



Ashley Canner Welcomed to the PCT Outreach Team

We are delighted to announce that **Ashley Canner**, one of our Volunteer Advisors has joined **Steve Walster, Christine Evans and Andy Hopkins** on our PCT Outreach Advice Team.

Ashley takes over the Advice Sessions at Swadlincote Surgery on Darklands Road every Wednesday afternoon. Appointments with any of our Advisors can be made via staff at your local surgery or by calling our office on 01283 210107.



PCT Outreach Clients on Average £7,135 Better off!

During the 6 month Period from April to September 2011 we identified £399,284 worth of unclaimed benefits for clients seen through our PCT Outreach Project.

This translates to those clients who are identified as being eligible for benefits being an average of £7,135.00 better off as a result of our work.

Our PCT Advice team can help with a wide range of issues including debt, benefits, consumer or employment issues. The project is delivered to 10 different GP surgeries across the region. See over for full information.

Mental Health Money Advice

Harinder Kaur is South Derbyshire Citizens Advice Bureau's specialist Mental Health Money Advisor.

This service was introduced as research by the Royal College of Psychiatrists show that 25% of people suffering mental health problems are in debt, and 50% of people in debt have a mental health problem.

As well as dealing with general money issues, Harinder works with clients to: ensure full benefits are claimed, negotiate with creditors, support Bankruptcy Applications, support Debt Relief Order Applications, suspend County Court Judgements, suspend Possession Orders and negotiate with Bailiffs.

Harinder explains "When people are suffering with stress or depression for example, it can be very difficult for them to keep on top of their finances, and debt can soon spiral out of control, but by assisting clients to resolve their debt problems we are able to reduce the stress and anxiety they have been experiencing."

For an appointment with Harinder phone the Bureau or ask your Support Worker for a referral.

Lasting Power of Attorney

Lasting Power of Attorney agreements are becoming more popular as family members are electing to take over control of finances of a loved one, should they become incapacitated. Steve Walster says "Anyone taking Power of Attorney needs to be aware that this course of action comes with a great deal of responsibility. Anyone considering Lasting Power of Attorney can talk to one of our Advisors to ensure that they have a full understanding."

Administration and Assessment Volunteers Needed

We have a particular requirement for administration and reception assistance, as well as for Assessment Session Advisors.

Volunteer Co-ordinator Glyn Bird says "People volunteer for the Bureau for lots of different reasons; For example, you may be retired or semi-retired with a little spare time each week, and your experience means that you can make a really valuable contribution to your local area." If this sounds familiar you should call Glyn Bird, on 01283 210108 or visit www.southderbyshirecab.org.uk and follow the link to our volunteers pages.



CSA Payment Schedule Problems

Christine Evans issues a warning to parents either receiving or paying CSA to keep a close watch on payments, and to contact the CSA immediately if payments stop, particularly if a set term payment schedule has been put into place.

This follows a case where payments to support a small child had stopped without warning to either party. Our client contacted the CSA who said that the payments had stopped as there had been a 12 month payment schedule in place, which had ended. The CSA told our client that now they had been notified payments had stopped a new schedule would be drawn up, but it could take up to 12 weeks to put into place.

Christine says "This situation will cause problems for both parents; our client will not receive maintenance until December, whilst the absent parent will have to pay arrears once the new schedule is in place." Christine adds "There does not seem to be a system in place at the CSA to inform the agency that a schedule is coming to an end or payments have stopped. It is only when a complaint is made and investigated that the agency put a new payment schedule into motion. I would advise anyone who has a fixed term payment schedule to get in touch with the CSA well before the end of its term, to ensure they do not face similar problems."

Outreach Advice Sessions

We are able to offer appointments at the following venues:

Monday	Overseal GP Surgery , Hallcroft Avenue, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm Gresleydale GP Surgery , Church Gresley, 9:30 am - 12:30 pm
Tuesday	Heartwood Medical Centre , Swadlincote, 13:30 pm - 16:30 pm
Wednesday	Swadlincote Surgery , Swadlincote, 1:30 pm to 16:30 pm Woodville Surgery Patients at SDerbys District Council Offices , 4:00 pm - 16.00 pm
Thursday	Wellbrook GP Surgery , Hilton, 14:00 pm - 16:15 pm Melbourne GP Surgery , Melbourne, 10.00 am - 12:15 pm
Friday	Newhall Surgery Patients at Old Post Centre , 9:30 am - 12:30 pm Prestwood House , Midway, 9.30 am -13.30 am Willington Surgery , Willington, 13:00 pm to 15:00 pm

Drop in Assessment Sessions

114 Church Street, Church Gresley, Swadlincote, DE11 9NP

- Monday 9:30 am to 12:00 pm
- Tuesday 9:30 am to 12:00 pm
- Wednesday 4:45 pm to 5:45 pm
- Friday 9:30 am to 12:00 pm

Telephone Assessments

01283 210107

- Monday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm
- Tuesday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm
- Wednesday 4:45 pm to 5:45 pm
- Friday 10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Outside of these hours call Adviceline Derbyshire on 08444 111 308

Identifying Employer Bad Practice

A Specialist Employment Advice service at South Derbyshire Citizens Advice Bureau has highlighted dubious gross misconduct cases being used as excuses to fire people to save redundancy costs.

Steve Walster reports that since the project started in May, he has had five cases of bosses using historical misconduct issues when they need to reduce staff numbers. Steve reminds employees that if they have been unfairly dismissed there is a 3 month deadline for a case to be presented to tribunal.

Another problem is when a company changes ownership, new owners are not always following the rules governed by TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking (Protection of Employment) Regulations) and the protection that this affords existing employees. The Bureau are seeing cases of new business owners dismissing existing employees, reducing their hours or their general contracts being changed without prior consultation. This again leaves companies open to liable claims.

Anyone who feels they have been treated unfairly at work should contact South Derbyshire Citizen's Advice Bureau on 01283 210107.