

Auriga Services: *Changing lives every day*

Social Return on Investment

Summary Document

auriga

A Social Return on Investment of income maximisation and welfare benefits to kidney dialysis patients at University Hospitals Birmingham

Background

The University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB) is the UK's second largest renal treatment centre. The Trust wanted an assistance service they could offer to patients which could help deal with their financial difficulties caused by illness and long term disability.

The assistance service is undertaken by Auriga Services, and is a one-to-one money, welfare and debt advice service for people with renal failure, under the care of the UHB.

It started in May 2016 and is funded primarily from the NHS with contributions from Severn Trent Water Charitable Trust Fund and, for one year, the Money Advice Service.

As part of the Money Advice Service contribution, an independent qualitative study was commissioned to evidence the impact of the service on individuals.

Separately from the Money Advice Service study, Auriga commissioned this Social Return on Investment study to evidence the wider financial benefits of the support given to kidney dialysis patients.



Of all the things that I have done for kidney patients this service has made the most difference to patients' lives.

CLARA DAY, CONSULTANT NEPHROLOGIST

Funded by



Key findings

- The SROI analysis shows that the service for the UHB is providing outstanding social impact and has changed people's lives.
- The service has directly increased patient's income, enabled patients to feel in control of their lives, provided financial comfort and relief from financial stress and enabled greater of confidence as people regain a sense of planning and management of their own lives.
- In financial terms, for every £1 invested in the service over the period reviewed, £14.52 in social value has been generated, through a mixture of direct financial benefits, non-monetary benefits and improvements in financial comfort, reduced stress, patients feeling in control of their own life and increased confidence.
- The SROI indicates that the investment made into the service demonstrates outstanding value for money as an initiative to address financial vulnerability in a healthcare settings. Some of the quotes are a powerful testimony from patients on what the service means to them.



Working with Auriga has transformed the way we deal with our dialysis patients.

CLARA DAY, CONSULTANT NEPHROLOGIST



Renal Patients: their vulnerable situation and the impacts

The service was introduced by the hospital trust due to the high level of need amongst patients for welfare benefit advice and support. Renal patients are drawn from all walks of life but are **more concentrated in deprived areas** of the Midlands, and at the UHB a high proportion of patients are **older people**. The debilitating nature of renal illness and the treatment regime results in considerable **detriment** amongst patients.

Patients often:

- **Suffer associated serious illnesses**
- **Have physical disabilities**
- **Have mental health issues** adversely affected by their illness, and the impact of diagnosis
- Are **Economically inactive** due to restrictions of treatment, and many are reliant on benefits.
- **Experience vulnerability** in other ways, including requiring higher than average **heating** in their homes, and have an increased level of **water usage** for personal and household hygiene.
- **Have a higher risk of fuel poverty**; reliant on welfare benefits or on a low income.
- Struggle with the challenge of funding a specific, **healthy diet to support renal health**, which requires suitable shopping, food preparation and storage facilities. With a low income, their diet can be adversely affected as they cut back on food to cover other essential outgoings.
- **Suffer anxiety and stress** where they do not have all the support to enable them to live an independent life, and where they do not feel in control of their situation.
- Need **support to regain or retain their ability to live independently**, such as having care and support to continue to live at home, or adaptations to reduce physical challenges
- Need **other disability related support** such as Blue Badges for parking and travel passes. These can also significantly support patients to feel in control of their life.

With the right support many patients can regain control of their lives. Relief from debt and financial worries are an immense relief from stress and worry - enabling patients to **return to some of their former activities** such as paid work, supporting children and being able to make plans for the future.

“

Home dialysis destroyed my relationship. It's no good. You're never away from it. My partner couldn't cope with it.

PATIENT

“

Being a man I was told I had high blood pressure, and I just ignored it. Hence I ended up with pneumonia and renal failure. I had serious blood poisoning. My foot was rotting and I was refusing to dialyse. I'd lost the plot really. I went into hospital and started pulling myself together.

PATIENT

“

I lived on savings for four years. Now the savings have run out. I didn't want to claim. I hate claiming. I paid all the bills for 4 years. I didn't take a penny from my daughters. But now it's finished and the bills are still coming in.

