

## **East Barnwell GP Practice**

The Outreach at East Barnwell has been running since May 2015, following a slow start it has become a busy and effective service that has seen some extremely positive outcomes for patients. We have seen 64 patients who have attended 83 appointments at the Service. Clients usually attend with multiple issues and we have recorded 128 advice subjects' areas for those patients, they can be broken down into the following areas:

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Total</b>
Housing	24
Debt	24
Benefits	35
Family and Relationships	11
Health and Community	12
Financial Capability	11
Consumer	3
Charitable Support	3
Employment	6
Education	1
Energy	3
Other	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>

This shows an average of 2.20 Advice areas per client who are attending the Service.

## **Referrals recorded**

Appointments are made by referral in the following ways:

GP = 36

Self-Referrals = 10

Reception = 3

Nurse = 1

Flu Clinic = 2 self-referrals

N.B Not all clients identified a referral process when presenting at the first appointments of the project.

Once the client has made contact with the Service and has been seen by an Adviser they can be referred for more specialist advice on debt and benefits if required.

For example, our Benefits Appeals Specialist has taken on two Social Security Appeals from clients who have attended the Service. In these cases it has been noted in medical evidence from the GP that the stresses of issues have a detrimental effect on the client's health and increase their time in the Practice.

Our involvement, support and where necessary representation on these issues helps improve a client's well-being, particularly mental well-being by taking the stress of dealing with the issues away. This in turn can decrease a client's reliance on GP support and decrease the frequency of appointments.

From these issues we can see below an extremely positive financial impact in the locality of the project. Again, these are mainly in the areas of debts being written off and clients

applying and being awarded benefits they are entitled too and undergoing Financial Education to help them manage household budgets.

Advice Area	Outcome	Number of Outcomes	Total £ amount recorded
Benefits & tax credits	Benefit / tax credit gain - a new award or increase	20	£77,134.20
	Benefit / tax credit maintained	2	£0
	Overpayment reduced/written off	1	£1119.05
	Improved health / capacity to manage	5	£0
Consumer goods & services	Improved health / capacity to manage	1	£0
Debt	Bankruptcy	1	£48,000
	Debts repaid	1	£475
	DRO - debt relief order	5	£30,626
	Financial situation stabilised / debts under control	1	£0
	Not recorded/not applicable	1	£0
Financial services & capability	Better deal with same supplier	1	£320
	Change to banking arrangements	1	£191
Health & community care	Able to access / engage in community activities	1	£0
	Free or reduced charges/costs	2	£90
	Health charges reduced or eliminated	1	£65
	Improved health / capacity to manage	3	£0
Housing	Improved health / capacity to manage	4	£0
	Other (non-financial)	2	£0
Other	Charitable payment	1	£150
	Improved health / capacity to manage	1	£0
	Non-financial	2	£0
	Personal Injury Compensation	1	£2250
Relationships & family	Improved health / capacity to manage	2	£0
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>£160,420.25</b>

This equates to an average income gain to each client of £2506.56. Although this is not a direct saving to the GP Practice, by clients making claims to entitled benefits and having debt issues solved it has a positive impact on them both individually and in the community.

The increased income and support clients potentially receive has a positive impact on their health and well-being which in turn decreases the reliance of the GP Practice support and pressure on available appointments.

We believe we deliver an invaluable service which has a positive impact on both the GP Practice staff and patients. As a newly developed project we have learnt a great deal in the first 7 months of the project and the service has evolved greatly since the start.

We are constantly reviewing all aspects of the Service including the referral process, marketing and how we can continue to ease the pressure on the staff at the Practice.

We would like to continue the Service at East Barnwell in order to build on the extremely positive work both ourselves and the Practice have done so far and extend to other GP

surgeries across the City. We have attached a budget sheet for this and also if the project was extended to other Practices in the locality.

## **CASE STUDIES from Wendy Eyles, Caseworker at East Barnwell**

### **CASE STUDY 1**

A retired couple came for advice at East Barnwell Health Centre. Mrs A has mental health issues, and is awaiting a psychiatric appointment. Mr A has recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. Neither of them receives disability benefits or support from care workers. They are local authority tenants. Both receive State Pensions and Mr A receives a small private pension from his previous employer.

