

Man died on his way home from Job Centre 'after being found fit to work'

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Siobhan Fenton Social Affairs Correspondent

20/01/2017

A man has died on his way home from a benefits appointment six months after being declared 'fit to work', his family have claimed.

Lawrence Bond, 56, suffered a fatal heart attack last week after leaving Kentish Town Jobcentre.

Mr Bond said he suffered from extensive long-term health problems, including breathing difficulties and reduced mobility.

His Employment and Support Allowance had been cut following a work capability assessment which found he was fit to work. He had submitted two appeals against the ruling and was awaiting the outcome of the second appeal at the time of his death.

His sister Iris Green says Mr Bond had been required to attend a meeting at the benefits centre and arrived in a state of clear "physical distress", on the day of his death. [She told *The Camden New Journal*](#), staff faced an "awful dilemma" after realising he appeared ill but requiring him to attend the appointment. She says he died while making his way home from the meeting.

She said: "I realise that the reception staff have no clinical knowledge or responsibility for doing it, but the rules need to be changed so that they have the right and discretion when they see a human being turning up in physical distress to flag the situation up and ask for urgent re-assessment.

"The main thing is that they have the means to make sure this doesn't happen again. We have such a tick-box society. If we can change that, then people can flag things up and really help someone."

A spokesperson for the Department for Work and Pensions said: "The local Jobcentre had been supporting Mr Bond and our sympathies are with his family at this difficult time.

"ESA decisions are made following a thorough assessment and after considering all of the evidence, including that provided by a claimant's doctor or other medical professionals. Anyone who disagrees with a decision can ask for it to be reconsidered, and if they still disagree they can appeal."

Of course those wrongly found fit to work and too unstable to appeal may die.

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Man ruled 'fit for work' dies from heart attack on way home from Jobcentre



Lawrence Bond

Published: 18 January, 2017
By WILLIAM McLENNAN

A MAN collapsed and died in the street after being ruled “fit to work” and forced to sign on.

Lawrence Bond, 56, suffered a fatal heart attack shortly after leaving Kentish Town Jobcentre on Thursday. His sister, Iris Green, said that he was in obvious “physical distress” when he arrived at the offices in Kentish Town Road, adding that staff are faced with an “awful dilemma”.

“I do feel really sorry for the people who dealt with him,” said Ms Green. “They face an awful dilemma of being the people responsible for collecting signatures for people signing on as fit for work, even when they can see people are very sick.”

Mr Bond suffered from prolonged health problems, including difficulty with mobility and breathing, associated with being heavily overweight. But his incapacity benefit, now known as Employment and Support Allowance, was cut following a second “work capability assessment”, which was carried out by American private firm Maximus in July.

A subsequent appeal was turned down and Mr Bond was awaiting the outcome of a second appeal at the time of his death, his sister said.

Ms Green, said: “I realise that the reception staff have no clinical knowledge or responsibility for doing it, but the rules need to be changed so that they have the

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right and discretion when they see a human being turning up in physical distress to flag the situation up and ask for urgent re-assessment.”

Mr Bond, who lived in Gillies Street, went to visit a friend in Highgate after leaving the Jobcentre and was boarding the 214 bus in Highgate Road when he collapsed. Paramedics battled to revive him in the street, but he was pronounced dead at the scene.

His sister said: “I think he suffered from anxiety all his life, but held down regular jobs and was never out of work from the age of 16 when he trained as a car mechanic, then did computer studies and went to companies fixing computers, photocopiers, cash tills – so he had his van which he felt safe in – but, of course, his diet was shocking so he put on weight.

“He lost his last long-term job two years ago and by then his weight and unfitness made him unemployable.”

Ms Green said his health deteriorated while he was unemployed, adding: “His anxiety was getting worse as he could not pay bills and was afraid to leave home to go to the shops. Two referrals his GP had made for mental health services had been lost and he said he felt annoyed about that.”

“He functioned very well when he had a job, and money, and a van and functioned as a productive tax-paying member of society, but he was frustrated that, although he was an intelligent person, he could not seem to get his needs met.

“The main thing is that they have the means to make sure this doesn’t happen again. We have such a tick-box society. If we can change that, then people can flag things up and really help someone.”

A spokeswoman for the London Ambulance Service said: “We were called at 4.57pm on Thursday, 12 January, to reports of an incident at Highgate Road.

“We sent an ambulance crew, three single responders in cars and an advanced paramedic to the scene. The first of our medics arrived at the scene in under seven minutes.

“Sadly, despite the best efforts of our crews, a patient died at the scene.”

A spokesman for the Department for Work and Pensions said: “The local Jobcentre had been supporting Mr Bond and our sympathies are with his family at this difficult time.

