



Delivering Advice, Information and
Legal Representation Services

Case Study from Bosnia and Herzegovina Community Advice Centre

The client X arrived in Great Britain in 2006. She joined her husband who came to Great Britain in 1993. This case is not common as the client does not belong to the population which came here while the war was still raging. In general, other people had already sorted out their social and housing situations long before her.

Client X approached our Centre for assistance. Everything had to be done practically from the beginning. Like so many other people from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Client X suffered from symptoms of PTSD as a result of the very traumatic war experience in her country of origin. During this time, her husband could help her a little bit, but later fell seriously ill and she took over as primary carer of him. As her life has become more and more difficult she found it extremely hard to cope and approached our centre for assistance.

The Caseworker's assessment of the situation indicated that Mrs and Mr X needed support on claiming adequate benefits, because both of them shared the income of her husband, who was getting only single person's income and disability benefit at the lower rate. Considering the Mr X personal and mobility needs for 24 hrs, 7 days a week, the Caseworker assisted Mr X to put a new application for a Disability Living Allowance, which he later was successful in, and received entitlement to both components of the care at the highest rate. Mrs X was then assisted to claim Carer's Allowance resulting in application to be successful.

The application for Community Care grant was completed for Mr X, resulting in successful award, which provided Mr X with financial assistance to purchase necessary household items, helping Mr X to stay at home rather than to go into residential care. The Social Services were contacted by the Caseworker and request for their assessment on Mr X care needs was made, after which Mr X was able to get adjustable bed and was awarded a care package from Social Services, which he receives on regular basis. Furthermore, the need for counselling and immigration advice was identified for Mrs X and she was referred by the Caseworker to Community Mental Health and immigration solicitor.

Mrs X has been encouraged to join her first English and computer classes at our centre, where she receives regular support from our teacher and volunteers. With the help of the solicitors that we referred her to, she was naturalised as a British Citizen and now holds a British passport. The outcomes of the case have had a significant impact on the lives of Mr and Mrs X: they have increased their income to what they are entitled to; they were able to access mainstream services which they would not otherwise have done; pressure and anxiety was reduced as a result of their living circumstances; they have been supported to live independently with the extra support that they are entitled to; and Mrs X has been supported to integrate better into her new society.