PATIENT

The service

Auriga Services operate as a not-for-profit organisation delivering services for clients that include charities, business, local authorities and the NHS. Services include grant giving to individuals and community organisations along with management of vulnerable customer support schemes.

The team of Auriga advisors offer money, debt and welfare advice that includes representation at appeals and tribunals. Providing one-to-one advice and support to patients, they:



Work closely with staff before the project starts to build an effective referral service.



Are the friendly face that all staff and patients know and trust.



Adhere to strict confidentiality and data protection procedures.

The service is patient-centred and sensitive to individual's physical, psychological and emotional needs. The support gives people a chance to transform their lives - to gain financial skills, confidence, address money problems, gain greater income and become more independent.



“

I have been looking after patients for a long time and through this work Auriga have gained the trust of patients and exposed social situations that I didn't know about.

CLARA DAY, CONSULTANT NEPHROLOGIST

“

I was desperate for additional financial support. The hospital staff made me aware of Auriga. They helped me reduce the cost of heating and water bills.

PATIENT

Having a social impact

The objective was to increase welfare benefits or reduced household costs, alongside improving patients' wellbeing outcomes including; financial comfort, reducing stress, feeling in control of their life and increased confidence. In total the cost of the service delivered by Auriga is £180,000 annually.

The service types by the major outcome area for each patient:



The total impact

During the first two years of the UHB work with renal patients:

- Just over **900** patients received assistance from Auriga. 700 of these patients received a tangible output and related positive outcome. The remaining patients received advice and a check on their circumstances, ensuring they were receiving what they are entitled to and not at risk of slipping into financial stress and fuel poverty.
- **300** patients received an uplift in their income, gained a grant or reduced their debts and bills
- The total gains across all patients who realised a financial gain was **£1,834,069**; an average gain of **£5,688 per person**
- Financial gains ranged from £50 through to over £45,000 per individual.
- A **total value of £2,614,351** was generated by the service
- Over 90% of patients stated that Auriga had made a *big difference* to their situation
- 94% of patients stated they were *feeling less stressed* as a result of Auriga's work with them

Social return on investment

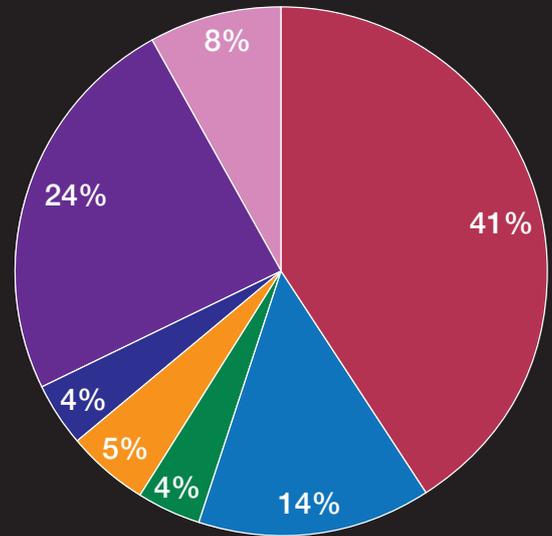
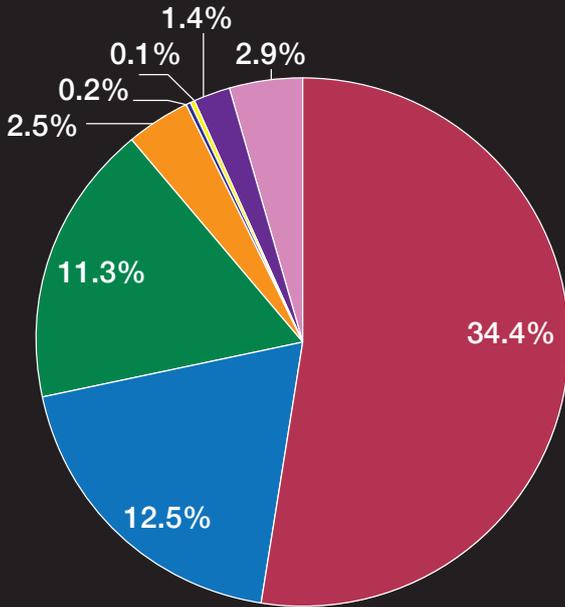
The SROI report assigned a social 'value' for the five key outcomes generated by Auriga's advice and support; the figures below summaries the total value of outcomes over 2 years.



