

Personal Adviser Service

Support, advice and guidance for young people leaving care in Cardiff

Purpose:

- Statutory service as outlined in the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014
- To provide young people leaving care with advice and guidance, including practical advice and support.
- To participate in the assessment, preparation, implementation and review of Pathway Plans
- To coordinate the provision of services to young people and take reasonable steps to ensure young people make use of services that could meet their needs
- To act as an advocate for young people and support their engagement with other advocacy services to ensure their voices are heard and responded to accordingly.

Who are we:

Current team of 22 people, based in Hafan Gobaith in Fairwater.

Team Manager: 1

Senior Personal Advisers: 3

Personal Advisers: 18

The young people we support:

- Young people leaving care in Cardiff. Approximately 354 young people open to the service at present. This only includes over 18 year olds.
- Each Personal Adviser has an average caseload of 30 to 35 young people.
- Ages - 16 to 25
- Ages 16 to 18, the Personal Adviser co-works with the young persons social worker, builds a relationship and supports the development of the pathway plan. Additional 143 co-working young people.
- Ages 18 - 21, the Personal Adviser provides support, advice and guidance around all aspects of a young persons life, while continually reviewing the pathway plan and working towards the young person becoming an independent adult.
- Ages 21 - 25, the Personal Adviser Service provides support for young people who are in full time, progressive education.

The support we provide:

- To coordinate the provision of services to young people and take reasonable steps to ensure young people make use of services that could meet their needs, in all walks of life.
- Practical support with housing, finance, education, employment, family contacts, health, independent living etc.
- Financial support - exercised with discretion and based on individual needs.
- Referrals to other services that can support the young person's needs.
- Advocacy on behalf of young people to ensure their voices are heard.
- Multi-agency approach to ensure the support, advice and guidance that we provide is relevant, accurate and up to date.

Some of our key multi-agency partners:

- Department of Work and Pensions
- Housing - Young Persons Gateway/Supported Lodgings Team
- Into Work Services - Bright Futures
- Locality Social Work Teams
- Cardiff and Vale College
- National Youth Advocacy Service

How have the service adapted to meet the needs of young people during the pandemic

- At present the service is now Home Working in line with COVID19 UK government advice. The service has maintained contact with all young people open to our service and provided up to date advice to young people. Contact is via telephone, skype and text. The service has rag rated the young people open to us and those who are presenting in the red/black risk category have been shared with the Operational Manager and individual risk plans in place.
- The service has adapted working hours with staff managing their time effectively in order to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the young people and the service. Staff are starting work later to maintain contact with young people who have requested this to also support them at times when they may feel more vulnerable and isolated. Some young people who live independently are also being contacted on weekends should they wish to maintain contact with their Personal Advisor We have also introduced a buddy system to support staff who are managed these high risk young people to support staff's emotional wellbeing.
- We have a duty system in place with two duty workers available during working hours. In an emergency and with Operational Management agreement the duty 2 worker will be available to respond to going into the community should a situation arise and following a risk assessment of the situation. We have agreed that any requests must be put in writing and the worker will respond after 2pm. This means that if there are a few requests for dropping off of food parcels etc. that the duty worker will only be asked to go into the community once and this reduces risk to them and their families. Risk assessments will be undertaken in all request.
- Weekly subsistence payments are now being paid to via BACS. For young people who do not have bank accounts we have an agreement with housing providers that they will hold subsistence and give them to young people weekly. This is in place with projects holding 6 weeks' worth of subsistence with a view to review and continue if needed. As far as possible, all payments to be made via BACS. This means that in an emergency we can transfer additional money if needed without having to have any staff out in the community.

What next for us

- Extending Entitlement - extending Personal Adviser Services for all 21-25 year olds.
- Development of partnership with Bright Futures Youth Employment Mentors
- Production of a Leaving Care Booklet, app and training day to inform and empower young people in relation to their rights as a young person leaving care.
- Consultation with young people to ensure we provide a tailor made service.
- Development of partnerships with other Children's Services teams to widen knowledge and gain awareness of support available for young people leaving care.

Thank you

The background features a series of overlapping, semi-transparent geometric shapes in various shades of pink, magenta, and purple. These shapes are primarily located on the right side of the frame, creating a layered, abstract effect. The colors range from light, airy pinks to deep, rich purples. The overall composition is clean and modern, with the text 'Thank you' positioned on the left side of the white background.