

3 September 2007

CHARITY LAUNCHES EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT VIA GP SURGERIES AND HEALTH CENTRES IN NEWCASTLE AND NORTH TYNESIDE

GP practices and health centres in Newcastle and North Tyneside are participating in new projects enabling a specialist employment adviser to be placed within doctors' and health centre surgeries to help patients get back into work, education or training.

Under the project, patients who are out of work for health reasons and claiming Incapacity or Disability Benefits, and who would like independent, one-to-one confidential advice about finding and keeping a job, can now make an appointment with the Tomorrow's People employment adviser dedicated to that GP practice or health centre. The service is provided at no cost to the GP surgery, health centre or to the patient.

Ongoing, one-to-one support provided includes confidence building, discussion of individual barriers to work, job interview techniques, CV writing advice, learning and vocational training opportunities, help with job application forms, work placements, paid and voluntary work options, as well as 12-month In-Work Aftercare Support following the clients' job start date.

Surgeries and health centres in Newcastle which have agreed to be part of the project include Saville Medical Group; St Anthony's Health Centre and Walker Medical Group. North Tyneside surgeries involved in the project include Garden Park Surgery, Portugal Place Health Centre, Park Road Medical Practice (employment adviser appointments held at Portugal Place Health Centre), Collingwood Surgery and New York Surgery. The charity is inviting any surgery in Newcastle or the Tyneside area to participate in the voluntary project.

Garry Urwin, Community Adviser for Tomorrow's People Newcastle comments: "Unemployment damages people's lives in many ways, including susceptibility to ill-health. We take our support directly out into the community and local neighbourhoods, through agreed outreach meeting venues including GPs' surgeries and health centres, to help those in need of advice on suitable work and learning options.

"Individual clients referred to our service by their GP or medical practitioner, register with their dedicated Tomorrow's People adviser on a voluntary basis. If patients feel they are being scrutinised or judged they will not seek help. Our independence from Government means that the adviser devotes more time to the referred patient, which is vital in gaining the trust and confidence of the client in helping the individual to overcome their barriers to returning to work or learning."

Registered Office:
Tomorrow's People Trust Limited
4th Floor Rothermere House
49/51 Cambridge Road
Hastings East Sussex TN34 1DT



Although the service can be accessed by any person with health issues, it is hoped that Tomorrow's People ongoing support will particularly help people in receipt of sickness, incapacity and disability related benefits, regain their confidence and achieve sustainable work.

This initiative is based on Tomorrow's People's background of success running similar projects across 74 GPs' surgeries, hospitals and health centres in various areas of the UK, including London, Devon, Bristol, Tyneside, and Glasgow.

The first Tomorrow's People GP Outreach Project began in a surgery in Kentish Town, North West London where for the last five years it has had a Tomorrow's People adviser based on site at a busy GPs' surgery. So far nearly 200 patients have seen the adviser in London, and of those who have completed the programme, 87% have returned to employment or are back in education or training. On average, 82% are still in work 12 months on. The project in London has saved the practice at least five GP consultations per patient, already saving the surgery thousands of pounds.

Tomorrow's People, which has a 23-year track record of helping people out of long term unemployment, provides a number of additional programmes across Newcastle and North Tyneside including mentoring. This service involves one-to-one support for unemployed clients who face significant barriers to work such as health problems, poor housing or homelessness, low confidence and self-esteem, debt problems, drug and/or alcohol abuse, a history of offending and low basic skills.

Any GPs, practice managers or health specialists who would like to get in touch and find out more about the project, or any person who would like to know more about this employment advice service, please contact Tomorrow's People by telephoning 0191 261 6242.

There is also the option of visiting our national website at www.tomorrows-people.co.uk

-Ends-

Notes to Editors:

Tomorrow's People is a national charity that has helped change the lives of over 400,000 people across the UK who had been resigned to long-term unemployment and welfare dependency, since it was established in 1984. It engages with the people who are the hardest to reach by giving them one to one support in their own community, helping them find the right job and to keep it long term. On average, 76% of people helped by Tomorrow's People are still in employment 12 months on.

Press enquiries:

Michelle Eastty, Media Relations Manager, Tomorrow's People
Tel: 01424 203752 or mobile 07875 412325, meastty@tomorrows-people.co.uk