Home Office: Immigration: EU Nationals

Written Answer

Sarah Wollaston Chair, Health and Social Care Committee, Chair, Liaison Committee (Commons), Chair, Liaison Committee

To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what support is available for EU citizens with (a) dementia and (b) other similar health conditions when applying for settled status given the possibility that they may have lost the necessary paperwork.

Brandon Lewis The Minister of State, Home Department

The EU Settlement Scheme is designed to make it simple and straightforward for EU citizens and their family members to apply to stay in the UK after we leave the EU. We are looking for reasons to grant status, not reasons to refuse, and the scheme is performing well.

The Home Office has put in place a comprehensive vulnerability strategy to ensure that the EU Settlement Scheme is accessible for all, including those requiring someone to make an application on their behalf. We are also engaging with relevant stakeholders, such as the Department for Health and Social Care, the Local Government Association, the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services and the Devolved Administrations, to assess the needs of vulnerable groups and ensure they are met.

The Home Office has introduced a range of support for applicants, including assisted digital support at around 300 locations across the UK and the EU Settlement Scheme Resolution Centre, open seven days a week, to provide help and information by telephone and e-mail. We have also provided up to £9 million of grant funding to 57 voluntary and community organisations across the UK to enable them to mobilise services targeted at vulnerable EU citizens.

Regarding specific support for (a) those with dementia and (b) other similar health conditions, such as those without mental capacity, the Home Office has designed a scheme that allows applicants to consent to an appropriate third party to apply on their behalf. This means that care givers, family members and friends can provide the necessary assistance to those who need it.

The Home Office is aware that a range of vulnerable applicants may face significant challenges in securing evidence to support their application. For this reason, we will in such circumstances accept a range of evidence of identity and residence on behalf of an applicant, working with the person making the application to establish the applicant's eligibility based on all the evidence available. Caseworkers are trained to exercise discretion in the applicant's favour where appropriate.

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