

To whom it may concern,

I would like to express my concern about the government's plan to cut our sessions from 18 to 10.

I suffered from post natal depression after two of three of my children, mostly stemming from the lack of support I had from my husband and family.

After my third child, I was struggling to regain my value to the community. I had given up a stressful, but well paying job to spend more time with my family and felt unappreciated by my husband to the sacrifice I'd made, especially given he was unable to keep a similar paying job which made our standard of living drop significantly and family stress levels increase, especially given the current economical climate.

Having seen my GP and placed on anti-depressants, I was referred to a psychologist using the mental health scheme and being diagnosed with moderate depression, I was able to start making inroads into feeling worthy again. I was able to identify what caused my feelings of distress and urges to hurt myself (just to have a break from my life) and also be able to focus on what I wanted from my marriage.

At the end of my allocated sessions, my psychologist was unsure as to my readiness to leave therapy, however I was feeling better and was unable to afford further sessions. Several months later though, having separated from my husband, and finally moving into rented accommodation with my children, I was in need of reassurance that what I was doing was the right thing to do. I had to wait though, until sufficient time had passed before I could apply for further sessions with my psychologist. During this time I remained on anti-depressant medication and also became dependant on alcohol, so I required significant therapy to reach a similar level to when I had previously finished my allocated sessions.

It takes several sessions to pinpoint what factors are causing the problems; especially given I was very hesitant to revealing details to my therapist. Having a limit on the number of sessions places additional pressures on someone who is already struggling mentally with their life. At times I felt I had to rush through certain aspects so my therapist had the complete picture. Especially given how emotional I was, I would forget things and then blurt them out at the end after we'd run out of time. Some things we were unable to delve into due to the limited timeframe. I therefore have ongoing issues that haven't been addressed. I still drink too much alcohol but am too scared to give it up while my life is so demanding. I hope I can return to therapy soon, WITHOUT any time pressures that place additional stress on an already tenuous situation.