

Citizens Advice Mid Lincolnshire

Boston Big Local Report- 1st January – 31st March 2017

The new project worker is continuing to see clients on a regular basis. A number have attended for further help.

The case studies below show a snapshot of the clients helped and the help received from the project.

PE21 6 Single man, 30 years old. Diagnosed MH condition, currently supported by CPN. Working 15 hours a week over 2 days. Net income £117.75. Paid weekly. Living in Framework accommodation - pays top up of £60.00 pw. Moving into Waterloo Housing property in next few weeks, needs full benefit check based on updated information. Rent stated as £74.00pw.

Full benefit check undertaken with client, options include client increasing his working hours to enable him to claim Working Tax Credit. Ongoing client.

PE21 6 Single man, EEA national. Diagnosed with brain atrophy. Living with and supported by family. In receipt of ESA (contribution based) and PIP (standard daily living). Has received ESA50 to complete and requires advice about benefits following cessation of contribution based benefit in May 2017.

Full benefit check undertaken with client, discovered that client is still in the assessment phase of ESA despite the claim date of May 2016. Client should have been assessed for either WRAG or the Support Group and his ESA increased. Telephone call to DWP on client's behalf to discuss. Client's income will increase from £73.10 per week to include the WRAG component of £29.05 or Support group component of £36.20 per week. Requested backdating on client's behalf. Explained to client that if he is assessed as having limited capability for work related activity, his contribution based ESA can continue further than the initial 12 month period. Client has no other income. Ongoing client.

PE21 8 Married lady aged 60. Husband claims SRP. Client has made a claim and received forms with a return date of 23/3/17. Client was working until recently, receiving SSP. She has since received a SSP1 from her employer. Explained that she should now be claiming ESA.

Claiming procedure explained and telephone number given. Then moved on to question of PIP. Client has a diagnosis of liver disease but this was only diagnosed in January 2017.

Explained criteria for PIP, client does not meet criteria at this stage, suggested therefore that she lets this claim go past return date and make fresh claim if she meets the criteria at the 3 month stage. Also spoke about the 9 month limit, client has been told she may need a liver transplant but this will not be considered until she has had the condition for 6 months. Agreed to send PIP descriptors in the post

for client to look at and decide if she will meet the criteria. If client makes further claim then explained that they need to be contacting office as soon as form received if she requires assistance.

PE21 6 Client has mental health issues and has been on ESA since release from hospital/prison 9-10 years ago .Client wants assistance to complete ESA assessment from which has deadline 23/1/17.

Client attended for appointment with Boston Big Local adviser. He had recently had a change of circs (partner released from prison and returned to home address) and ESA2 required to confirm the change.

Assisted with the paperwork. Form due to be returned by 23/01/2017 - tel call to DWP regarding delay. Client advised to take the completed paperwork into JCP and request that form returned via the internal post. Telephone call to DWP – Confirmation received that the payment due on 23/01 has been issued - £234 and will be in client's bank account on 23/01.

PE21 6 Couple with dependent children. Private tenant. EEA national. Client has received a council tax demand from Boston Borough Council (BBC). Client is disputing that he owes this debt.

Phone call to BCC to understand the situation and discuss options. Amounts currently outstanding, year 2015/16 £196.00; year 2016/17 £773.50. Client is currently in receipt of full CTS as unemployed. Debt is for previous tax years, previous arrangements have been set up, but client has failed to keep up with the repayments.

Client has agreed to fill in a financial statement of income with the council to sort this out and agree once again to a payment plan. Explained the consequences of non-payment of council tax, this is a priority debt and non-payment would result in a court summons, bailiffs and in extreme cases, prison.