

STOCKPORT LIVE WELL

Happy healthy lives for everyone

Toolkit: Attendance Allowance take up via GPs
Stockport Council & Heaton Moor Medical Practice

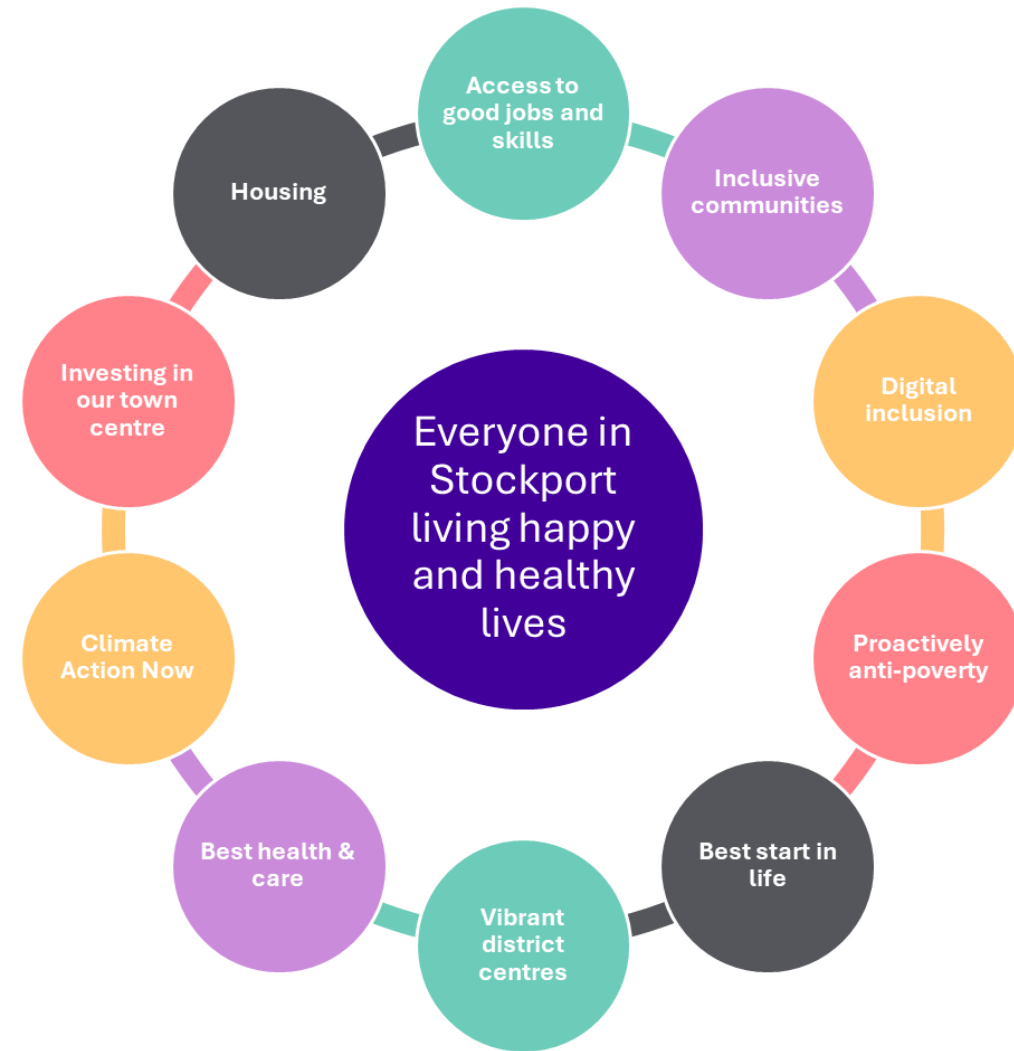
September 2025

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Our mission for this work

- In Stockport, we put people at the heart of everything we do
- As part of our relentless focus on prevention, we work to maximise the income of residents, so they are better able to live independent happy and healthy lives
- We take a place-based approach, working in partnership with the NHS and the VCFSE sector
- Our work is part of Live Well, Greater Manchester's movement for community-led health and wellbeing
- Our dedicated and experienced in-house Welfare Rights team finds innovative ways of enabling people to claim what they are entitled to
- We have one of the fastest ageing populations in the country
- Attendance Allowance is one of the most under-claimed benefits and makes a big difference to those who receive it



In a nutshell...

