

DCR Manager's Report Appendix: Case Studies (Quarter 1 2010/11)

South Hams

We received a referral from Hospital OT who asked if we could help with Benefits. Telephone call to client who informed me she had fallen and was on the floor and not able to get up. I asked if she was hurt and not to move around and I would call an ambulance. Client did not want this but could I contact her neighbour, client could not remember their name and got upset, talked to her calmly and she remembered their name was called Smith, I agreed to try and find their telephone number as client could not remember this. I discussed with other colleagues in the office and decided to call the ambulance service in case I could not trace the neighbour. I eventually found their telephone number and discussed with them what had happened, they were going to her straight away. A few weeks later I visited and completed Attendance Allowance form, during visit client was very forgetful and couldn't find National Insurance number or any paperwork that it might be on, she was also very forgetful about what she was looking for and I realised that something was not right. Referred client back to the hospital OT with my worry that client had memory loss. This week I had a telephone call from clients brother who has Power of Attorney and he explained that client has Alzheimer's and that she is already in receipt of Attendance Allowance he will get in touch with the Pension Service to cancel the application we had put in. He was very worried as he doesn't live locally, suggested he speak to the hospital OT perhaps to get carers in on a regular basis to make sure she is looking after herself.

Northern Cluster

1. Progressing applications

Torrige Caseworker achieved installation of stair lift for a terminally ill client in 19 working days from receipt of signed Statement of Need by Torrige Care and Repair. Her delighted Occupational Therapist fed back that the overall timeline was 23 days from the date she was allocated the case, a remarkably short time for DFG funded work. In North Devon area two "Danger" cases, requiring over-bath showers, were fast-tracked by asking for quote from experienced/approved contractor based on OT standard specification.

2. Increase of income achieved in a number of cases. In particular the following:

2.1 Couple had recently had Attendance Allowance (AA) awarded via DWP worker. Caseworker identified that if DWP were dealing with application forms for Carers Allowance (CA) and Pension Credit (PC) then couple would be entitled to Guarantee Credit (GC) CW checked if DWP would also be doing CA/PC applications. Response from DWP was that they did not have the capacity to do this so CW supported clients in making CA application on-line. This was then passed back to DWP as the couple had high savings which would need evidencing. Without high savings couple would have been entitled to around £160 per week Guarantee Credit (GC) once AA/CA in place. With high savings only small entitlement to GC – around £30 per week BUT – full Council Tax Benefit (CTB) was then awarded which is additional income of around £25 per week. This, of course, also established full DFG entitlement as 2 grants are required.

2.2 Appeal for higher rate Disability Living Allowance (DLA) Care was successful (night rate). On first visit to couple, Mrs W appeared to be eligible for Attendance Allowance so CW made application and this was awarded. Mr W was receiving low rate care + high mobility so no entitlement to CA. Couple said that they didn't want pension credit. They had some HB/CTB so entitlement to grant for urgent stairlift was in place. First case for DLA refused so CW made appeal and after more than 12 weeks they awarded HIGH care including night-time. This means that couple can now go on GC (which they didn't want originally!) after applying for CA to look after each other.

3. Establishing alternatives to grant funding

Discussion with a couple of clients identified means of self-funding of adaptations thereby avoiding the need to go through grant application route and long wait for funding. Caseworker gained agreement from Sanctuary to fund a few adaptations which provided tenants with adaptations within a relatively short timescale and conserved grant funding.