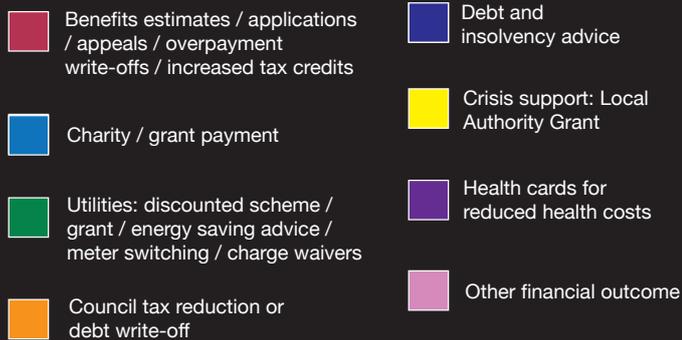
“Patients are less stressed and happier which has a positive impact on their overall health since they are able to have additional support that makes their life easier.

UNIT DEPUTY MANAGER

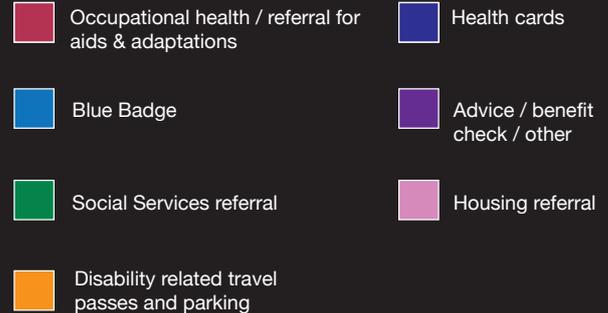
Financial benefit & outcomes



Financial comfort



Retaining control of their life



The services for UHB is diverse in term of outcomes for patients - and the SROI confirms Auriga are:

- **Providing extraordinary value** – the service has a particularly strong social return on investment: for every £1 invested in Auriga’s specialist services, patients, their families and society at large receives an average social reward equivalent to £14.52
- Having an **exceptional impact on some of the most vulnerable in our society** – the average actual gain in income is £5,688 per person changing the everyday lives for 1,000s of people
- **Delivering benefits for the NHS** – the specialist service, integrated in a healthcare setting, is changing the way renal units understand and treat patients.
- **A much-needed service for renal patients.** Through interviews, we were also able to gather considerable evidence from patients on what the services meant to them



Auriga have been incredible from the start, they helped me with so much financially which I am truly grateful for. I was told about the device that would help me be visually independent – never would I have expected this to happen. The device reads to me and I am able to go to the shops for simple things like milk. I have been given a new lease of life.

PATIENT

Lessons learned

The SROI of this service is £14.52 for every £1 invested, is higher than most reported in other schemes. Such positive results and success is most likely due to the following factors:

