledge

to ensure people who are terminally ill can access welfare benefits quickly and sensitively

### Executive summary

Following campaigning by the MND Association and Marie Curie, in July 2019 the Government announced it would review how the benefits system supports people who are terminally ill. The system isn't fit for purpose – 10 people die every day waiting for a decision on their disability benefits claim. This needs to change urgently.

We are calling on all candidates standing in the general election 2019 to commit to reform the welfare system for people diagnosed with a terminal illness.

### What is the problem with the current system?

The Special Rules for Terminal Illness is a fast-track route for accessing welfare benefits, with claimants receiving their payments quickly without having to fill in a long form or attend a face-to-face assessment. For Universal Credit, it also means claimants don't have to attend a work-focussed interview with a Work Coach.

However, only those who are likely to die within six months are eligible to claim under these rules. This unfairly excludes people with unpredictable terminal illnesses like motor neurone disease (MND).

### What's the solution?

We're calling on the next Government to scrap the six-month rule and replace it with the judgment of a clinical specialist. This policy change was passed by the Scottish Government in 2018 and received cross-party support. We want the same change enacted across the rest of the UK. Only then will everyone who is terminally ill be able to access benefits quickly and sensitively.

### How you can help

Please show your support by completing the pledge and tweet a photo of you holding it. Alternatively, please return to Tina Downs, MND Association, PO Box 246, Northampton, NN1 2PR or email [campaigns@mndassociation.org](mailto:campaigns@mndassociation.org) If you prefer, you can complete the online pledge at [www.mndassociation.org/s6mpledge](http://www.mndassociation.org/s6mpledge)

### For further information, please contact:

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I pledge to help people living with a terminal illness to access welfare benefits quickly and sensitively.

Name:

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Constituency:

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My message (optional):

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**#Scrap6Months**

## About Motor Neurone Disease

- Motor neurone disease (MND) is a fatal, rapidly progressing disease that affects the brain and spinal cord
- It attacks the nerves that control movement and can leave people locked in a failing body, unable to move, talk and eventually breathe
- MND kills 30% of people within 12 months and more than 50% within two years of diagnosis
- Six people a day die from MND in the UK
- Some people may experience changes in thinking and behaviour, with a proportion experiencing a rare form of dementia
- It affects up to 5,000 adults in the UK at any one time
- It has no cure

## About the MND Association

The MND Association is the only national organisation supporting people affected by motor neurone disease in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, with approximately 90 volunteer-led branches and 3,000 volunteers.

The MND Association's vision is of a world free from MND. Until that time, we will do everything we can to enable everyone with MND to receive the best care, achieve the highest quality of life possible and to die with dignity.

To find out more about MND please visit our website at [www.mndassociation.org](http://www.mndassociation.org) or follow us on Twitter @mndcampaigns #Scrap6Months #MND

### Motor Neurone Disease Association

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