

Thursday 3 and Friday 4 December 2020

On Zoom

AGENDA

Day 1: Thursday 3 December 2020 (1.00pm to 4.30pm)

- 1.00 **Welcome and introductions** Alan Markey (NAWRA Chair, Coventry Independent Advice Service)
- 1.10 **Opening address** [The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor of Norwich, Councillor Vaughan Thomas](#)
- 1.30 **The Children's Society's Coordinated Community Support** George Dunstall and Toby North, The Children's Society
- The Children's Society's [Coordinated Community Support programme](#) seeks to better join the dots between Local Welfare Provision, local crisis support and onward advice and guidance through the development of partnerships and collaboration at a local level to ensure that those in need have their needs met swiftly and effectively. It aims to address the gaps that exist in emergency support provision through better networking of different local agencies involved in the provision of emergency assistance and reduce repeat instances of financial crisis by addressing underlying causes of crises, as well as the immediate emergency. Learn about the findings from the four local authority pilot areas (Norfolk, Oldham, Swansea and Tower Hamlets)
- 2.00 **Welfare reform and larger families: needs and entitlements** Aaron Reeves, Associate Professor, Department of Social Policy and Intervention, University of Oxford
- In this session, we'll hear about research (funded by the Nuffield Foundation) which is looking at the [impact of recent benefit changes - the two-child limit and the benefit cap](#) - which end the link between need and entitlement to state support. We'll explore how the poverty risk of larger families has changed in recent years; and also share findings around the link between the benefit cap and mental (ill) health.
- 2.45 **Break**

3.00 **Help with childcare costs in the UK** Will Hadwen, Locum adviser & freelance trainer

Help with childcare costs in the UK is a confusing pick & mix: free childcare 'offers' in the different nations, support via the benefits system, childcare vouchers for some, & HMRC's tax-free childcare accounts (effectively a top up to parents' contributions). Which bits of support can be used with each other, and which can't? How can we as advisers help people navigate this maze, and deal with some of the problems that come up?

4.15 **Wrap up and close** by 4.30pm

Social evening: Thursday 3 December 2020 (7.00pm to 9.00pm)

In the evening all members are welcome to join a virtual NAWRA social evening, featuring a quiz session and other fun activities! Session will be led by NAWRA Chair, **Alan Markey**.

Day 2: Friday 4 December 2020 (9.30am to 1.15pm)

9.30 **Welcome and introductions** Alan Markey (NAWRA Chair, Coventry Independent Advice Service)

9.40 **Out of the frying pan... welfare advice for EU nationals is about to get MORE complicated** Prof Charlotte O'Brien and Alice Welsh, EU Rights and Brexit Hub, University of York

Even before the referendum, EU nationals faced a host of complex legal and administrative obstacles accessing their welfare rights. As we near the end of the transition phase of Brexit, we are about to enter a system of multiple parallel immigration regimes, each involving different welfare entitlements. This presentation introduces the [EU Rights and Brexit Hub](#), a clinic offering second tier advice on EU nationals' welfare rights (and access to other public services), and documenting the problems, obstacles, and possible discrimination, encountered.

10.30 **Welfare Safety - Net or Lottery?** Kelly-Marie Jones, Child Poverty Action Group

Since the start of the pandemic, [CPAG's Early Warning System](#) has been collating evidence of the gaps in new social security measures, and how the pandemic has exacerbated existing difficulties. This presentation provides a summary of the trends seen in the EWS, pointers on dealing with newly arising and common problems plus an overview of the issues we anticipate over the coming months.

11.30 **Break**

11.45 **Fighting funeral poverty in Scotland: Improvements, challenges and solutions as experienced by Scotland's only not-for-profit funeral directors – Caledonia Cremation** Angela Johnstone, Funeral Director, Caledonia Cremation

[Caledonia Cremation](#) was set up in 2018 by the anti-poverty charity [Community Renewal](#) to fight funeral poverty by providing affordable and dignified cremations throughout mainland Scotland. Since then, they have campaigned alongside others for greater awareness around the issue of funeral poverty. Over the past year they have seen significant improvements in the state support available for those from low income families. These changes have positively impacted on their ability to provide a funeral free from financial worry for those who qualify for Government support. However, they are also supporting those who don't qualify for the benefit and face taking out a loan to cover the cost of a basic cremation - £3,569.

Angela will share stories of those who we have been benefitted from these improvements, those who fall through the gaps and how Caledonia Cremation has supported both.

12.00 **What's occurring? A catch up on changes to the COVID-19 changes, and benefit alterations** Daphne Hall from Rightsnet and Tom Messere from Big Book of Benefits

It's been a funny old year... Once it was a July assumption of a gradual return to DWP "business as usual" and a wind down of (reluctantly extended) CJRS and SEISS schemes. Now, the slow wake up to "second wave" has meant a new round of changes to the changes :-). This session mixes: presentations, Q&As and discussion to share, tips and experiences.

We look at:

- Covid-related changes to both HMRC schemes and DWP benefits
- other important benefit changes in e.g. ESA, PIP and UC
- the greyer area of changing DWP practice: processes and assessments
- impacts on you and your service

1.00 **Final questions, wrap-up and close by 1.15**

The conference is free to attend but open to NAWRA members only.

[Find out more about joining](#)

If you have any queries about the meeting please contact
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