The purpose of this newsletter is to provide you with the latest information on Healthier, Wealthier, Children and celebrate some of our success.

If you have any questions about the project, or if you would like any resources or referral forms please contact:

Melissa Ford, Income Advisor  Email: melissa.ford@renfrewshire.gcsx.gov.uk
Tel: 0141 618 6376  Mobile: 07960 942 781

Please Note:
These contact details are for STAFF ONLY and should not be passed to patients/clients.

What is Healthier Wealthier Children?

» The Healthier Wealthier Children project was established in 2010 to contribute to reducing child poverty by targeting Welfare Rights and Debt Advice.

Who is eligible for support?

» Pregnant woman and families with young children experiencing, or at risk of, child poverty.

Success to date

» Total gains to date: £2,567,427.79
» Number of referrals: 1447

How to refer

» Complete the updated (December 2013) referral form and email it to the Income Advisor (Melissa Ford).
  OR
» Contact the Income Advisor directly with the client’s details (full name and address including, postcode, contact telephone number, referrers name and contact number).
» Clients can be seen at a number of flexible venues and times or via telephone appointment.
Example of Support

Successful claim for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) = Big financial impact on family

Making a successful claim for Disability Living Allowance (DLA) for a child can have a big financial impact on a family. A lone parent was referred to HWC for a benefit check; she was claiming jobseeker’s allowance (JSA) and was struggling to meet all her claimant commitments. The client was also under occupied which meant that she had to pay £10.50 per week towards her rent out of her benefit income. The client was so worried about getting into rent arrears she used her money to pay her rent.

During the initial appointment with the Income Advisor it became apparent that the child had individual support needs and could be eligible for DLA. A claim for DLA was made. A food voucher was applied for and awarded, and a discretionary housing payment (DHP) was applied for to help her in the short term with her rent costs. DLA was awarded for her child. This increased her income by £133.43 per week. She was also able to claim Income Support (rather that JSA) and carer’s allowance – this increased her income a further £34.20 per week and also meant that she did not have to maintain her Claimant Commitment for JSA (removing the worry of being sanctioned). The under occupancy charge for her Housing Benefit was successfully appealed and the client no longer had the £10.50 per week charge applied for her rent. In addition the client also received support to make applications for a Community Care Grant and a Buttle Trust Grant – helping with white goods and other essential household items.

Accessing the HWC project assisted this family with short term emergency. Increased their household income by just under £180 per week and removed some of the uncertainty regarding their tenancy sustainment and benefit payments. It also helped them access items that they would not have been able to buy from their limited income.
Other Services provided by Advice Works

www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/adviceworks
If you or your clients have any benefit issues/debt issues call the Advice Works helpline (Mon – Fri 10am – 4pm) on 0300 300 1238 or attend one of the drop in sessions (as below) for further support.

Erskine
Erskine Library
Bridgwater Shopping Centre
Bridgewater Place
ERSKINE
PA8 7AA
Friday
9am – 11am

Johnstone
Advice Works
8 Collier Street
JOHNSTONE
PA5 8AR
Monday – Thursday
9am – 11am

Paisley
Customer Service Centre
Renfrewshire House
Cotton Street
PAISLEY
PA1 1BU
Monday, Tuesday & Friday
9am – 11am
1pm – 3pm

Renfrew
Renfrew Health & Social Work Centre
10 Ferry Road
RENFREW
PA4 8RU
Wednesday – Thursday
1pm – 3pm

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**Benefits Update**

**Welfare of Reform: Impact on Scottish Families**

Due to cuts in the UK benefits and tax credit system it is estimated that between £1.6bn (around £480 for every adult of working age) and £2bn will be cut from Scottish household incomes.

The women and families you are working with may be affected by changes to the welfare system in particular:

- Working Tax Credits
- The move from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Sanctions (financial penalties for breaching terms of claiming job seekers allowance).

For up to date local information on welfare changes go to: [www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/webcontent/home/service/benefitsanddebtadvice/benefitchanges/ce-jm-benefit-changes](http://www.renfrewshire.gov.uk/webcontent/home/service/benefitsanddebtadvice/benefitchanges/ce-jm-benefit-changes)

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**Energy Advice Renfrewshire**

The new Energy Advice Renfrewshire Service is now up and running. The service will provide specialist fuel support to the areas most vulnerable residents. Please refer anyone you are working with who could benefit from fuel advice, is of working age and meets one of the following criteria please refer:

- Affected by benefit changes.
- Low income/on benefits
- Have fuel debt
- Struggle to afford to heat/light/cook in the house

To refer please call Energy Advice Renfrewshire on 0141 618 7515 or 07825 193 697.