



Leicestershire Advice Service For Social Care



News – Winter 2016

Client feedback:

- * "This is a fantastic and brilliant service!"
- * "So helpful and personally very compassionate in the advice given."
- * "I would advise anyone to come to this service for help."

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Going from strength to strength!

2015 was a great year for the Leicestershire Advice Service for Social Care. As our free service continued to grow, month on month, we have been able to empower more individuals than ever before through the provision of accurate, high-quality and timely information and advice.

As a result, we have promoted the wellbeing of the individual, their family and friends by enabling them to make well-informed decisions that have, in many cases, prevented or delayed the need for care

and support.

We are looking forward to the year ahead, with our continuing growth and the increased opportunities that this is sure to bring.

By continuing our high quality provision of truly person-centred and holistic information and advice, we will continue to work to support people to maintain maximum choice and control in their lives.



Client contacts during 2015

Throughout 2015 we had the pleasure of working with many clients providing information and advice on a large range of issues. We advised a varied range of clients including service users, their family and friends, and health and social

care professionals.

We establish our client's preferred style of information provision, and are able to tailor this to the individual using a variety of communication methods such as by

telephone, letter, and email.

In December, 84% of clients made initial contact with us by phone. However, all of our contact details are on the back cover, so do get in touch in whatever way suits you best!

The simplest things make a real difference

For individuals living with ill health and disability, simple household tasks can become a struggle that has a negative impact on their quality of life and their ability to remain living in their own home. Some of the conversations that we have on a daily basis with



clients revolve around these issues. So, perhaps we can help you!

If you give us a call, the advice worker will discuss your needs and can then re-search appropriate services in your local area, including their availability and cost. While we can't recommend one particular

service, we are able to tell you what services there are to choose from and provide you with the information to make an informed choice – we can even make the initial contact on your behalf if that helps. Some of the services that we can advise on provide support with activities such as: shopping, cleaning, and gardening, as well as handyman services. So, give us a call to get free, independent advice today!

In 2015 , we provided information and advice on more than 4300 separate issues

The number of issues we address is HUGE (and ever-growing)!

In 2015 the Leicestershire Advice Service for Social Care provided information and advice on more than **4300** individual issues.

These issues covered a wide range of social care related topics, too many to mention here! Some of the more common subjects include:

- Access to services
- Welfare benefits
- Transport
- Housing issues
- Community groups and social opportunities
- Carers' services

We research information on an individual basis relating to the client's unique circumstances to ensure a person-centred,



holistic approach. (See the case study on page 3 as an example.)

Valuable links

The Advice Service has continued to develop its highly valued joint working with Leicestershire County Council's Customer Service Centre (CSC).

As you may know, CSC staff are able to transfer calls to the Advice Service where the caller is in need of social care information and advice.

This continues to be a very effective way of the Advice Service reaching individuals when they are actively seeking support with social care issues.

Moving forward, we are continually exploring other ways of working together, with pilots already under way so watch

this space for further developments!



Combating loneliness and social isolation

Loneliness and social isolation are proven to have a detrimental effect on health and wellbeing. Studies show that being isolated or lonely can have a negative and long-lasting impact on blood pressure and is closely associated with depression.

Anyone can be affected by loneliness and social isolation but factors such as the loss of friends, family, mobility and income mean that older people

are particularly vulnerable. Recent research estimates that among those aged over 65, between 5 and 16 per cent state that they feel lonely and 12 per cent report that they feel isolated, with these figures expected to rise.

At the Leicestershire Advice Service for Social Care, we recognise the importance of tackling the issues of loneliness and social isolation and can ensure that people are

aware of suitable social opportunities within their local community. We research services in your local area that are designed to reduce social isolation, and can assist you to make contact with your chosen service(s). So whether you fancy going to a friendship group, a special interest group, or the village coffee morning we can inform and empower you to make the right choice for you!



Mr Smith – a case study

Mr Smith is 79 years old and he contacted the Leicestershire Advice Service for Social Care to find out what help may be available to him. He cares for his wife who has numerous health issues and they pay for help with her personal care. Mr Smith said that he is happy to continue to care for his wife.

The advice worker discussed Mr Smith's needs and suggested that they apply for **Attendance Allowance** which could help towards the cost of Mrs Smith's care. She also gave him information on how to obtain a **Carer's Assessment** as well as information on **carers' support services**.

Mr Smith went on to talk about his wish to learn computer skills, as he had been given a second-hand computer but did not feel very confident using it. The advice worker was able to refer him to an organisation that specialises in **free computer training** for older people in their own home.

Mr and Mrs Smith went on to successfully **gain £55.10 per week in Attendance Allowance** for Mrs Smith which has really helped them to manage financially. Mr Smith is currently awaiting an outcome from his **Carer's Assessment** and reports that his computer classes are a great success.

He now does his weekly shop on line and he and his wife hold regular 'Skype' sessions with their daughter and grandchildren who live in Australia!



In 2015, 100 % of callers to the Leicestershire Advice Service for Social Care were responded to within 1 working day.



5th Floor, St John's House,
30 East Street,
Leicester
LE1 6NB
Registered Charity No. 512719

Phone: 0116 2229555
Text: 0758 597 5701
E-mail: advice@lcp-trust.org.uk

www.lcp-trust.org.uk

The Leicestershire Advice Service for Social Care is a free, independent and confidential service.

Our contact details are given here, and we also hold drop-in sessions throughout the County. If you would like to attend one of these sessions to discuss a social care issue, you can give us a call and we will provide you with the details of the next session in your local area.

You can also like us on Facebook (The Leicestershire Advice Service for Social Care) or follow us on Twitter (@LeicsAdviceServ).

Keep in touch!

We are extremely grateful for all of the support that we continue to receive from our clients and professionals from all areas of health and social care.

If you provide a social care service, don't forget to keep us up-dated about any changes or developments to your service so that we can inform our clients as appropriate.

We look forward to continuing this partnership working, which is so vital for high-

quality social care provision, throughout 2016.