- Stockport Council worked with a GP practice to increase take up of Attendance Allowance
- GP practice identified patients who might be eligible
- GP practice sent a letter inviting patients to contact the council's welfare rights team
- Council in-house welfare rights triaged and carried out home visits to support form-filling
- Pilot very effective and being rolled out more widely across Stockport and Greater Manchester
- This toolkit is aimed at councils and GP practices to share practice and learning



Attendance Allowance

- Attendance Allowance is a non-means tested benefit for people of State Pension age who need personal care because of a disability or health condition
- It's one of the most under-claimed benefits, older residents with disabilities struggle to complete forms, and it can unlock other benefits - Pension Credit and Council Tax Support
- Stockport has one of fastest ageing populations in the country
- Our in-house welfare rights team was tasked to find innovative ways of enabling people to claim
- AA is paid at 2 rates:

Rate	Qualification
Lower rate - £73.90	Frequent help or constant supervision during the day, or supervision at night
Higher rate - £110.40	Help or supervision throughout both day and night, or a medical professional has determined the patient is nearing end of life

What we did, step by step

- Council provides GP practice with list of conditions likely to produce a successful claim
- GP practice runs search to identify matching patient records
- GP practice prints and posts letter to patients prepared by council outlining benefits of AA and offering council support with application
- Resident contacts council, triaged and book home visit/ appointment in community space
- Application completed and submitted
- Conversation with resident around other benefits and needs
- DWP respond direct to resident
- Council's Welfare Rights team follow up with residents to find out outcomes and gather feedback



Results: phase 1 Dec 2023 – March 2024

450 letters

16 %
response rate
(71 contacts)

88 %
passed initial
phone triage

£200,427

Cash gains per annum
Attendance Allowance + other
awards

For every **£1** spent on admin
£74 was brought in for residents

82 %

home visits resulted
in application

- 18% not eligible, supported to claim other benefits
- Average interview time 80 mins

95 % award rate

- 5:1 higher vs lower AA rates
- Nationally 1/2 AA applications rejected

Sample letter

Dear Mr Bloggs,

Are you eligible for Attendance Allowance?

Attendance Allowance is a tax-free benefit designed to assist people with disabilities or long-term health conditions to manage extra costs associated with care needs. If you struggle with daily activities due to illness or mobility issues, this financial support can provide valuable assistance.

Key benefits:

- **Financial assistance** – Receive tax-free payments to help with care needs, regardless of whether you have a carer.
- **Flexible use** – Allocate funds in a way that best suits your needs, whether for home adaptations, personal care, or mobility support.
- **Potential increase in other benefits** – Receiving Attendance Allowance may lead to increased entitlements, such as Pension Credit or Council Tax Support.
- **Greater independence** – Additional financial support can enhance your quality of life, making daily tasks more manageable.

If you would like to know more about Attendance Allowance, you can ring Stockport Council's Home Visiting Team on XXXX XXX or complete the tear-off slip below and return in the Freepost envelope. They will contact you to arrange a home visit or local appointment.

With kind regards,

I'd like to know more about Attendance Allowance. Please contact me.

