

AIMHS Mental Health Forum Group
Thursday 27th February
Koco Building, Spon End, 10.30am – 12.30pm

Present: 17 Attendees

1. Welcome

Karen Keates, AIMHS welcomed everyone to the forum.

2. Apologies

None sent.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising and the minutes of the last meeting were agreed as true.

4. Janet Gurney, Coventry Law Centre

Janet Gurney, Welfare Benefits Caseworker at Coventry Law Centre discussed benefits changes and how they might affect people.

The following information has been taken from Coventry Law Centre's Website:

'Getting benefits advice

The Law Centre offers a specialist service in benefits law. We are able to advise anyone living in Coventry. We have attained the Legal Aid Agency's Quality Mark at the Specialist Help level for welfare benefits law. We have held this since March 1999.

We specialise in advocacy and representation before all types of Social Security Appeal Tribunal. We also specialise in representing cases before the Upper Tier Tribunal, and higher appeal courts. Where necessary we can take judicial review proceedings. Besides representation we also take on complex cases referred to us by other voluntary agencies, advice services and solicitors. We can advise and represent on all social security law, including entitlement to all benefits, backdating, suspensions and overpayments. We represent at hundreds of appeals each year covering employment support allowance, disability living allowance, attendance allowance, incapacity for work and all other benefits, including tax credits.

We do not offer either a form filling service for benefits or basic benefit checks. For help with this sort of benefits questions we suggest that you contact the Coventry Benefits Advice Line on 02476832000. We work closely with this service to ensure that the benefits advice needs of the people of Coventry are met.

If you think that you will need an appointment or representation then either telephone our reception on 02476223053 or drop into the Law Centre. You will be given an appointment with a specialist benefits appeals worker. It is important that you give us as much notice as possible if you want us to represent you at an appeal hearing. But please note that we will only advise you if you live in Coventry.

If you need an interpreter please let us know so that we can arrange for one to be present at any interview.'

For further information please visit <http://covlaw.org.uk> or AIMHS has a number of hard copies which Janet was referring to.

Date of next Meeting: Thursday 17th April, 10.30am – 12.30pm
Koco Building, Spon End, Coventry, CV1 3JQ.

AIMHS Forum Meeting Dates for 2014

30th January

27th February

17th April

29th May

10th July

21st August (AGM)

2nd October

13th November

18th December

NB. Please note all forums will take place at the Koco Building, Spon End, 10.30am – 12.30pm unless you are notified differently.