

Benefits & Debt Advice Project

East Sussex Better Together

9 Months Apr - Dec 2017



Headline Figures

- £6,247,067 annualised benefit income realised for residents
- 7,141 individuals received benefits advice
- 82% of respondents reported improved mental wellbeing
- £3,465,389 total debt managed for 481 individuals
- 13,653 household members benefited from benefits and debt advice

Helpline - 0333 344 0681

- 4,749 people contacted the helplines
- 7,256 different benefit enquiries dealt with
- PIP, ESA and Universal Credit most common benefit enquiries
- 54% of callers lived in the most deprived wards
- 71% of callers had long term health conditions
- Depression and mobility issues most common long term health conditions

Casework: Helping people with complex benefit issues

- 2,190 people received face to face casework support
- 74% of casework clients lived in the most deprived wards
- 79% of casework clients had long term health conditions

Outreach Services: Advice delivered from a health or community setting

- 99 outreach sessions
- 76 outreach sessions delivered from a GP Practice or NHS location
- 306 people received advice at Outreach sessions
- 147 people identified as requiring Casework support
- 68% of people lived in the most deprived wards
- 94% of people had long term health conditions

Target Groups

- 1,874 older people received advice to support their independence
- 972 people at risk from homelessness received benefits advice
- 5,532 people with a long term health condition received benefits and debt advice
- 1,360 families with children received benefits and debt advice

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

- 481 people supported with debt advice
- 6 debts per client on average
- £3,465,389 of debt managed for all clients
- £936,837 of debt written off
- 83% of people lived in most deprived wards

Briefings, Presentations and Events

- 9 briefings to over 90 East Sussex Better Together Proactive Care & Frailty teams, health and key workers and Children's Services staff
- 24 briefings delivered to other organisations including Optivo, Orbit, Supported Housing services, council staff and self-help groups
- 197 staff, volunteers and residents

Benefits Awareness & Training

- 11 sessions delivered to health and social care organisations
- 86 staff and patients at respiratory physio groups and pain clinics
- 58 sessions delivered to other organisations including ASC older people's services, supported housing services and at learning disability events
- Over 1,100 staff, volunteers, carers and residents

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

- 899 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 secured for Expert Service clients between April - December were £2,587,803
- For every £1 invested in our Expert Services we generated £23 in financial gains for our clients
- Helpline engagement costs are under £12 per client

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Development Work

- Produced Universal Credit briefing paper for residents and professionals
- Presented at East Sussex Financial Inclusion Steering Group
- Reviewed current IMD Ward data to ensure valid and appropriate monitoring and reporting
- Introduced a new dedicated older people's service
- New B&DAP leaflet produced and printed and delivered to health, social care, statutory and voluntary organisations and services
- Met with Joseph Rowntree Foundation to discuss destitution and how B&DAP supports people to address health and financial factors
- Participated and contributed to Eastbourne Universal Credit network

Case Study

Miss T, 56, has a brain tumour, idiopathic hypersomnia, underactive thyroid, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, high blood pressure, fibromyalgia and osteoporosis. Client's whole body shakes, she can't sit down and when standing has to lean against a wall for support. The adviser visited the client at home. The house was crammed with items up to shoulder height. Food from a delivery was left on the table which should have gone into the fridge but client was not well enough to do this. The adviser talked to Miss T about her situation, and with her agreement made a referral to Adult Social Care via the ESCC website for an assessment. Miss T has had an assessment and received a number of follow-up visits.

Her Disability Living Allowance claim had ended but she had been too unwell to open post and didn't know that she had to make a new claim for Personal Independence Payment (PIP). There was also an unopened Employment Support Allowance (ESA) benefit form. The adviser completed both forms and explained the situation to the DWP so they wouldn't close the claim. Both PIP and ESA claims were successful.

The adviser also supported Miss T when the Motability scheme invoiced her for a period when she hadn't been receiving any benefits and was not well enough to drive the car. The adviser also spoke with the insurance company and obtained clarification on her insurance status.

Miss T is now in receipt of her full and correct benefit entitlement, has resolved the issue with the Motability scheme and is receiving support from Adult Social Care.

If you would like further information on briefings, training or have any general enquiries, contact: Barry Cooper - Project Manager | 07977336610 | barry.cooper@sussexcommunity.org.uk