

Oct 2017

Advocacy Support to Access to Benefits and Debt Advice

York Advocacy Hub is a service delivered by York Mind, in conjunction with Cloverleaf Advocacy, to provide 5 specialist advocacy services to people living in York. For more information on our work please visit our website at www.yorkadvocacy.org.uk

We have recently been successful in securing funds from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to deliver a project supporting people to access debt and benefits advice.

What: We will provide advocacy to support clients to access a range of advice services around benefits and debt, to make decisions and put advice into action. We will not provide specialist benefits and debt advice. This is a small project, at any one time our capacity will allow us to work with between 5 and 8 people.

We will:

- ✓ Go to benefits meetings, assessments and appeals with clients
- ✓ Support clients to access advice
- ✓ Support clients to make informed choices
- ✓ Help clients have their say and communicate their needs

We won't:

- X give financial or welfare benefits advice
- X provide befriending, counselling or open ended support
- X complete benefits forms for clients

How: a team of volunteers specially trained in advocacy skills supported by an advocacy caseworker will work one-to-one with people throughout the process of applying, reapplying or appealing a benefits decision and putting in place a debt management plan. Throughout our support we will promote our client's self-advocacy skills and knowledge of their rights, further reducing their risk of being in poverty in the future.

When: the project will run from December 2017 for 12 months.

Who: we will be supporting vulnerable people with additional needs such as learning disabilities and mental ill-health, who experience barriers in accessing financial and benefits advice and in putting this advice into action.

Referrals: to refer someone for this support please contact York Advocacy Hub on 01904 414357, or email office@yorkadvocacy.org.uk