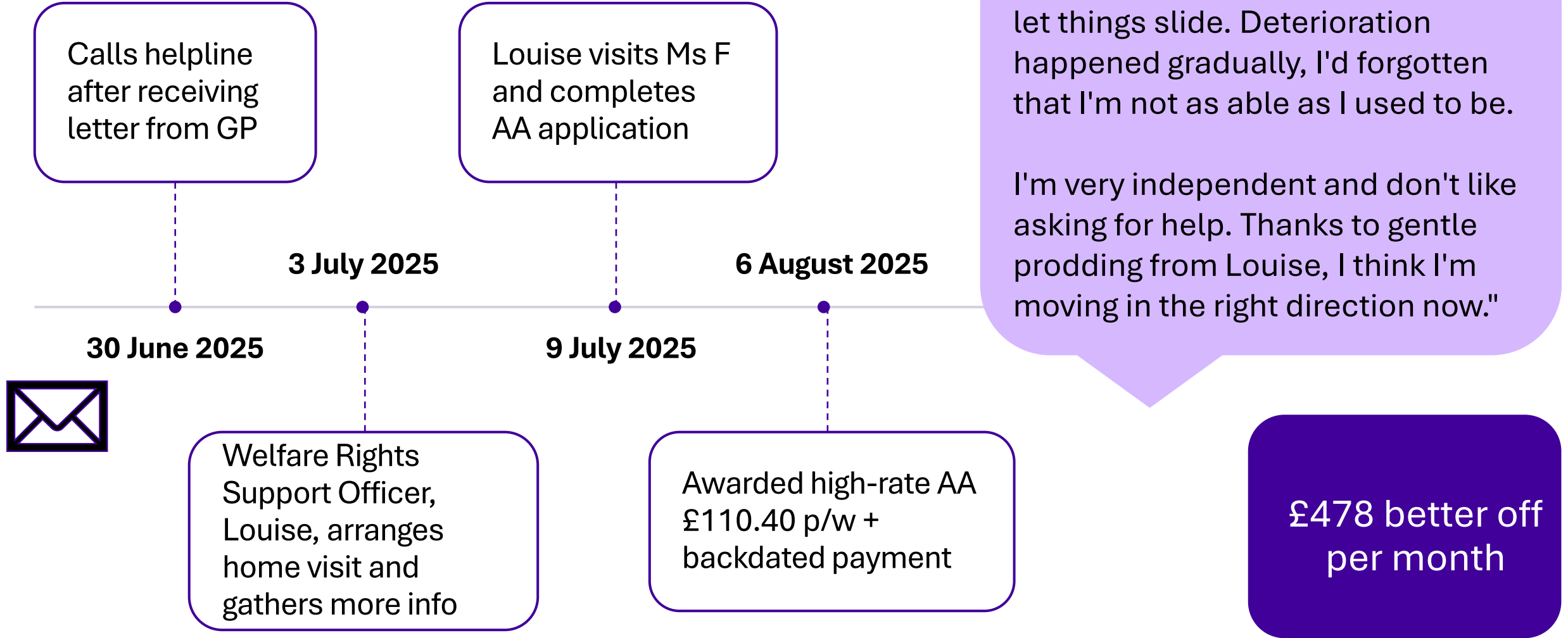
Name: _____

Address: _____ Postcode: _____

Telephone number(s): _____ Email: _____

Case study 1

Ms F (osteoporosis, arthritis, depression)



Case studies 2

Mrs A

- Deaf
- Blurred vision
- Arthritis - mobilising difficulties
- Shortness of breath and dizzy spells

Outcome

Income was £202 per week (State Pension)

Awarded £110.40 per week (higher rate AA)

£478 better off
per month

Mr K

- Deaf
- Memory loss
- Joint pain and unsteadiness
- Osteoporosis

Outcome

Awarded high-rate Attendance Allowance

£478 better off
per month



Case studies

Mrs E

- Arthritis – limited mobility
- Leaking heart valve
- Shortness of breath and dizzy spells
- Receives Disability Living Allowance low-rate care

Outcome

- Increased to DLA high-rate care - additional £81.65 p/w
- Qualifies for guaranteed Pension Credit £3.87 p/w unlocking other benefits including:
- Council Tax support
- NHS benefits (glasses and dentists etc)
- Warm home and cold weather payments

£408 better off
per month

Mr L

- Heart failure
- Ischemic heart disease
- Chest pains & Breathlessness

Outcome

Awarded high-rate Attendance Allowance

£478 better off
per month

Case studies 3

"A very big thank you, I am very pleased! You were ace!! I have never received anything before in my life and to get this help means a lot."

"During your home visit and with your expertise the whole process was easy and straight forward. I am delighted that my application was successful, this award will be lifechanging for myself and my wife."

"Heartfelt thanks for helping me make the application. Attendance Allowance has helped tremendously; I can get help around the house and catch taxis."



Learning



Send letters in batches to manage response rates

Better response rates with tear-off slip and FREEPOST envelope (instead of ringing number)

Each letter took around 2 min admin time for GP practice



Home visits almost universally accepted and valuable for observing levels of need

Easy bridge to support with:

- Other support - occupational therapy, adaptations, safeguarding, care and support at home
- Other benefits - Pension Credit, Housing Benefit, Council Tax support, support when claims are rejected

Observations



Some don't take up offer of means-tested benefit check, prefer not to discuss their income

Positive feedback from patients – requests for letters for friends and family, less than handful of queries

Additional triage of patient list would reduce wastage e.g. phone patients prior to letter being sent

Next steps

- Continue 'phase 2' with built-in patient agreement for analysis of patient records to evaluate any changes in support needs, e.g. do those who receive Attendance Allowance go on to have fewer GP appointments?
- Repeat in Heatons Primary Care Network and extend to other Stockport PCNs
- Explore adapting for children with disabilities/special educational needs
- Continue rolling out our Pensioner Assist Network benefit uptake campaign
- Welfare Rights team attending 'coffee mornings' at sheltered housing



Find out more

Other toolkit resources including list of health conditions and EMIS codes
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imogen.fox@stockport.gov.uk – Delivery Manager, Financial Inclusion
c.mcgirr1@nhs.net - Ciara McGirr, The Heatons PCN Lead Care Coordinator

