

Financial capability and mental health



Key learning points

Money problems can worsen people's mental health and those with mental illness are more likely to experience financial problems or debt.

Improving people's ability and understanding of their money matters can assist their recovery through improved psychological wellbeing, life satisfaction, and reduced risk of anxiety/depression.

Moneymadeclear is a new service to help people with their money matters and is available:

- Over the phone on 0300 500 5000.
- Online at www.moneymadeclear.org.uk.
- Face to face in the North East and North West of England – call 0300 500 5000 to make an appointment.¹

Money and mental health

Money difficulties can contribute towards the development or escalation of mental health difficulties (financial problems are the most frequently cited cause of depression).^{2,3} In addition, those with mental illness are more likely to experience money difficulties and debt.⁴ As a health or social care professional, your clients are much more likely to be experiencing problems or concerns about their money which will affect their wellbeing.

If people are already in debt, advice can be helpful.⁵ However, supporting people to budget and better manage their finances overall (their financial capability) both reduces impact of debt and risk of getting into debt. Improved financial capability also has wider social benefits and is associated with psychological wellbeing.⁶ Moving from low to average financial capability improves psychological wellbeing by 5.6%, life satisfaction by 2.4% and reduces risk of anxiety/depression by 14.7%.⁷

The key role of health practitioners

Health practitioners are well placed to link people with mental health problems to sources of information and advice regarding their financial problems.⁸ The time spent in helping people make these links may support recovery and improved wellbeing. You can help by:

- Signposting to the Moneymadeclear service by providing flyers in waiting areas which provide information about how a client can access the service.
- Asking clients about their money matters and if relevant, signpost them to the Moneymadeclear service.

- Making direct contact with Moneymadeclear to assist clients in making an appointment to deal with their money matters.
- Offering space in your premises for a Money Guide to provide the service on-site.
- Finding out more about the issue of financial difficulty and mental health problems, and what health practitioners can realistically do.⁹

Moneymadeclear

Moneymadeclear can help people with all sorts of concerns about money, for example:

- I'm struggling to pay my rent and other bills – how am I going to manage?
- I have just been made redundant/lost my job what do I do?
- I've separated from my partner – what should I do about the finances?
- I'm in debt – what are my priorities?
- What benefits and tax credits am I entitled to?
- I'd like to borrow some money but have been turned down by my lender – what are my options?
- I haven't got a bank account for my benefits to go into – what do I do?
- I've received a bank statement but I don't understand the jargon.

We can arrange for a Money Guide to operate from your premises, to find out more contact Kate Jarvis on 020 7943 0479 or kate.jarvis@moneymadeclear.org.uk

Key facts about Moneymadeclear

- Moneymadeclear is a new impartial service from the Consumer Financial Education Body (CFEB) that can help your clients and/or their carers with their money matters.
- In November 2009, the Government announced the UK-wide rollout of the money guidance service. This was based on interim evaluation findings from the pathfinder scheme carried out in the North-East and North-West of England which shows that Moneymadeclear is making a distinct contribution to the information/guidance landscape on money matters and delivering high levels of satisfaction among users. CFEB has committed to a phased national roll out from spring 2010.
- The service is available:
 - Over the phone on **0300 500 5000**;
 - Online at **www.moneymadeclear.org.uk**; or
 - Face to face in the North East and North West of England – call 0300 500 5000 to make an appointment in your local area.

What happens in a Moneymadeclear session?

A client can have a session over the phone or if they live in the North West or North East, they can have a session locally with a trained Money Guide. Both these options can be arranged by ringing the helpline on 0300 500 5000.

The session is based around a conversation, where the Money Guide helps the client discuss their concerns or queries, and the Money Guide provides guidance on addressing these. The Money Guide crucially helps the client identify the underlying issue or cause of the problem and what they can do to resolve this. Often, the root cause of the problem is not always apparent to the client or their carers.

The client will leave the session with actions which they can do to help resolve their problems. The client can ask to see the Money Guide again for more help or further queries, or can ring the helpline or use the website. It may also be appropriate, in some situations and with the client's consent, for a health practitioner or care coordinator to be involved or informed about the discussion, to allow them to support this process.

Further details on the service

- All discussions are confidential between the client and Money Guide.
- Calls to the phone line cost no more than 01 or 02 UK-wide call rates and are included in any inclusive mobile and landline minute bundles.
- All face-to-face appointments with a Money Guide are completely free.
- Money Guides use easy to understand language and can explain tricky terms so that the client will fully understand what is being talked about.
- The service isn't able to offer case management in, for example, serious debt cases but is able to help people understand their options whatever their questions on money.
- The service is for everyone, with translation facilities available.

1 From April 2010, face-to-face services are only available in the North East and North West of England and in addition 37 priority areas across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. A phased national roll out of the full service throughout the UK will commence from late 2010.

2 *Social Exclusion Taskforce factsheet*, www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk, September 2008.

3 Fitch, C., Hamilton, S., Bassett, P. Dovey (2009) *Debt and Mental Health. What do We Know? What Should we Do?* Royal College of Psychiatrists & Rethink, www.rcpsych.ac.uk/debt

4 *The Forum, Primary Care Guidance Debt and Mental Health factsheet*, www.rcpsych.ac.uk/college/mentalhealthinprimarycare.aspx, July 2009.

5 Ibid

6 Taylor M, Jenkins S, Sacker A (2009) *Financial capability and wellbeing: Evidence from the BHPS*, Financial Services Authority, Occasional Paper Series 34.

7 Ibid

8 *The Forum, Primary Care Guidance Debt and Mental Health factsheet*, Op cit.

9 Ibid



Moneymadeclear™
No selling. No jargon. Just the facts.

From the Consumer Financial Education Body,
established by the Financial Services Authority

Face to face
0300 500 5000

www.moneymadeclear.org.uk