They came to East Barnwell Health Centre with various issues apart from their health problems which needed addressing:

- 1) Debt – priority and non-priority – Priority debts are debts that relate to housing, rent, utilities etc.
- 2) Benefit Applications – Attendance Allowance, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction
- 3) Financial capability – clients need help with money management and will benefit from Financial Education
- 4) Garden – the garden is overgrown. Clients a large tree cut down and the lawn replaced with shingle for easy maintenance
- 5) NHS costs

### **DEBTS**

Clients have debts of approx. £12,000 so would be eligible for a Debt Relief Order (DRO) (debts are below £20,000). They have no assets and are not homeowners. Mrs A is able to understand the implications of a DRO but Mr A is not be able to comprehend them because of his Alzheimer's and because of the legal requirements we are unable to apply for a DRO for him. As some of the debts are in joint names we will look at applying for a DRO for Mrs A and requesting debt write offs for Mr A. I will help the clients to open a new basic bank account.

### **BENEFITS**

Mr A has recently been diagnosed with Alzheimer's. I completed an application for Attendance Allowance on his behalf. I will also help Mrs A claim Carers Allowance and look to see if she is entitled to Attendance Allowance due to her mental health problems.

Clients need help updating their Housing Benefit and Council Tax Reduction awards. I contacted Mr A's former employer to obtain a P60 for company pension details. The information will be forwarded to the Housing Benefit department to evidence his situation and entitlement.

### **FINANCIAL CAPABILITY**

Clients needed help with budgeting to avoid further debt. I contacted their internet/telephone/satellite provider and negotiated a reduction of £27.00pm. Clients now want help to switch provider for further savings. I also spoke to Cambridge Water and arranged to clear the balance of their water bill in four instalments.

## **GARDEN**

The clients cannot manage the garden; as a result it has become very overgrown. I provided Mrs A with a list of organisations who may be able to assist. A local gardener has agreed to remove the tree free of charge. He is now in touch with the local authority to see if they will pay him to tidy up the rest of the garden and replace the lawn with shingle for easy maintenance. Mrs A is very happy that the tree is going to be cut down as it is overgrown and affecting daylight into their property.

## **NHS COSTS**

Mr A lost an NHS hearing aid at home and was going to be charged £65 for a replacement. I rang the hospital audiology department who agreed to waive the fee on this occasion because of his memory loss. I have talked to Mrs A about keeping the hearing aid in a box when not in use so it can be found easily.

I will advise Mrs A on support she can access from the Alzheimer's Society to help manage Mr A's condition.

## **CASE STUDY 2**

Miss B is separated from partner and has three children under 14. She lives in local authority housing with debts of approx. £50,000. Her middle child is autistic and she has struggled to find respite care to enable her to spend quality time with the other children. She accrued non-priority debts during a difficult relationship with her former partner. She is in receipt of benefits.

- 1) Debt – catalogues and credit cards £50,000
- 2) Family – raising her three children alone and no contact with former partner. She says she is getting little support from the local school for her son's autism. He is very active in the evenings and when he gets angry he smashes household items

## **DEBT**

Miss B is unable to clear debts of nearly £50,000. After discussing various debt options she felt bankruptcy was the best way forward. I therefore produced a financial statement to reflect client's current position and helped to her complete a bankruptcy petition. As part of this process I had to advise the client on potential Court fees and costs associated with bankruptcy.

I also advised client to change bank account. Client has now arranged for her benefits to be paid into a basic bank account to help her manage the household budget more effectively.

## **FAMILY**

Miss A's middle child is autistic and very demanding of her attention, which she feels is to the detriment of the two siblings. She asked about respite services which would enable her to spend quality time with the other children. I provided her with details of the National Autistic Society with information about home and community support which gave her the tools/information to set up support for her and her son.

<http://www.autism.org.uk/get-involved/why-support-us/contact-us.aspx>