

GP Project Report 2015/16

Elmwood Medical Centre
Buxton



Derbyshire
Districts

In 2015/16 at Elmwood Medical Centre...

88
Clients
helped

293
Client
contacts

£220,169
in benefits
and grants
secured

£1,934
debt
rescheduled

Our GP outreach service is a community resource we are particularly proud of. Over the last year we have helped 4,158 people, in more than 80 outreach locations across Amber Valley, Derbyshire Dales, Erewash and High Peak. Our outreach advisors are on hand in a wide variety of communities from industrial towns to rural villages, providing help and support in some of our most challenged and isolated neighbourhoods.

This programme, which is one of the largest in the country, is focussed on tackling the root cause of problems **before** they develop into health and crisis issues. We are seeing more people with increasingly complex and challenging issues. Many of our clients are referred to us by health professionals within the surgery and the wider health community.

By helping people deal with redundancy, debt, homelessness, poverty and the impact of relationship breakdown, we not only provide immediate relief and support for individuals but also reduce costs of health and local authority interventions.

Every day our outreach advisers are helping people stay in work, preventing housing evictions, keeping families together and ensuring some of the most vulnerable people in our communities are safe. In addition to helping patients to receive the additional income to which many are entitled, Citizens Advice Derbyshire Districts advisors provide solutions to immediate needs, such as having no food – through food banks and dealing with emergency debt situations.

Easy access to high quality, independent advice is more important than ever. Despite continuing financial pressures across our communities we remain committed to protecting this service as a key priority in our endeavour to reduce health inequalities and social injustice in Derbyshire.

We would like to thank all the GP's and staff at the surgery for their help and support over the last year. Your support is essential to the success of the project and is much appreciated.

Together we are able to make a difference.

Across Derbyshire Districts:

4,158
Clients
helped

11,220
Client
contacts

£7,825,130
secured in
benefits and
grants

£2,529,161
debt
rescheduled

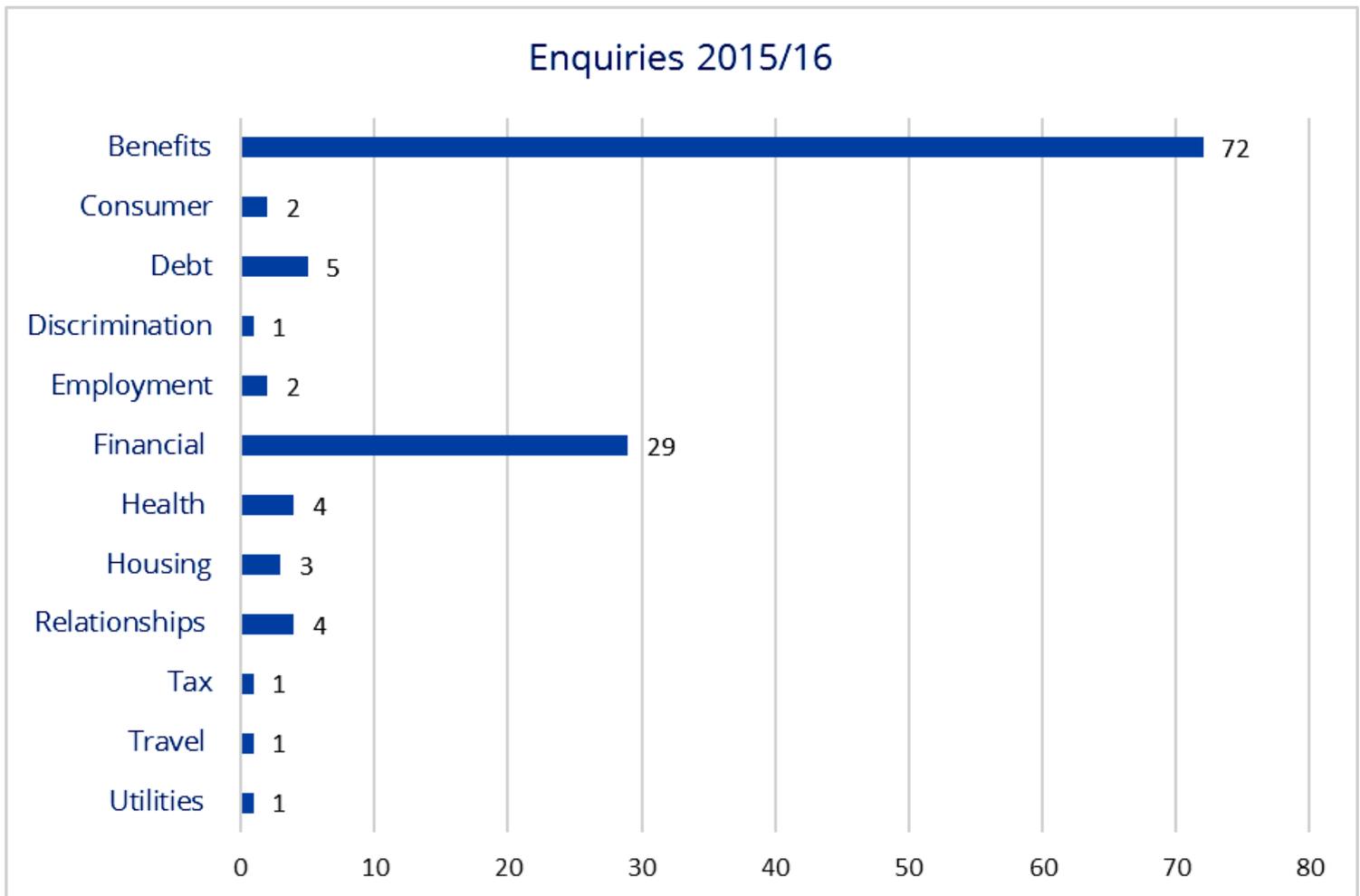
Our Outreach service at Elmwood Medical Centre...

