

Issue 7

Happy Holidays from A2B!

Benefit Calculator

The Benefit Calculator was launched in Parliament Buildings on 9 October 2008 and received a wide range of coverage across the local press, from Ballymoney to Enniskillen to Newry. The event report can be found on the new 'publications' page of www.a2b.org.uk.

During October and November 2008, 1332 valid calculations were carried out on the site and 38% of these gave a result showing unclaimed benefit entitlement. 183 people went on to say that they intended to claim the benefit(s) identified, which equates to an annual value of £469,181 of additional entitlements.

The A2B staff team

- Patrick Minne, Chief Executive Officer
 - Tracy Bell, Project Coordinator
- Hilary Doherty, Outreach/ Community Development Officer
 - Zoë Anderson, Content Officer
- Kate Cowan, User Experience Officer
 - Neil Curran, Technology Officer
 - Brendan Rafferty, Training Officer



The ABC

access to benefits circular

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benefits
REAPING REWARDS FOR OLDER PEOPLE

december 2008

About A2B

A2B is working to help older people in Northern Ireland maximise their take-up of benefit entitlements.

We have developed a 'Benefit Calculator' which calculates benefit entitlement for an older person and also signposts them to other benefits which do not depend on their income.

Through outreach work we are identifying older people and the organisations that work with them. This allows us to raise awareness of the calculator and helps us to reach more isolated people, including those in rural areas. We are also providing training support to overcome any barriers to benefit take-up that many older people face and to help with the technological aspects of the calculator.

A2B is supported for four years by The Atlantic Philanthropies and specific funding from the Department of Finance and Personnel.

What we've been doing

A2B has been represented at:

- Community Safety event in Magherafelt (attended by 130 people)
- Information event in Gordons chemist, Lurgan
- Two Fuel Poverty events in Derry
- Two Safe Senior events in Ballygowan and Bangor
- Electric Blanket testing events in Downpatrick and Benburb
- Credit Crunch event at Dungannon library
- Slipper Amnesty in Dunmurry
- Beat the Blues event in Newcastle (attended by 70 people)
- NIFH conference Ballymena

Training on the A2B Benefit Calculator has taken place in Rasharkin, Limavady, Ballymena, Portadown, Derry and Belfast.

As part of the planning for the Older Person's Adviser Course, Advice NI has produced a Needs Analysis Report to help inform its content and delivery prior to development. The main aim of the research was to identify 6 topic areas for inclusion in the course based on the training needs of those working with older people and the welfare needs of older people themselves. The full report can be found in the publications section of www.a2b.org.uk

Our plans for the coming months

You will find us at:

- A Safe Seniors event in Ballywalter Village Hall
- A joint A2B/Age Concern Cookstown information event and tea dance
- A Sunday lunch and tea dance with St Vincent de Paul, Armagh
- Two energy/fuel poverty workshops in Corrs Corner and Ballymoney
- A Safe Seniors event Newtownards
- An Energy Saving event in Grove Well Being Centre, North Belfast

Training will be taking place in Dungannon, Monkstown, Lisburn and Downpatrick. A list of all the organisations who have received the training and who meet our quality assurance standards will be available in our Organisation Directory in the next few weeks.

Work is now under way on future updates to www.a2b.org.uk – an Organisation Edition and a Form Filler function will be available in the spring. A2B is also reviewing tenders for the creation of a 'Datamine' which will allow for more detailed research to be carried out on the anonymous data gathered by the Calculator.

Contact Us

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