

## Halton 2018-19 QU.4 Case Study

### About the person

Mrs H is a family orientated woman who works full time whilst helping her older relatives. Mrs H has Lasting Power of Attorney for an elderly uncle and is strict on respecting his wishes and principles in life.

### What was the problem?

Mrs H approached the office one evening after work as she was in a great deal of distress due to her uncle's situation. Mrs H's uncle had already been in hospital for two months after receiving medical treatment and was not being discharged as they were awaiting a care package to be arranged by the local authority. Due to the prolonged wait and being left in a bed or chair throughout the day Mrs H's uncle, who already had reduced mobility due to his health conditions, had found his mobility had significantly deteriorated and he had become very low in mood.

Mrs H explained to us that further stress was being caused by the request for a financial assessment by social workers at the hospital. Mrs H's uncle already felt that his independence had been taken away so he felt that keeping his finances private was the last piece of dignity he had. Mrs H and her uncle were happy to fund the care and support themselves but felt they were getting nowhere with waiting for a local authority care package and did not know if there was anything else they could do. The emotional exhaustion of the combined stress relating to the care package and worrying about her uncle had begun to severely affect Mrs H's own wellbeing.

### What did you do to make a positive difference?

During Mrs H first conversation with our service we discussed in depth the different avenues of rehabilitation when discharged from hospital and the many different ways in which care can be funded, including non-means tested forms of funding. For further information and reference for Mrs H to look back at later we provided her with copies of Age UK Factsheets.

- Factsheet 20 describing NHS funded nursing care was given as Mrs H's uncle may become eligible in the future should his health become unpredictable or unstable.
- Factsheet 10, paying for permanent residential care, was also given so that should the client's uncle need to use these facilities in the future they would have the information surrounding all options.
- Factsheet 24, personal budgets and direct payments in social care, was provided to the client so that she was aware of all the options for accessing care and support.
- Discussing Factsheet 24 with Mrs H allowed us to provide information and advice on the choice and types of care and support, and the choice of providers, available to those who are in the local authority area and how to access that care and support, as outlined in The Care Act 2014.
- Factsheet 48 on Pension Credits was provided to allow Mrs H to check if uncle was receiving his full benefit entitlement.

We advised her that her uncle did not have to have a financial assessment and was entitled to refuse it. We explained that the family could, if they wished, organize their own care for their uncle, eliminating the need to wait for a care package and remain in hospital too much longer. We provided Mrs H with a list of domiciliary care agencies that cover the local area.

During Mrs H's first visit we also discussed possible avenues of maximizing her uncle's income so that he didn't face too heavy a burden paying for care.

We explained the eligibility criteria for pension credits and how it is calculated, providing our client with Age UK Factsheet 48 "Pension Credit" to allow her to see whether she could calculate whether her uncle is entitled to pension credit.

We also agreed that her uncle was likely to be eligible for Attendance Allowance and ordered the claim forms. As our client has Lasting Power of Attorney and advised that when the form arrive she should come and see us again so that we can assist in the completion of the form as Age UK Mid Mersey I & A are all trained and experienced on completing Attendance Allowance forms.

We also advised that Mrs H could request to speak with an occupation therapist within the hospital to discuss her uncle's prior abilities within his home. This way Mrs H would be able to talk about and arrange for aids to be provided within the home.

As Mrs H works full time we adjusted our office times slightly to allow us to provide her a long enough appointment to be supported with the application.

Shortly after completing the application for Attendance Allowance Mrs H had to again contact us regarding her uncle being pressured to have a financial assessment. We reassured Mrs H that her uncle could refuse a financial assessment and still have the needs focused assessment as the two are independent assessments and under The Care Act 2014 local authorities must carry out an assessment of anyone who appears to require care and support, regardless of their eligibility for state-funded care, and focus the assessment on the person's needs and how they impact on their wellbeing.

## What outcomes did you achieve?

Within seven days of Mrs H initially reaching out to us for support she had managed to speak to the occupational therapist and social worker in the hospital, agreeing to make all the care arrangements herself, and all the required aids were arranged and delivered to her uncle's property. Nine days after the initial discussions the client's uncle was discharged to his home from the hospital. Mrs H explained that just five days after he was discharged her uncle was starting to regain his mobility and independence that he had before his hospital stay.

There was a visible improvement in Mrs H's emotional wellbeing too as a large amount of worry and stress had been lifted by identifying the various options and avenues that were open to her and her uncle.

The information, advice and support we had given had empowered Mrs H to help her uncle regain his dignity, independence and confidence back in a much shorter time span than she had expected and via means she had been unaware of.

The information provided gave Mrs's H and her uncle choice on the types of care and support available and the choice of providers in their local area



Using the provided domiciliary care agency list, Mrs H had been able to get a variety of quotes and packages to identify the most suitable agency to support her uncle in the short term while he rehabilitated at home. Mrs H and her uncle did not have to face the intrusion of a financial assessment and were able to feel confident and comfortable with their own choice of care provider.

### **Quotes from Mrs H.**

Mrs H wrote:

*"This experience has made a huge difference to my uncle's recovery, and without the help of Age UK Mid Mersey would not have been the case! Thank you."*

Mrs H's last statement was *"Now I know what I can do and what choices are available I can get things done for my uncle."*