“ESA decisions are made following a thorough assessment and after considering all of the evidence, including that provided by a claimant’s doctor or other medical professionals. Anyone who disagrees with a decision can ask for it to be reconsidered, and if they still disagree they can appeal.”

Tags: Camden New Journal Website Kentish Town Local News News

Comments

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 22:47.

Ms Greens comments are very

Ms Greens comments are very dignified and sensible

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 21:11.

Overstretched gp services

I too have been made unemployed through ill health , my gp, surgery no longer see patients , they prefer phone calls . so when i needed their support , they could not help , in fact i dont think they would know who i am face to face ! So my esa was stopped and i went to appeal and lost , so at present i am a 63yr old woman living on my savings , i am sure the government hope i die before i reach my state

pension , even though i paid national insurance for 47 yrs ! This story is tragic but all to common .

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 20:16.

What can you expect when a

What can you expect when a company gets paid according to the number of people it rejects. The pressure is put on Job Centre staff to keep to quotas otherwise they can be dismissed for not doing their job properly.

One way to fight back is for the staff to take strike action stating they should not be expected to put people's well-being and lives at risk.

Not sure if people are aware but the people doing the examination and asking health questions are not even medically trained. As the article said, it's all about box ticking.

What have we become? All of us are one bad illness away from being in this very situation.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 19:16.

Dla esa and pip. I think all these medicals should be scrapped

In my opinioi6these medicals should be scrapped for the disabled. If they were on dla then they should automatically be switched over to esa or pip. These so called medicals that ridicul the disabled are causing more physical and mental strain. That carnt help towards there well being. Most of the people who have had these so called medicals are having to appeal against there decision. It's a joke just a month eye scam to kick people off disability the government aren't interested in anyone's illness they just want to save money and cut disability. If anyone needs a cut in pay it's the government. Vote to scrap these ridiculous medicals.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 19:11.

Nobody knows when the hour will come...

My Dad was a GP. He told me "I never tell a patient he is healthy. I can never be sure he will not keel over and die as he walks out of the room."

But well done to all the amateur medics commenting here, who know the WCA was wrong. Clever you.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 18:08.

I'm so sorry for this man.

I'm so sorry for this man. Men and Women who should have had their pensions at 60 and who have worked all their lives are now waiting up to 66 yrs before they can get their pensions. Many suffer poor health and having to attend the job centre as well for capability assessments and found fit to work or lose their benefits ESA. They have to attend job clubs with 16 yr olds or face sanctions. My friend is having chemotherapy and still being forced to look for work and hasn't got the energy to attend. That's why I've joined WASPI 'women against pension injustice 'group who are now taking a legal case against the government. Please check your pension age as you might be surprised as women are not being told of the age increase.

This poor man's pension pot will pay for those who refuse to work !
My condolences to this family but sadly it's happening elsewhere.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 13:14.

Thorough assessment my a##e!!

I am in a similar position as this gentleman. I went for a WCA a few weeks ago and told them that along with my original condition for which I'd been receiving ESA, I had just been for an angiography which has revealed that I required a triple cardiac bypass surgery with three narrowed heart arteries and the added complication of an aneurysm in one of them. A life threatening condition in anyone's book. Guess what.... I was found fit for work and expected to apply for jobs and attend interviews up to 90mins travelling distance away.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 12:59.

How can he appeal if he's

How can he appeal if he's dead, DWP?

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 12:46.

ESA Deaths

My heart goes out to his family and friends, we have to have a better way of assessing fitness to work, no help in this situation but there are better ways. I have worked on benefits cases since 1996 and never (Well rarely) lost an Incapacity Benefit appeal and often got people another disability benefit too (Showing the right are doesn't know what the left is doing.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 12:18.

Life Choices caused his death, not capability assessment

It is clear from the article that his own Life Choices caused his death, not the capability assessment - the assessment was 6 months before his heart attack

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Fri, 2017-01-20 00:33.

Own Life Choices ??

You're being presumptuous. Arriving at such a judgement based on your own disregard for inconvenient facts is called "pre- judgement," also called "prejudice."
Do you really want to appear this way ?
Before you presumptively judge me, for this comment, re-read the article with an open mind and you'll see that you have ignored issues which far from lead to the conclusion you originally arrived at.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 16:54.

No it does not.

Read again :

Mr Bond suffered from prolonged health problems, including difficulty with mobility and breathing, associated with being heavily overweight. But his incapacity benefit, now known as Employment and Support Allowance, was cut following a second “work capability assessment”, which was carried out by American private firm Maximus in July.

including difficulty with mobility and breathing, associated with being heavily

overweight.

It was the "prolonged health problems" that caused his death as pointed out his weight gain was after his loss of employment.
The DWP ARE to blame as they are in hundreds of other cases, dont blame the individual blame the cost cutting expense guzzling bunch that are running this country.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 16:45.

