

Torfaen County Borough Council Supporting People Team

The Benefits of Supporting People

How intervention is helping to save money

Every £1 spent saves £2.30ⁱ

Richard's Story

Early Life

Richard grew up in difficult circumstances.

His mother suffered with severe alcohol misuse and often struggled to cope.

Due to the severity of the alcohol misuse, Richard would often spend time in care.

He continued to move in and out of care for most of his early life, which had a significant impact on his childhood and his transition into adulthood.

At 18 he started using heroin, which caused the start of a downward spiral into drug abuse and a life of petty crime.

Adulthood

At 23 Richard was diagnosed with Schizophrenia and spent several periods in hospital.

He was allocated a Community Psychiatric Nurse and a Mental Health Social Worker.

Richard now takes medication daily which helps to keep his mental health under control, however, his drug addiction has continued.

To fund his drug habit he has frequently turned to stealing and other petty crimes.

He has been in prison 3 times in the last year, serving several months at a time.



Housing

Richard's chaotic lifestyle has meant that he has struggled to maintain accommodation.

He has lost several tenancies in the last few years and been homeless on a few occasions.

He lost his last tenancy with the Council due to rent arrears, so moved back in with his mother.

After a short period of time, their relationship broke down and she kicked him out because of his behavior.

He is currently sofa surfing, but due to the insecure nature of his situation he is not taking his medication regularly and his health is beginning to deteriorate.

Family

Richard has a 6 year old son called Max who lives locally and with whom he would like to have more contact.

However, due to his excessive drug use and the lack of suitable accommodation, his ex-partner is reluctant to grant him access.

As a result, he has not seen his son for 2 years and this is having a further impact on his mental health.



Employment

Richard left school with no qualifications, his education being disrupted due to the instability he experienced at home.

He has very few literacy skills and his ability to access employment is limited.

The last time that he had a job was seven years ago and he has not been in employment or training since.

Costs

During his adult life Richard has accessed many services, which have been paid for by the public purse.

The following section attempts to use current estimates to identify the cost of services Richard has accessed and how much has been spent helping him.

Mental Health Service

Richard is likely to have accessed most of these services in the last few years:

Clinical Behavioural Therapy (for Schizophrenia)	£86.66	(per hour)
Mental Health Secure Unit	£528	(per average admission)
Average Out Patient Attendance	£100	(per visit)
Local Authority Mental Health Care Homes	£793	(per week)
Day Care Services (Mental Health)	£38	(per sessions)
Counselling	£48	(per hour)
Support for Mental Health – Home Care	£176	(per week)
Support for Mental Health – Day Care	£69	(per week)
Mental Health Nurse	£46	(per hour)
Social Worker	£55	(per hour)

Unit Costs of Health and Social Care 2013

Housing

Cost of eviction from a social tenancy	£1,119
Rent arrears – write-off	£1,900
Cost of re-letting property post eviction	£2,787
Cost of homelessness decision	£375
Temporary accommodation (p/w)	£162.44 (ii)
Cost of concluding duty	£230

Shelter

Criminal Justice System

Average cost per prisoner (per year)	£37,163
Average cost of a burglary	£2,300

Personal Social Services Research Unit & Home Office



Without housing related support from a support worker, the outlook for Richard is not good:

Substance Misuse

- Poor contact with agencies and Richard's lack of engagement with treatment programmes
- Richard would fall into increasing financial hardship and rent arrears making Homelessness more likely
- His anti-social & offending behaviour would continue; stealing to pay for drugs
- Further convictions and prison for Richard are likely

Mental Health

- Richard doesn't keep appointments with his Community Psychiatric Nurse or social worker
- He is not taking medication regularly and his overall physical and mental health is deteriorating
- Crisis leading to hospitalisation is likely
- Richard's anti-social behaviour increased, so an ASBO is likely repeatedly involving the Police and his landlord
- Richard is in increasing risk of a prison sentence as a result of his offending behaviour

Other Support Needs

- Richard has no contact with mother
- And no contact with his son
- He is not likely to develop positive relations and a support network with his family
- Richard remains unemployed and unqualified
- Richard has poor budgeting skills, and can't pay off rent arrears and his homelessness continues



However, the story could have been very different

How can Supporting People help?

If Richard had received housing related support from a support worker:

Substance Misuse

- Richard would be supported to access to a drug treatment programme
- Richard would receive ongoing support to continue the programme, and support to remain safe and address his health needs

Mental Health

- The support worker would liaise with the Community Psychiatric Nurse and Social Worker and help Richard to keep appointments
- Links would be made with other Mental Health services, reducing the risk of crises and future hospitalisation

Other Support Needs

- Richard would be supported to reduce his challenging anti-social behaviour
- He would be helped to manage and reduce his offending behaviour
- Support would be provided to access, set up and maintain a home, preventing a Homelessness presentation
- The support worker would help him e-establish contact with his mother and son
- Support goals for accessing training and work would be identified and followed, helping Richard to gain qualifications and employment
- Budget management and agreement to pay previous rent arrears would also be supported



NB: Accurate cost analysis is not straightforward, with figures now being compiled by a wide range of organisations at different times and using different criteria. This briefing therefore is only intended as an indication, not a definitive list of the cost.

References

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In support of Supporting People

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ⁱ The research '*Cost Benefits of Supporting People Programme*' which was commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government in 2006 came up with a saving of **£1.68**. However, Carmarthenshire Supporting People carried out their own assessment in 2011 which recorded a saving of **£2.30**

ⁱⁱ Temporary accommodation costs can vary depending on the type of accommodation used. In this example, the figure used relates to PRS stock accommodation.