Our advice sessions at the surgery run every week with four appointments of 45 minutes each.

The surgery serves the local community in Buxton.

Our clients are local people from all walks of life, varied ages and a range of backgrounds including working and those with families.

Why we're needed...



The difference we make...



Bindi* was on incapacity benefit with a top-up of income support and had received a form to claim employment and support allowance (ESA). She had no idea how to fill it on or the claims process.

We explained to her what this was, what to expect and completed it with her. At this appointment it became clear that she may also qualify for another disability benefit called **Personal Independence Payment (PIP)**. We discussed this and a claim was made.

Two weeks later we completed the PIP form. From this it became clear that Bindi had a lot of **health problems** and so we suggested she **return to her GP to further assess her medical issues.**

On returning for further help and advice for her PIP claim, Bindi confirmed she had now been awarded **ESA in the support group** and this meant she also became eligible for an enhanced disability premium. Together, these **benefits totalled £125.05 per week**. Her PIP **claim had been refused** and that meant we needed to start the first stage of the appeals process – which was to ask for a **mandatory reconsideration (MR)**. Bindi had already tried to do this by calling them herself, but was ‘dismissed’ by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). We decided to put in a paper MR claim instead.

A few weeks later Bindi contacted us to say her **MR had also been refused**. She still wanted to **appeal**. We explained that we would fill in all the necessary forms and refer her to our partner agency – **Derbyshire Welfare Rights (DWR)**. They would help her with the appeals process, all necessary paperwork and attend the court tribunal with her as needed. She felt very **re-assured**.

It took eleven months from the original PIP claim, appeals process and attending court when Bindi returned to tell us that she was awarded nothing at all at court. She was very dismayed. She told us since the original claim and returning to her G.P **her condition had worsened** and she now had a **diagnosed condition** and had been referred to four specialists and consultants. She was very disillusioned with the whole PIP claims process but after some gentle persuasion we suggested she put in a new PIP claim due to her new health issues. She agreed but said she would not be willing to go through the appeals process again if it failed.

We did a **new claim for PIP** and included all the new information and reports from the specialists. Three months later she returned to tell us she had been awarded the **enhanced rate of both the mobility and daily living elements of PIP**. She was **absolutely delighted**. This gave her a weekly income of £139.75 per week. This award now meant she could claim for a **blue badge** and also nominate the car of a her friend, who takes her anywhere she needs to go, for the vehicle excise duty to be paid.

Over a period of fifteen months we have helped Bindi to claim benefits worth a total of £264.80p per week, equivalent to £13,769.60 per year. She felt empowered enough to claim the blue badge and vehicle excise duty herself.

She told us “I would like to **sincerely thank you** for all your help with both my ESA and PIP claims. **Having you there to help with the forms and advice made the whole process so much easier, and I would not have carried on with the claims if it wasn’t for you”.**

Whilst Bindi is still living with a lot of health issues her mental state of mind, general health and wellbeing has been greatly improved.

* Name changed to protect client’s identity