



# “No Longer Suffering in Silence”

A review of the  
Lamplight Support Service

April 2017

“

My life has changed with the help I received and I will be eternally grateful for the support they gave me.”





## Background

Since its establishment in 2010, the RCN Foundation has provided access to financial support to any and all nurses, midwives and health care assistants (HCAs) who were facing hardship. Prior to that, this type of assistance was provided by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN), but only to its members.

In February 2016, the Lamplight Support Service was created as a partnership between the RCN Foundation and the RCN as a new model through which to deliver advice and grants to members of the nursing community facing hardship. The RCN Foundation funds in full the cost of operational delivery of the Lamplight Support Service and the grants to recipients. The RCN provides the personnel and infrastructure required to deliver, monitor and evaluate the service.

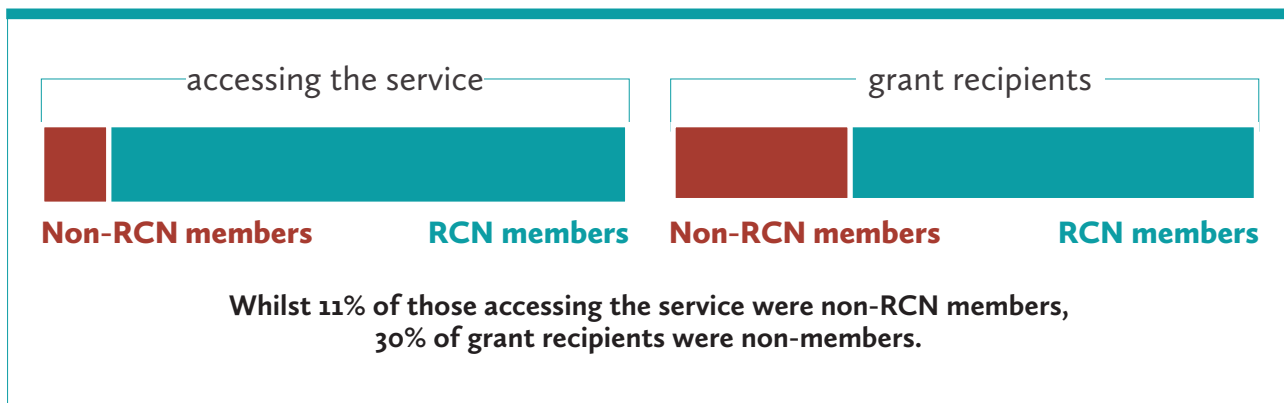
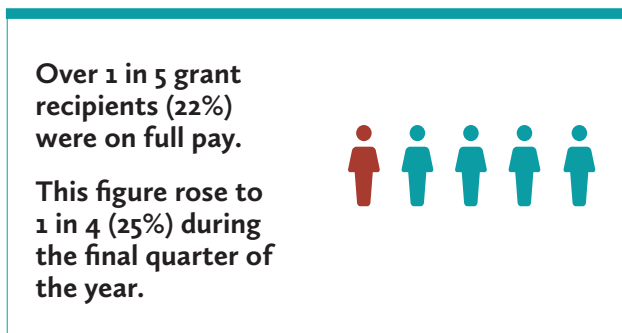
As a service funded by the RCN Foundation, the Lamplight Support Service continues to be open to all nurses, midwives and HCAs in the UK, not only those who are members of the RCN.

This report provides an overview of key results and outcomes from the first year of the partnership. It also looks at some of the key trends in relation to the service since the RCN Foundation was established in 2010.

## Key results and outcomes

### About the individuals using the service

1,711 people made contact with the Lamplight Support Service during its eleven months operating in 2016. The numbers of people making contact with the service on a monthly basis accelerated as the year wore on. Figures for the final quarter of 2016 showed that 510 assessments were offered, putting the average annual figure for those seeking support at over 2,000.

