

Chorley Council - Collecting information on a customer's needs 'in the round'

Chorley Council used their 'Circle of Customer Need' methodology to better understand the needs of older people experiencing fuel poverty. The 'Circle of Customer Need' methodology broadens the frame of reference for the exchange of information between customer and service providers beyond the customer's immediate presenting need and seeks to identify each customer's 'pattern' of need, and map the causes and effects.

Addressing the customers' Circle of Customer Need at first point of contact saves Chorley Council (and their customers) having to conduct multiple interviews and repeat the same information with different front line staff, or different organisations.

The approach generates operational efficiency savings to the participating organisations. For example Chorley Council estimated that to identify and access a single complex service (such as a grant) a customer would require two face to face interactions and three telephone conversations at a cost of £17.32.

Following the Circles of Customer Need process, the case worker was able to offer three services with an average of one follow up visit and one follow up telephone call. This represents an estimated potential saving of £39.12 or 75 per cent per customer. If 15 case workers/home visitors/home workers from across the LSP visit two customers per month with complex needs and offer on average three additional services, this will be a total saving of £14,083 per annum in avoidable contact alone. For further details on how these approaches help Chorley and partners management demand see 'Increasing the independence and resilience of older people'.

Extract taken from:

Managing customer demand Understanding and changing behaviours to help meet the financial challenge,

Local Government Association

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http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=d51198ea-c73d-4c88-adea-b46e238f85eb&groupId=10180