

REPORT

To: SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE		Subject: HOME CARE SERVICE USERS INCOME MAXIMISATION REPORT
From: DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL WORK		
Date: 20 DEC 2001	Ref: GMCI/JJ	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT / INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. To advise the Social Work Committee of the level of benefits which have been generated by the Social Work Department on behalf of service users who receive a home care service.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. In an effort to improve the take-up of benefits by home care service users, the Social Work Department in January, 2001 created 7 temporary posts of Income Maximisers, Grade AP2/3, who were deployed within the 6 Area Teams and one post across the 2 hospital teams to assist with benefit uptake.
- 2.2. The Income Maximisers posts were developed to assist Home Care Managers identify and promote benefits to a vulnerable care group whose needs and circumstances frequently change with consequential benefit entitlement being an issue.
- 2.3. This report details the outcome of this initiative and sets out the level of benefits which have been generated in the period January 2001 to 9th November, 2001.

3. PROPOSALS / CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1. In the period since taking up their posts the Income Maximisers have, collectively, helped to generate £1,789,632 in unclaimed benefits. This figure is the annual value of the awards and does not include backdated arrears payments.
- 3.2. The average backdated benefit generated from January 2001 to 9th November 2001 is approximately £8,500 per office. Across the 7 offices this amounts to 59,500. Backdated benefit payments are a one off payment and depend on the individual circumstances of each of the claims made by the service user.

LOCATION	NO. OF SERVICE USERS	TOTAL WEEKLY VALUE OF AWARDS	WEEKLY AVERAGE PAYMENT	ANNUAL VALUE
Airdrie	85	£5,090	£59.88	£264,680
Bellshill	18	£1,320	£73.33	£68,640
Coatbridge	151	£4,847	£32.09	£252,044
Cumbernauld	160	£8,334	£52.08	£433,368
Motherwell	149	£7,665	£51.44	£398,580
Wishaw	86	£4,178	£48.58	£217,256
Hospital	57	£2,982	£52.31	£155,064
TOTAL	706	£34,416	£369.71	£1,789,632

3.3 The difference in the Bellshill figure arises because of a delay in the appointment of a postholder to the Income Maximisers post in this locality. The differences in income generated between other offices e.g. Airdrie and Wishaw with similar numbers of service users assessed may be related to factors such as the level of disability living allowance or attendance allowance awards or levels of other income such as occupational pensions which are taken into account in the calculation of meantested benefits.

4. FINANCIAL / PERSONNEL / LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS

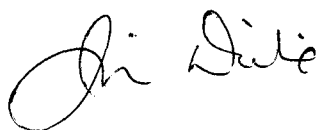
4.1. The seven temporary posts are funded from the mainline Social Work Budget. It is proposed that these posts continue on a temporary basis till early summer 2002 when their impact can be reassessed and reported to Committee. A further report will be forwarded to committee in June 2002 to report on their future impact on benefit take up.

4.2. Funding is available within the Social Work budget to meet the costs associated with these posts.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Committee is asked to:

- a) Agree to the continuation of the seven temporary Income Maximiser posts, Grade AP2/3 detailed in section 4.1 of this report.
- b) Request the Director of Social Work to report to Committee in June 2002 on the take up of benefit in respect of home care service users.
- c) Otherwise note the contents of the report.
- d) Remit this item to the Policy and Resources (Personnel) Sub Committee for noting of the staffing implications



Jim Dickie
Director of Social Work
14th November, 2001

*For further information on this report please contact George McNally, Manager Social Work Strategy
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