

Fund M.E./C.F.S. Research, Fix the DWP, and Unlock Hundreds of Thousands Back to Work

Thursday 27 November, 2025

Chancellor Rachel Reeves' Autumn Budget repeatedly referenced "working people," yet this terminology fails to reflect the reality that many disabled people, including those on PIP, are also in employment. Stripy Lightbulb CIC challenges the Government's continued use of labels such as "economically inactive" for those living with M.E./C.F.S. No one is economically inactive: every individual contributes to the economy through spending, consumption, and participation in society.

Reeves claimed Universal Credit reforms will bring 15,000 people back into work. Stripy Lightbulb CIC argues that adequately funding biomedical research into M.E./C.F.S could enable hundreds of thousands to regain health and return to employment, a far greater impact than the measures announced.

Sally Callow, Managing Director of Stripy Lightbulb CIC states:

"Talented and highly skilled people are being forced to watch from the sidelines after M.E./C.F.S. has taken them out of the workforce. Without treatments or a cure, they have no realistic hope of returning to employment, and that is a loss both to them and to the wider economy."

We also call attention to the inefficiencies and waste within the Department for Work and Pensions. The DWP's complex, fragmented systems and deliberately burdensome processes deter people from accessing the support they need. If the Government is serious about cutting costs, it should begin by cleaning up its own house.

Our message is clear:

- Stop dismissing disabled and chronically sick communities as "inactive."
- Invest in research to unlock long-term workforce participation.
- Reform the DWP to deliver efficiency and fairness.

Stripy Lightbulb CIC urges the Government to adopt a genuine long-term strategy for the disabled and chronically sick communities, one that recognises everyone's contribution to the economy and creates real pathways back to work.

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