

*A day in the life of.....*

## **An ILS Worker**



On arrival at a customers' house, if there is no answer, I wait for an hour, then push a note through the door to say I've called and how long I waited. I then telephone 'on-call' to let them know that no-one was at home.

If the customer is in, I first check they have taken their medication and also if they have enough supplies of their medication. If they are running short, I remind the customer that they need to take their repeat prescription to the Doctors and then pick up the new medication two days later. I then note this down in the diary to ensure other staff know what is happening.

It is very important to read the diary at the start of a visit to see if there are any appointments for the day or any important messages from other staff.

I encourage the customer to do household chores, wash their clothes and cook for themselves. I do this through working *alongside* them as opposed to doing it for them – this is Independent Living!

I also encourage customers to maintain their personal hygiene. Most ILS customers can shop for themselves but some need support. I promote healthy eating, particularly if the customer has health problems such as diabetes or high cholesterol. This does not mean telling the customer what to buy, simply making suggestions is enough.

When a customer has a Doctor or Hospital appointment I encourage them to attend and then go with them, sometimes even sitting in on the consultation.

I also attend meetings with social workers, psychologists, occupational therapists etc.

I always ask the customer if there is any mail in case there is something important that needs my attention eg Housing Benefit or Income Support Forms – these all need immediate attention.

I encourage the customers to use the telephone to contact maintenance about any faults and record dates/times of when they will be calling, this is important as there is not always a member of staff available to do this with them. I also advise on Health & Safety issues eg not overloading electric sockets.

A lot of my time is spent listening to customers. Some of them need to talk about fears and problems they may have with any aspect of their lives. This may include personal relationships, neighbour disputes or financial worries.

If a customer gets upset or agitated, I keep calm, talk and listen to them until we reach an agreement or understanding. If in doubt I ask for help.

I encourage all customers to use public transport – buses, taxis, trains, and go with them, remembering I cannot always be there and they will need to use them alone at some point. I do not use my own car unless there is an emergency.

I support customers to gain and keep employment or attend college courses. I encourage them to get out, meet people, socialise, use local facilities eg pubs, leisure centres, to go on holidays and all the things that you or I would do.

I treat customers with respect, dignity and confidentiality at all times. I get to know each one as much as possible – all customers are different and have different needs.<sup>1</sup>