

Vicky's Story

Vicky is a single lady in her 60s attended Rhyl Job Centre Plus (JCP) for help to claim Universal Credit (UC), she was referred by JCP staff to Citizens Advice Denbighshire's (CAD) co located service. Vicky was a carer for her father who passed away recently, she was entitled to the 8 week run on of Carers Allowance but this was ending as was her Income Support, so she needed to claim UC. Vicky lives in 2 bedroom housing association property.

Vicky has arthritis but this currently does not affect her ability to work, she was not going to mention it on UC application however we advised her that it would be better to put it in the claim so that should it get worse and affect her ability to work DWP would be aware of the ongoing condition. Vicky does not have any internet access at home and needs assistance using computers.

We liaised with Denbighshire County Council's co located staff member at Rhyl Job Centre who confirmed Vicky was entitled to 2 week run on of Housing Benefit and that her Council Tax Reduction application is in place.

CAD Advice and Action:

- UC digital claim form completed and advice given on how to action and respond to work journal messages and how to complete the "To do's" section.
- Advised Vicky they need to log into their UC account regularly, at least once a day if possible.
- ID verification appointment confirmed at Rhyl JCP.
- Advised Vicky that UC is paid calendar monthly (in arrears) and that it will take 5 weeks before the first payment is received.
- Advised Vicky that a request for an advanced payment can be made once ID verification has been successful and had a brief discussion around the amount to request.
- Advised Vicky any advance taken will be recovered from their ongoing UC award over a 12 month period
- Advised Vicky on the claimant commitment that will be agreed when they have at their first appointment with their work coach.
- Advised Vicky of the additional personal budgeting support available after their work coach appointment including a full review of their income and expenditure and completion of a financial statement.
- We suggested Vicky could access digital help and support either at the digital suite at our Rhyl office or at the Jobcentre Plus
- We referred Vicky to the Women's Centre for support and help to cope with her bereavement and loneliness
- We talked to Vicky about her current housing situation, she is an under occupant and made an appointment with her landlord to discuss her housing situation and made a claim for a Discretionary Housing Payment.

We also made an appointment for Vicky a few days later at our Rhyl office for assistance with her electricity bill. Client had a significantly large electricity bill

accrued before her father died, he needed the additional warmth. We contacted energy supplier and negotiated phased repayment of bill and arranged for a pre-payment meter to be installed at Vicky's request. We placed Vicky on the Priority Services Register.

