



APPLYING FOR BENEFITS: A USER JOURNEY MAP

Referral To Advisor (Statutory Or VCS)

Making Contact

Applying

Decision

Approval

Rejection

Reviewing Decision / Feedback

Non-Monetary Support

Actions

- Statutory Services
- VCS services
- Self-referral
- Family referral

- Referral logged
- Contact made with older person
- Interview
- Consent form

- Assistance with forms
- Form sent to benefit assessors
- Monitor application progress

- Notification of approval
- Automated payment

- Notification of rejection

- Advice
- Begin application for additional benefits
- Chasing up
- Signpost to non-monetary support

- Community support
- Social services
- Health support
- Emergency services

Method of contact with older people

- Direct:
 - a. Email
 - b. Telephone
 - c. Face-to-face
- Indirect:
 - a. via referrals
 - b. via family members

- Face to face
 - a. Home
 - b. In office
- Online
- Telephone

- Face-to-face
- Letter
- Online

- Letter
 - a. One per benefit received
 - b. Rejection letter if not eligible
- Face-to-face
- Telephone

- Letter
- Telephone
- Email
- Face-to-face

- Letter
- Face-to-face
- Referrals from other services:
 - a. Hospital
 - b. Housing

- Letter
- Telephone
- Email
- Face-to-face

Feelings of older people

- Confusion
- Relief
- Disappointment
- High expectations
- Desperate

- Mixed emotions
- Overly optimistic

- Sceptical
- Emotionally drained
- Loss of pride
- Clueless
- Confident

- Disbelief
- Hesitant to spend
- Confusion
 - a. access
 - b. payments affected?
- Grateful

- "I'm a whole person!"
- Isolated
- Lonely
- Desperate

- Relief
- Surprise
- Desperate

- Relief
- Supported

Feelings of service providers

- It's all part of the job
- Satisfaction
- Sense of responsibility
- Relief
- Under pressure

- Stressed out

- Frustration

- Sense of achievement
- "I was over the moon all day!"

- "It all starts again!"

- Satisfaction
- Frustration

- Helplessness
- Frustration
- Sympathy
- Relief

Improvements

- Time pressures prevent adequate needs assessment

- Lack of awareness: Many myths surround the benefits system

- Don't have detailed knowledge of pension credit
- Too many different numbers
- Illogical system: Have to apply for benefits you won't get to access others
- Very negative process - you must ask people to describe "their worst day"

- Face-to-face explanations are needed
- Duplication
- Phone calls not useful for people with hearing problems
- Problems accessing benefits in hospital: many rely on hospital based charity
- Direct payments are often misunderstood

- Benefit assessors are very removed from the person
- System frustrations: Have to be rejected from certain benefits to qualify for others
- Lack of feedback for unsuccessful claims: Concerns re. centralisation of services
- The importance of local knowledge

- More time to listen and advise older users on support

- Service providers need more training on and more time to explain other help available
- A directory of what's available
- Skill sets needed for dealing with older people should be valued more
- More time for council benefit offices to explain