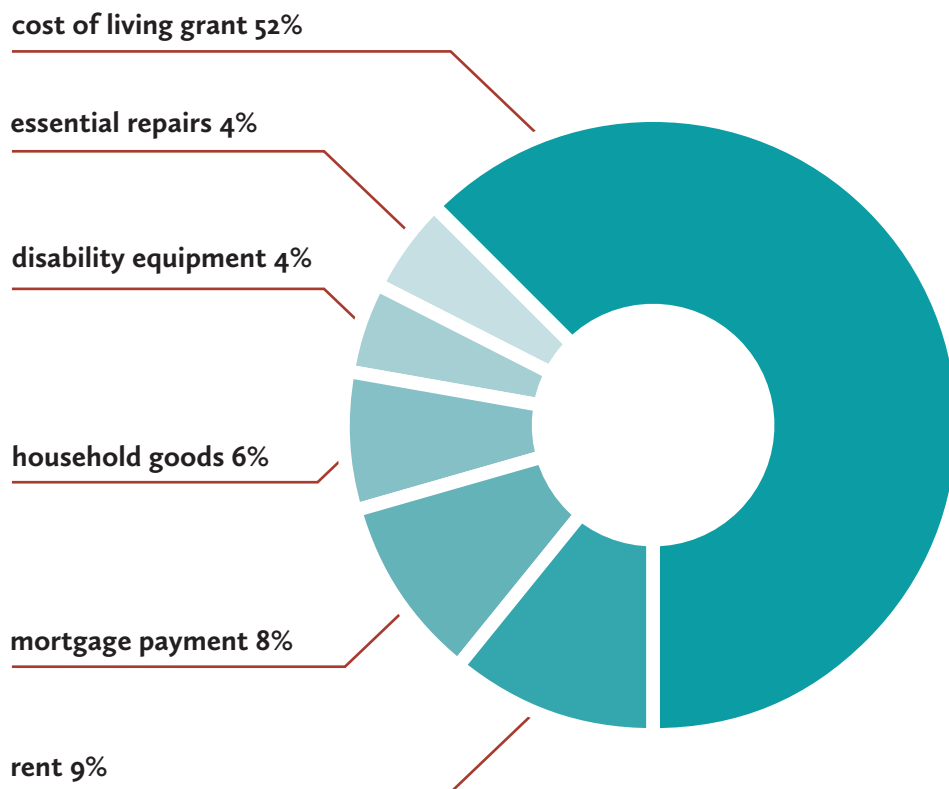


### Why nursing staff were accessing the service





Grants were needed for a number of reasons. The top six reasons were:



The main issues advised on were:

income  
maximisation

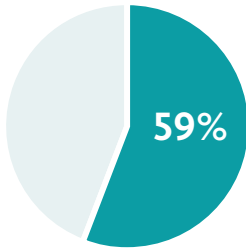
housing needs

disability  
benefits

job seeking  
benefits

childcare  
benefits and  
tax credits

## Impact of the service



59% of callers to the service were better off financially as a result of advice they were given by the LSS team. This rose to 77% during the final quarter of the year.



**£2,775**

On average, individuals who contacted the service were better off by £2,775 per year as a result of the advice they were given. This figure rose to £3,125 during the final quarter of the year.



**£1,420,947**

In 2016, the Lamplight Support Service provided advice to individuals to enable them to apply for potential benefits and tax credits to which they were entitled worth £1,420,947.



63% said the grant would increase their independence

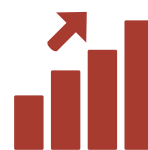


54% said the grant would assist them getting back to work

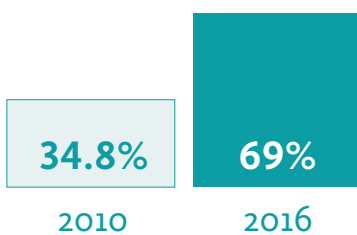
## Longer term trends



Since 2010, there has been a 46% increase in the number of applications received for grants, and a 59% increase in the value of grants made.



The number of grant recipients on full pay in 2016 (22%) is almost double the number in 2010 (12%).



The number of recipients receiving a grant to alleviate severe hardship doubled between 2010 (34.8%) and 2016 (69%).

## Case studies

**John** was referred to the Lamplight Support Service by a member of the RCN's Legal team, who were concerned about his welfare. When LSS contacted John in the run up to the Christmas period, he was homeless and sleeping in a hostel. After an initial discussion, a Lamplight adviser identified that John could be supported with the cost of temporary accommodation whilst he explored more permanent options for housing.

However, the situation deteriorated during the assessment process, with John contacting the service to tell them that he had been evicted and was sleeping rough. That same day, an adviser spoke with a local housing charity and was given details of alternative accommodation. The adviser contacted the owner of a local guest house and explained the situation, and she was happy to offer John accommodation with a commitment from the service that it would meet the costs.

Within the space of a few hours the Lamplight Support Service had secured accommodation for John that would ensure he had somewhere safe, dry and warm to sleep over the Christmas and New Year period. The service continued to work with a local housing charity and John to find a permanent solution to his housing problems.

**Ann** has been a nurse her entire working life. At the age of 49 she was diagnosed with Transverse Myelitis, a neurological condition in which the spinal cord is inflamed. It was a downward spiral of loneliness and desperate lack of earnings, leading to emotional turmoil and dark depression. She had not turned the heating on for two winters and went many days without meals. The Lamplight Support Service offered Ann a grant to get thermal blackout curtains and blinds ahead of the winter. We also provided her with carpets to keep the warmth in and had a cupboard built under the stairs to house her wheelchair. She says "My life has changed with the help I received and I will be eternally grateful for the support they gave me."

**Chloe**, a nurse of 12 years, had escaped a violent relationship and needed to take time off from work to recover from the ensuing stress and anxiety. Chloe needed household essentials for herself and her two young children for their new home. The RCN Foundation was able to assist Chloe with a grant of £650 to get her life back on track by enabling her to purchase beds for her children and a new cooker.

**Katharine** received a hardship grant to assist her financially following a road accident. This grant offered her much needed respite.

She was suffering from chronic pain, fatigue and depression after an accident in London where she was hit by a coach. At the time, she had just been promoted and therefore felt she had to carry on working. Six months later, she realised that she needed support and contacted the RCN Foundation. She says "I have come to realise that at certain times in our lives we may find ourselves in need of either emotional or financial support. The Benevolent Fund is there for nurses, and it really makes such a difference to have this support when things seem bleak. I now know that I no longer need to suffer in silence."

“

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## We want to hear from you

Feel free to contact us and see how we can help:

- ✉ [rcnfoundation@rcn.org.uk](mailto:rcnfoundation@rcn.org.uk)
- ☎ 020 7647 3645
- 🖱 [www.rcnfoundation.org.uk](http://www.rcnfoundation.org.uk)
- 🐦 @RCNFoundation
- 📘 /RCNFoundation



To access initial advice and book an appointment for a full assessment, call the Lamplight Support Service team on 0345 772 6200 between 08:30 and 20:30 Monday to Friday.

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