Dear Sir, Madam;

Re: Consultation on ‘The Disabled People’s Right to Control (Pilot Scheme) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2012

Disability Rights UK aims to be the largest pan-disability user-led organisation in the UK. Sue Bott, our Director of Development, sits on the Right to Control Advisory Group.

We are writing in response to the consultation on the extension of the Right to Control pilots. We agree to the extension and we are taking this opportunity to raise a few key issues in relation to the promotion of the Right to Control objectives and the evaluation of the pilots.

The Right to Control is about transforming disabled people’s lives and giving them real control over the support that they need to enable them to play a full and equal part in society. This was supported by all political parties when the Welfare Reform Bill was going through parliament in 2008.

We call on the Department for Work and Pensions to explicitly recognise this objective and promote this strongly and consistently, within their department as well as across government.

We hope that this will be used as an opportunity to ensure that the evaluation process will be co-produced with disabled people. ‘Nothing about us, without us’ also means that researchers works with disabled people, and in particular the disabled people’s organisations who have participated in the pilots, to shape and review the evaluation (and that disabled people are not just involved as respondents only).
We are also looking for an assurance that in looking at the cost/benefits of the Right to Control, the Department for Work and Pensions will take full account of the outcomes achieved. There needs to be a recognition that even where there are no direct savings from the pilots (although we would hope that there are some, especially in relation to reducing the bureaucracy) – the benefits in terms of freeing up disabled people so that they can access education and employment opportunities and play a full and equal part in society will bring longer-term savings as well as improve their quality of life.

Finally, we observe that the trailblazers have suffered from a lack of consistency and a change in DWP structures and civil service roles. We hope that for the time that is left for the project that there will be no more changes.

We would very much welcome a meeting with the Minister for Disabled People to discuss the Right to Control regulations. You can contact me at marije.davidson@disabilityrightsuk.org to arrange this meeting.

I look forward to your response to the issues raised in this letter.

Yours sincerely,

Marije Davidson
Policy and Research Manager

About Disability Rights UK
Disability Rights UK was formed through a merger of Disability Alliance, Radar and the National Centre for Independent Living on 1 January 2012. We aim to be the largest national pan-disability organisation led by disabled people. Our vision is of a society where everyone with lived experience of disability or health conditions can participate equally as full citizens.

Disability Rights UK’s objectives are:
- To mobilise disabled people’s leadership and control;
- To achieve independent living in practice;
- To break the link between disability and poverty; and
- To put disability equality and human rights into practice across society.