

Co-location of Denbighshire County Council staff member at Rhyl Job Centre – Homelessness Prevention Navigator

Case Study 1

A UC claimant contacted Rhyl Job Centre and spoke to one of the work coaches (DWP staff member). He was homeless, staying temporarily with friends. He had been offered a job in Rhyl but his lack of housing prevented him from being able to commit to it.

The work coach got advice from the Denbighshire County Council's (DCC) co-located staff member about the housing issues and the claimant was quickly referred to DCC's Homeless Drop-In at Russell House. He went there the same day, discussed his options with them. He was eligible for support and they offered him an up-front payment to cover either the deposit or rent in advance for a prospective new property.

He called in to the Job Centre a few days later to say he was able to secure the majority of a deposit and he was just going to view a property in Rhyl. The plan was to secure that property, move in and then be able to start work in his new job. In one go he ceased to be classed as homeless and be able to start work as well. He was delighted with the situation. Three separate departments working together to secure a very positive result for a vulnerable claimant.

Case Study 2

A Denbighshire resident visited Rhyl Job Centre. He had been living off his savings for some time, but these had run out. As a result he had fallen into rent arrears on his home and had been issued an eviction notice by his landlord to leave the property. He was clearly distressed with the situation and he explained that he struggled with mental health problems and had not known where to turn.

He was advised by the Job Centre staff to claim UC as a matter of urgency. In view of his obvious needs (financial and housing) he met with both a DWP Job Centre staff member and the co-located Denbighshire County Council (DCC) staff member at the same time in the Job Centre so he could explain his situation once and receive the combined advice and support he needed in one go.

With support from the DWP staff he successfully made his online UC claim at the Job Centre. Whilst the DCC staff member was able to resolve his housing crisis as follows.

As with all UC claimants he would now have to wait 5 weeks for confirmation of his UC award. However in the meantime he had a court date very shortly regarding the eviction notice. He was eligible to receive support from DCC Homeless Prevention Team (HPT) and so their services were engaged. However to meet strict external regulations HPT would need confirmation of his claim to UC (in particular details around the rent element). But he was not due to receive this for 5 weeks. The claimant gave consent for DCC to request these details on his behalf from Rhyl Job Centre staff. The DCC co-located staff member was able to liaise with the Job Centre staff to receive this information and it was then emailed securely by the DCC staff member to HPT. HPT were able to support the gentleman and subsequently the landlord withdrew the eviction notice and the court date was cancelled.

The communication between the Rhyl Job Centre staff, the DCC co-located staff member and the HPT meant that a vulnerable claimant did not lose his home and his benefit applications were all in hand.