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Rt Hon David Gauke MP  
Secretary of State for Work and Pensions  
Caxton House  
Tothill Street  
London  
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7<sup>th</sup> September 2017

*Dear David,*

The Scottish Government's Programme for Government 2017-18 was announced by the First Minister on 5<sup>th</sup> September in the Scottish Parliament. The Programme contains the Scottish Government's priorities for the year ahead, and a key commitment is the extension of Free Personal Care to all those under the age of 65 who are assessed as needing it.

Following the introduction of Free Personal Care for over 65s in 2002, the UK Government chose to withhold from Scotland Attendance Allowance payments from self-funding residents in care homes. This has now resulted in the Scottish Government spending an additional £600m to mitigate against those benefits being withdrawn.

I am writing to seek an absolute assurance from the UK Government that when Free Personal Care is extended to under 65s, that there will be no reduction in the level of benefits received by those self-funders in residential care in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and Personal Independence Payments (PIP) before these benefits transfer to the Scottish Government.

In Scotland the extension of Free Personal Care to under 65s has cross-party support, including the Scottish Conservative Party, in implementing this change. I would hope that the UK Government will not ignore the strong support for this policy in the Scottish Parliament.

I look forward to working constructively with you to ensure that vulnerable people in Scotland benefit from these policies and are not adversely affected by any interactions between our extension of Free Personal Care to under 65s who require it, and the existing Social Security system.

*Best wishes,  
Shona*

**SHONA ROBISON**