



Caroline Bradford

### **STAFFORDSHIRE CANCER ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT PROJECT**

The Staffordshire Cancer Advocacy and Support project is a partnership between the Beth Johnson Foundation and Macmillan Cancer Support and is funded by Macmillan Cancer Support.

We are here for anyone who is aged 50 or over who has been affected by cancer, either as a patient or a family member, friend or carer.

Our Aim is to help resolve any issues or difficulties, cancer-related or not, to ultimately improve your quality of life.

Advocacy aims to help you to:

- Express your views
- Ask for what you want or need
- Obtain services to which you are entitled
- Stand up for your interests
- Safeguard your entitlements

Caroline Bradford, Volunteer Coordinator for South Staffordshire and Cannock Chase District, has recently come into post. Caroline is currently getting to know the areas and is very keen to come along to any community group or organisation and talk about the project.

Caroline is also looking for more volunteers to support the project and older people affected by cancer.

If you are :

- over 45 years
- a good listener
- someone with knowledge or experience of cancer-related issues
- able to commit to between two and four hours per week

Expenses are paid for and you will receive free training, ongoing support from our health and social care professionals, plus a thoroughly rewarding experience.

Please contact Caroline Bradford through the BJJ office number 01782 844036 or email:

[caroline.bradford@bjf.org.uk](mailto:caroline.bradford@bjf.org.uk)

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### Examples of advocacy:

Gentleman living on his own, in a council bungalow, his energy company claimed he owed £200 and they raised his tariff.

Our Advocate informed the client of Beat The Cold and asked if he would like to be referred. The support worker contacted the energy company – the debt was cleared and his tariff was lowered.

Later, in August, the client received confirmation of the higher rate of DLA as he lived alone, he was suffering blackouts and dizzy spells and was at risk of falling but the higher rate DLA was only going to be awarded from October.

The Advocate contacted DWP on behalf of the client to question the award being from October. Consequentially his case was re-assessed and he was awarded the higher rate immediately.

Client A aged 56 years, following a diagnosis and treatment for lung cancer, was referred to the Advocacy service by the Macmillan Cancer Information and Support Centre manager. He had been discharged to the YMCA to stay with his sons. He was not in receipt of any benefits and did not have a permanent address. Following his sons returned home to Fleetwood, the client became homeless.

The Advocate worked with a Housing Association and he moved into the Travelodge, temporarily, his only income was ESA, he was then re-homed into sheltered accommodation but without any furniture, kitchen equipment, furnishings. The advocate supported the client to obtain grants and allowances to furnish his home.

He was supported further by the advocate to make an application for Personal Independence Payment (PIP). Capita cancelled 4 assessment appointments on the day they should have taken place and the advocate liaised between the client, Capita and DWP. Nine months later the decision was made to refuse PIP. An appeal is currently in progress.

Mr & Mrs K were referred to the Advocacy service by the hospital Discharge Liaison Team. Mrs K had a terminal cancer diagnosis, had been fast-tracked for NHS Continuing Care Funding and needed to move into a Nursing Home.

Mr K, 90 years old, did not know how to go about this! He wanted to do what was best for his wife.

The advocate discussed Nursing Homes in the area where they lived, obtained CQC reports, and arranged to visit with Mr K prior to discharge.

Mrs K was discharged to the Nursing Home and died several days later. Mr K felt he had done his best for his wife and she had passed away comfortably at the Home.

## How to get in touch

You can ring us directly or you can ask a member of your healthcare team to get in touch with us on your behalf.

Telephone: **01782 844036**

Email: **macmillan@bjf.org.uk**

A member of our team will visit you in the comfort of your own home to find out what difficulties you are experiencing and together you'll work out a way forward.

If you have more than one or a particularly complex issue, we are able to offer ongoing support and home visits until you feel the issue has been successfully resolved.

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OLDER PERSONS ADVOCACY ALLIANCE

When you have cancer, you don't just worry about what will happen to your body, you worry about what will happen to your life. At Macmillan, we know how a cancer diagnosis can affect everything and we're here to support you through.

If you have any questions about cancer, need support or just someone to talk to, call free, Monday to Friday 9am-8pm on **0808 808 00 00** or visit **www.macmillan.org.uk**.