

QUESTION TIME

State Welfare System in the UK

History:

After the war, which highlighted that so many people were deprived and poor, the Liberal politician William Beveridge identified five issues that needed to be tackled to make a better Britain.

To achieve his aims, Beveridge proposed the introduction of a welfare state.

The proposal for a welfare state - the basics

In 1942, the Liberal politician William Beveridge, who the government set the task of discovering what kind of Britain people wanted to see after the war, declared that there were five "giants on the road to reconstruction":

1. poverty
2. disease
3. ignorance
4. squalor
5. idleness

To defeat these giants, he proposed setting up a welfare state with social security, a national health service, free education, council housing and full employment.

In the years after the war, the Labour government tried to make this vision come true.

Today these services are provided by the UK Government for those resident long term in the UK.

Like in the National Health Service, the aim of these benefits is to help individuals at particular times of need. The words 'From cradle to grave' used of the NHS could be equally well used for the State Welfare System.

The main Government Agency involved is the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP). Their website at <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/lifeevent/benefits/> gives more details on the different allowances etc, and the conditions to be fulfilled to receive them. In many cases, the allowances relate to the National Insurance contributions that you have paid.

The services provided relate to the age and situation of the individual. The main groups are listed below with the most common provisions listed for each:

Those of working age (16 – 65 years old)

- Jobseekers Allowance
- Statutory Sick Pay

Those of retirement age (Over 65 years old)

- State Pension
- Bereavement Payment

Families and children

- Statutory Maternity Pay
- Child Benefit

Disabled People

- Attendance Allowance
- Disability Living Allowance
- Carers Allowance