

# Benefits & Debt Advice Project

Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford CCG Q3 Oct – Dec 17



## Headline Figures

- £944,817 annualised benefit income realised for residents
- 970 individuals received benefits advice
- 86% of respondents reported improved mental wellbeing
- £563,338 total debt managed for 57 individuals
- 1,964 household members benefited from benefits and debt advice

## Helpline - 0333 344 0681

- 493 people contacted the helplines
- 927 different benefit enquiries dealt with
- PIP and ESA most common benefit enquiries
- 53% of callers lived in the most deprived wards
- 70% of callers had long term health conditions
- Depression and mobility issues most common long term health conditions

## Casework: Helping people with complex benefit issues

- 272 people received face to face casework support
- 65% of casework clients lived in the most deprived wards
- 69% of casework clients had long term health conditions

## Outreach Services: Advice delivered from a health or community setting

- 17 outreach sessions
- 6 outreach sessions delivered from a GP Practice or NHS location
- 35 people received advice at Outreach sessions
- 15 people identified as requiring Casework support
- 67% of people lived in the most deprived wards
- 94% of people had long term health conditions

## Target Groups

- 521 older people received advice to support their independence
- 133 people at risk from homelessness received benefits advice
- 695 people with long term health conditions received benefits and debt advice
- 159 families with children received benefits and debt advice

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## Expert Debt Service: For people with physical/mental health conditions

- 57 people supported with debt advice
- 7 debts per client
- £563,338 of debt managed for all clients
- £78,255 of debt written off
- 69% of people lived in most deprived wards

## Briefings, Presentations and Events

- 3 briefings to 22 East Sussex Better Together staff, including Frailty Teams, Health and Key Workers
- 2 briefings delivered to other organisations and 21 staff, volunteers and residents

## Benefits Awareness & Training

- 12 sessions delivered to organisations including Respiratory Physio groups, Council housing staff, foster carers and at learning disability events
- Over 300 staff, volunteers and residents received free awareness and training sessions

## ESBT Project Data – Staff & patient engagement and value for money

- 258 direct engagements with ESBT staff and patients including training sessions, health and social care professional referrals/enquiries, and number of people attending outreach sessions delivered from health locations
- Financial gains generated for Expert Service clients between October - December were £1,075,198
- For every £1 invested in our Expert Services we generated £25 in financial gains for our clients
- Helpline engagement costs are £12 per client

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## Development Work

- Participated in University of Brighton Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact workshop
- Reviewed current IMD Ward data to ensure valid and appropriate monitoring and reporting
- Benefits & Debt Advice Project (B&DAP) screen saver sent to ESCC Libraries
- New B&DAP leaflet produced and printed and delivered to health, social care, statutory and voluntary organisations and services
- Participated and contributed to Eastbourne Universal Credit network

## Case Study 1

Mrs T is 48 years old and recently moved because she could no longer manage the stairs at her previous property. She is now living in a bungalow which has had some adaptations and is wheelchair accessible.

The client suffers from Osteoarthritis, Fibromyalgia, depression and anxiety, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Eczema and High Blood Pressure. She is in constant pain and suffers from memory loss and brain fog. Her mobility is very poor and she mainly uses a wheelchair to get around.

Mrs T was awarded standard rate Personal Independence Payment (PIP). She asked for a Mandatory Reconsideration but the decision remained the same. The client's husband contacted the project asking for help with the appeal. Mrs T was very anxious about the appeal and the stress was impacting on her mental health. She was very depressed, had difficulty sleeping and her hair began to fall out. We assisted the client to prepare written evidence to send to the court in advance. The decision was revised and the client was awarded the enhanced rate of PIP for living and mobility components.

Mrs T now receives the correct benefits which enables her to maintain her independence. This relieves the physical burden on her husband, of relying on him whenever she needed to leave the house, and reduces the stress on them both. She will be able to make further adaptations to the bungalow which will further help her to maintain her independence. Mrs T said that she was very grateful for the practical help we provided, for listening to her and believing what she said.

If you would like further information on briefings, training or have any general enquiries contact:

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