

PE1683/K

Petitioner and TAMBA Submission of 29 August 2019

Many thanks for giving TAMBA and I (joint response) the chance to respond to the recent submissions.

We would like to note the following points:-

1) Not targeting vulnerable groups, such as families with multiples, when the Scottish Child Payment is introduced - this appears to be in conflict with the Department of Health and Social Care's application of proportional universalism <http://www.healthscotland.scot/reducing-health-inequalities/take-the-right-actions> Whilst welcome in that it will help many families in significant need, it may lead to embedding existing inequalities that are already acutely felt by families with multiples.

2) Could you please confirm if a specific modelling was carried out, based on introducing a £10 top up for all families with multiples to see this impact? Whilst the impact on families with multiples would be very significant, the potential work of both planning for and implementing alongside the cost to the public purse is very low.

3) a number of issues flagged at the first session are yet to be addressed - eg please see our initial response dated 24th May 2018:

"A similar proportion of multiple birth children live in 'poor' households as other families. However a higher number of families with twins more generally have lower average incomes, sit just above the poverty level, experience greater financial distress, are more likely to be behind on their bill payments, and their children are more likely to go without.

Our families are more likely to have a parent in work but are far less likely to have both parents working. This means they are less able to work their way out of poverty. This appears to be as a result of the costs and availability of childcare, which deters many mothers from returning to work. Unlike other families the costs of childcare cannot be spread across a number of years.

Parents in these families are also more likely to experience relationship breakdown. Financial difficulties can be a contributory factor. Not only do these families go without, but the children miss life opportunities, while many mothers report their absence from the work place undermines their careers and they never recover."

We will look forward to hearing more about how families with multiples will be specifically targeted and how those who do not fit in the low income bracket will be supported at this financially, physically and emotionally difficult time for many.