Social Welfare Legal Advice – Online Training Session

Duration: 3 hours
Delivery: Online

Audience: Frontline staff, including managers and staff supporting frontline teams, working across NHS North West London and North Central London Integrated Care System (NWL and NCL ICS). This could include but is not limited to, Social Prescriber Link Workers, Care Coordinators, Health and Wellbeing Coaches and those in a personalised care role within primary care.

Overall Aim:
To equip frontline staff working across NWL and NCL with the knowledge and confidence to recognise debt, housing and welfare advice needs at an early stage, respond appropriately, and connect patients, their families and other beneficiaries to appropriate specialist support.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the session, participants will:

- **Recognise common debt, housing and welfare issues** that may affect patients, their families and other beneficiaries, and identify early indicators that someone may need advice or support.
- **Understand people's basic rights and entitlements** in relation to benefits, housing and debt, as well as the local support available within their community.
- **Feel more confident in recognising and responding to advice needs**, so they have supportive conversations, provide initial information and take appropriate action without stepping beyond the boundaries of their role.
- **Be able to explain how and where to access appropriate information, advice and support**, including when an issue requires specialist advice and emergency intervention
- **Use reliable online resources** to find and share information about main enquiry areas, cost of living support and other relevant local and national assistance
- **Identify the most appropriate steps for early intervention and connecting people to support,** using knowledge of local services to provide information, signpost, make referrals or take urgent action where appropriate.

Overall progression:
Recognise → Understand → Respond → Connect to appropriate support

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Session outline:

Time	Duration	Session topic / activity	Purpose / approach
10:00–10:15	15 mins	**Welcome, introductions and session objectives**	Welcome participants, introduce the session and facilitators, outline the learning objectives and establish expectations.
10:15–10:25	10 mins	**Introduction to Citizens Advice and Advice First Aid**	Brief introduction to Citizens Advice and the Advice First Aid approach, including the role frontline staff can play in recognising advice needs and providing appropriate support and timely early intervention.
10:25–10:30	5 mins	**Introduction to the case study**	Introduce the case study that will be used throughout the session.
10:30–10:40	10 mins	**How to research and find good information**	Explore how to identify reliable sources of information, assess the quality and relevance of information, and use online resources to find and share appropriate information and support.
10:40–11:05	25 mins	**Introduction to debt**	Provide a brief overview of different types of debt and the different consequences that can arise depending on the type of debt. Explore early indicators that someone may need debt advice, relevant sources of information and support, and apply learning to the case study.
11:05 – 11.10	5 mins	**Break**	
11:10–11:50	40 mins	**Introduction to housing**	Briefly explore different types of tenancy, homelessness and housing insecurity, and the impact of the Renters' Rights Act. Consider common housing advice needs, sources of information and local support, applying learning to the case study.
11.50 – 12:25	35 mins	**Introduction to welfare benefits**	Provide a brief overview of the different types of welfare benefits available and the circumstances in which people may be entitled to support. Explore how to apply for benefits, sources of reliable information and when further advice may be required, applying learning to the case study.
12:25–12:30	5 mins	**Break**	

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12:30–12:55	25 mins	**Cost of living support**	Explore the different types of cost of living support that may be available nationally and locally, including support with essential living costs, household bills, food, energy, housing, Council Tax and other areas of financial pressure. Consider how local authority schemes and other localised support can vary by area, and how to identify and share appropriate information.
12:55 – 1:00	5 mins	**Questions, reflection and close**	Address outstanding questions, reflect on key learning and reinforce the appropriate steps for identifying advice needs, providing early intervention and connecting people to appropriate support. There is flexibility to extend this segment by a few more minutes if participants wish.
Total	3 hrs		

Delivery approach:

The session will use an interactive and practical learning approach, combining short presentations, discussion, practical examples and interactive activities. Exercises and opportunities for questions will be embedded throughout the session, allowing participants to engage with the topics as they are introduced.

Activities will be designed around realistic situations that participants are likely to encounter in their own roles, enabling them to apply their learning to practical scenarios rather than simply receiving information. The case study will be introduced early in the session and revisited to reinforce learning and help participants consider how they might identify advice needs, provide early intervention and connect people to appropriate support.

Participants will also have opportunities to use reliable online resources, explore relevant information and consider appropriate signposting and referral routes, helping to build confidence in applying the learning within their frontline roles.

Participant outcomes:

By the end of the session, participants will have increased their awareness of debt, housing and welfare issues, improved their ability to recognise advice needs early, and increased their confidence in providing appropriate information, signposting and referrals. Participants will know how to find reliable information and identify appropriate local and national support, including when specialist or urgent advice may be required. They will have applied their learning to realistic scenarios relevant to their frontline roles.

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