

Benefits & Debt Advice Project

East Sussex Better Together

12 Months Apr 17 – Mar 18



Headline Figures

- £8,422,657 annualised benefit income realised for residents
- 10,097 individuals received benefits advice
- 80% of respondents reported improved mental wellbeing
- £4,416,643 total debt managed for 705 individuals
- 19,199 household members benefited from benefits and debt advice

Helpline - 0333 344 0681

- 6,774 people contacted the helplines
- 10,433 different benefit enquiries dealt with
- PIP, ESA and Universal Credit most common benefit enquiries
- 54% 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

- 2,933 people received face to face casework support
- 70% of casework clients lived in the most deprived wards
- 75% of casework clients had long term health conditions

Outreach Services: Advice delivered from a health or community setting

- 186 outreach sessions
- 103 outreach sessions delivered from a GP Practice or NHS location
- 497 people received advice at Outreach sessions
- 213 people identified as requiring Casework support
- 74% of people lived in the most deprived wards
- 91% of people had long term health conditions

Target Groups

- 2,758 older people received advice to support their independence
- 1,355 people at risk from homelessness received benefits advice
- 7,897 people with a long term health condition received benefits and debt advice
- 2,020 families with children received benefits and debt advice

Benefits & Debt Advice Project

East Sussex Better Together

12 Months Apr 17 – Mar 18



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

- 705 people supported with debt advice
- 6 debts per client on average
- £4,416,643 of debt managed for all clients
- £2,180,238 of debt written off
- 85% of people lived in most deprived wards

Briefings, Presentations and Events

- 11 briefings to 124 East Sussex Better Together Proactive Care & Frailty teams, health and key workers and Children's Services staff
- 30 briefings delivered to other organisations including Optivo, Orbit, Supported Housing services, council staff and self-help groups
- 217 staff, volunteers and residents

Benefits Awareness & Training

- 31 sessions delivered to health and social care organisations
- 218 staff and patients at respiratory physio groups and pain clinics
- 74 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

- 1,393 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 '17 and March '18 were £5,998,220
- For every £1 invested in our Expert Services we generated £24 in financial gains for our clients
- Helpline engagement costs are under £12 per client

Benefits & Debt Advice Project

East Sussex Better Together

12 Months Apr 17 – Mar 18



Development Work

- Produced Universal Credit briefing paper
- Reviewed current IMD Ward data to ensure valid and appropriate monitoring and reporting
- 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
- Working with University of Brighton on academic evaluation study
- Sent out project flyers with all Eastbourne Council Tax letters
- Produce business case for continuation funding for Expert Support Service and for additional Training Service hours
- Produced a B&DAP press release for NHS England

Case Study

Mr A is 58 years old and lives alone in privately rented accommodation in an area of high deprivation. He suffers from cancer, depression, arthritis and mobility issues.

Mr. A's Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) stopped following a work capability assessment. He had asked the Department for Work and Pensions to reconsider his case, but the request was denied. Mr. A attended a Benefits Project Outreach session seeking assistance to make an appeal. Mr. A was in financial crisis, had been visiting the local foodbank and all these factors were impacting on Mr. A's physical and mental health and wellbeing.

An advisor supported Mr. A to submit an appeal. Mr A was going to make an appointment with his GP to ask for a medical report. The advisor assured Mr A the evidence he already held and the facts of the case meant that this was not necessary.

Mr A's appeal was successful.

Mr A can now meet his daily living costs and no longer has the increased physical and mental health impact of getting to and from the foodbank. Mr A said his stress and anxiety levels had improved and he had begun to think more clearly.

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