**{YOUR FULL ADDRESS}**

**{YOUR POSTCODE}**

**{DATE}**

Dear **{MP NAME}**,

My name is **{YOUR NAME}** and I am a constituent of [**{FIND YOUR CONSTITUENCY ONLINE}**](https://members.parliament.uk/).

I am writing to you to raise my concerns about the impact that the cost-of-living crisis is having on me and the millions of people affected by epilepsy in the UK.

633,000 people in the UK have epilepsy, and only 42% are currently in employment. This is among the lowest employment rates for disabled people in the UK. [Research by the Trade Union Congress (TUC)](https://www.tuc.org.uk/research-analysis/reports/disability-employment-and-pay-gaps-2019) has also highlighted that people with epilepsy in work are paid on average 11.8% less than non-disabled workers. This means that not only are people with epilepsy less likely to have a paid job, but when they do, they earn less than their non-disabled peers.

Many people with epilepsy have struggled to successfully apply for Personal Independence Payments (PIP). The current PIP assessment process is not working for people with epilepsy. The process does not properly assess the impact epilepsy has on an individual’s daily life, and it is not able to capture and reflect the nature of epilepsy. Too many people with epilepsy are not successful in their initial assessment for PIP and have to go through the appeals system to get the support they should be entitled to.

On top of this, people applying for employment support through the Access to Work scheme are facing huge delays. These delays are having a huge impact on people with disabilities trying to stay in employment, with many forcing to quit due to not receiving the support they need in a timely fashion.

The disadvantages that people with epilepsy face in both finding employment and getting sufficient support through the welfare system, mean that they are particularly vulnerable to the impact of the cost-of-living crisis.

Inflation is now at 10.5%, with energy bills and food prices that have made the cost of life unbearable for many people with disabilities, who have seen benefit payments increasing only by 3.1% so far. This is despite research showing that extra costs faced by disabled people add up to £583 a month on average.

And while the government has guaranteed that benefits will rise with inflation from April, the cost-of-living crisis isn’t slowing down, and people with epilepsy have to face health-related consequences that are worsening their quality of life.

People with epilepsy are experiencing more seizures as a result of the stress caused by this situation – many are skipping meals, or not turning on their heating.

**{PLEASE EXPLAIN YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS AND EPILEPSY}**

As my MP, I am asking you to support the work of Epilepsy Action to ensure that action is taken so that people with epilepsy are given the support they need to find and stay in work, and successfully claim for support through the welfare system.

I would be very grateful if you could:

• Share your support for Epilepsy Action’s #CostOfEpilepsy campaign on your social media

• Write to the Chancellor and Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to raise these issues related to employment for disabled people

• Ask the Chancellor to create social tariffs for energy bills, to help vulnerable people facing high energy costs, and to reverse eligibility changes to the Warm Home Discount that currently excludes 210,000 disabled people from applying

• Urge the Government to increase the maximum income for Carer’s Allowance and allow those who claim it to also claim their State Pension, as many pensioners continue to care for their loved ones past their retirement age

Please keep me informed of any progress made.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,