Thoughts go to family and friends

So very sad, but what you say is true, DWP or the government cannot be blamed for this poor mans condition

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 16:14.

Insensitive

Are you totally devoid of intelligence and compassion? Nobody said that the WCA caused his heart attack. What it does show is that the WCA is a farce and he shouldn't have been found "fit-for-work" As for your crass, insensitive "lifestyle choices" remark. I will remind you have something Jesus said. "Judge not lest ye be judged" and "He who is without sin cast the first stone." Think on that and in the meantime try and acquire some humanity and compassion.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 20:07.

Above

Absolutely right.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 16:13.

Life choices!

Perhaps you do not mean to be judgemental and unkind but if you read the article, you surely will understand that this poor man had problems. He could function quite well when he had a job but became anxious and insecure when he was not in work. He had had two mental health referrals from his doctor, which somehow became lost.
Do you really think he made life choices. When you're in a difficult and stressful position, you cannot always think of eating what is best for you or exercising. He needed help not judgement. He probably ate badly because he was anxious and needed help. This attitude of it being the victim's fault because of the choices he made is exactly the divisive attitude that successive governments have been promoting. While we're busy criticising and judging each other, we forget the poverty and low living standards that they have created for the 98% of the population that don't fall into the mega-wealthy category.
We need to have a change of heart and start to share wealth more equally and to realise that caring for each other and making each other's lives better will lead to a socially just, happier and healthier society.
My sympathy goes to his family and friends.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 10:49.

A spokesman for the

A spokesman for the Department for Work and Pensions said: "The local Jobcentre had been supporting (YES THEY SAID SUPPORTING)

Mr Bond and our sympathies

(SYMPATHIES ARE REDUNDANT WHEN SOMEONE IS DEAD... SYMPATHY AND EMPATHY AND SOME DIGNITY NO DOUBT WOULD HAVE BEEN VERY WELCOME BY THIS GENTLEMAN AND HIS FAMILY WHEN HE STILL HAD A CHANGE TO LIVE)

are with his family at this difficult time.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 09:49.

I DanielBlake

This is so disgusting when will solicitors start to fight for the injustice in this country, so someone should be held accountable for these decisions. He obviously was unwell , watched I Daniel Blake the guy collapsed and died at his assessment , so very sad makes me wanna swear, this government are so utterly disgusting what they doing to sick , disabled people in society. Hope karma come soon and people should be being sued for making lies and false statements about people. Never have I seen so much immoral stuff in my life and I am nearly 50 years old. We need change and the ones at the job centre could lose there jobs too if they close them down to save money. They have caused so much division against people working and ones who are unemployed. We all need to come together no one knows what the future holds for any of us

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 08:11.

Man dies after signing on

Look at that stupid standard reply from the dwp. Totally insensitive. If I were that family I'd sue Maximus the dwp and gov. The health assessors and dwp have become really crooked under the tories in order to get people on lowest amount of money.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 08:09.

Look at that stupid standard

Look at that stupid standard reply from the dwp. Totally insensitive. If I were that family I'd sue Maximus the dwp and gov. The health assessors and dwp have become really crooked under the tories in order to get people on lowest amount of money.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 01:51.

Ian Duncan-Smith is responsible!

“ESA decisions are made following a thorough assessment and after considering all of the evidence, including that provided by a claimant’s doctor or other medical professionals. Anyone who disagrees with a decision can ask for it to be reconsidered, and if they still disagree they can appeal.”

How can he appeal the decision?!... HE IS DEAD! If the assessment was so thorough, how come he died of a heart attack on the day he was deemed fit for work. Clearly he was not fit. WAS HE, YOU STUPID BUNCH OF GOVERNING TERRORISTS?!

Mr Ian Duncan-Smith and the Tory government have their hands soaked in the blood of thousands of victims.

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 23:26.

IDS or GB

Which government introduced ESA? Labour
Which government introduced the WCA? Labour
Which government contracted out the WCA to Atos? Labour

[reply](#)

Submitted by Anonymous on Thu, 2017-01-19 22:42.

Work capability assessment

I had a WCA in September last year and was found fit for work, 17 years ago the DWP decided that I was disabled and sick, I had a mandatory reconsideration/appeal and I was given my ESA back after 70 days of living on only my disability money, the health care professional (HCP) said I was mentally fit for work and I had no mental health problems....the HCP never once asked me anything about my mental health/illness because if he did then I would have told him, but he lied and said I was fit (mentally) .mental health is a vital part of the WCA and it was only when my psychologist wrote to the DWP then they had to reinstate my benefits,this HCP was not qualified to assess me on mental health issues so that in anyone's language is WRONG!!

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