**DIAL Manager’s End of Year report for March 2024**

**Our Achievements**

We have been challenged this year with helping an increasing number of people affected by the ‘cost of living crisis’ following on from the pandemic.

The health and wellbeing of Disabled people continues to be disproportionately affected by such crises. Many local people have found themselves thrust into poverty. We anticipate this will sadly continue for some time so we continue to work tirelessly and know we need to step up to continue to be a well -respected voluntary organization in the District.

Although it continues to be difficult to find suitable volunteers we have been lucky enough to recruit two new volunteers this year who have made an excellent addition to the team, providing telephone and face-to -face advice and helping clients to maximise their income with benefit applications.

DIAL staff and volunteers have-

* Helped to generate over **2.7 million pounds** into the District by helping our clients to maximise their income by successfully obtaining disability benefits this year. **A million pounds** over what was generated last year.
* Helped 552 people to complete their benefit applications. An increase of 47% from last year.
* We have supported 84 people to successfully challenge their welfare benefit appeals enabling them to obtain £959,865 with a 93% success rate this year. The national average being 62%.
* Dealt with 6454 contacts with 9108 issues. Giving advice and information on a range of subjects including benefits, equipment, Social Care, daily living, transport to name but a few.
* Dealt with a number of referrals from a range of Social Services and other professionals including Live Well Wakefield, Age UK, Citizens Advice.
* Attended a number of on-line events/networking opportunities to promote the needs of service users, provide advice and information, raise awareness of our service and build on our knowledge.

Our unique, knowledgeable, caring approach to giving advice, information and support has improved the wellbeing of those who use our service as well as our staff and volunteers.

We have had excellent feedback from people we have helped as indicated in their comments to us when we asked them how DIAL made them feel and what difference our help had made to their health, happiness and wellbeing.

“I spent most of my childhood in hospital and missed school. Could not have done it without your help”.

“Although I suffer terrible with anxiety etc I felt comfortable around the staff”. “Couldn’t ask for better”.

“Listened, advised, great service”.

“Mum has dementia. The service we were provided with was fantastic and I do think without this help we wouldn’t have been successful. We can’t thank DIAL enough”.

“Has changed my life completely. Now feel safer knowing I can afford things”.

“More confident knowing service is here”.

“Big change now like new life”.

“Its made a great difference to me both mentally and financially as I don’t have to worry about having a day off work”.

“Support was second to none- made me feel more secure just knowing DIAL would help no matter what”.

“I am not as stressed because of DIAL’s help”.

“Much happier now I can afford to get help”.

**Future Development:**

DIAL aims to:-

* Maintain core services including giving practical support to clients where possible.
* Continue to provide one to one support to people challenging adverse benefit decisions.
* Continue to increase the awareness of DIAL.
* Recruit further volunteers to our team.

DIAL has been grateful for the continued funding and support of WMDC and Wakefield CCG this year.