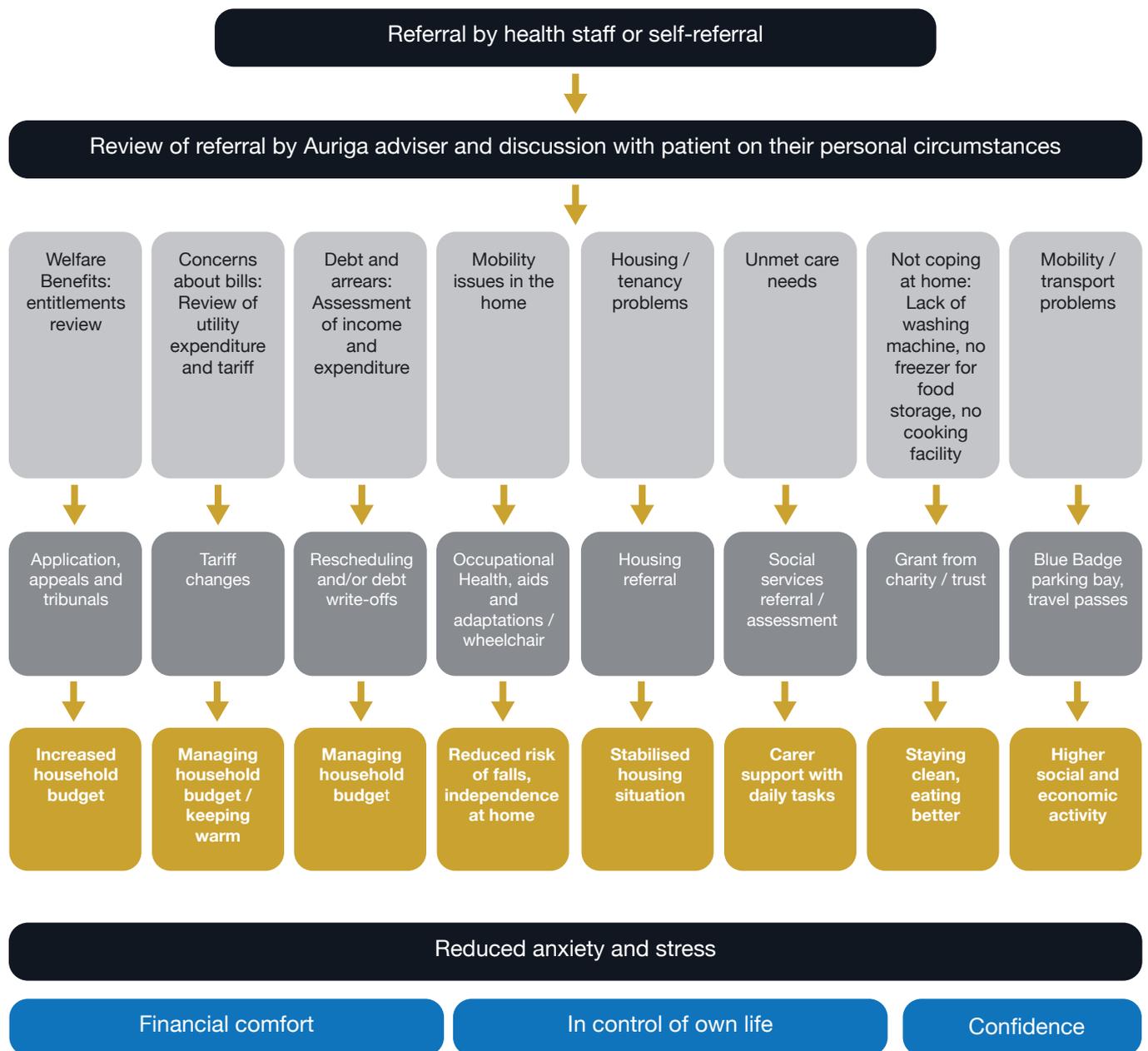
- Delivery in a healthcare context: Patients were able to draw on an advice service within a trusted and familiar environment. Healthcare staff emphasise the importance of a) having a service integrated with other health interventions and b) an effective referral pathway.
- The circumstances of vulnerable renal failure patients: Financial difficulties result from periods of illness or longer term disability. Kidney failure and its treatment affects not just the patient's health but their ability to function within society and their relationships with family and friends; few patients have any financial buffer against the impact of being diagnosed, or their savings had run out.
- Auriga's knowledge and professionalism: in terms of vulnerability, the situation of patients, and the financial support available.
- Intensity of interventions with the patients - Many patients need multiple interventions, and each person is helped by Auriga to maximise their income, manage their household budget and attain appropriate services to support them. Interventions go on throughout the year, and cases can remain open for long periods. Processes such as benefit applications, appeals and the follow through administration of the case can take many months, especially if they require a Tribunal.

Next step

Auriga have an ambition to deliver this service throughout the United Kingdom. The company aims to achieve this by forming a funding collaboration of water and power utilities and Kidney Care UK.



The outputs and outcomes of the service



If you would like to read the full version of our SROI report please contact Carol@aurigaservices.co.uk

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This SROI report was researched and written by Carolyn Hay (MA, MSc), Independent Researcher and Consultant. A review of the report has been undertaken by Professor Nick Henry Professor of Economic Geography/Co-Director (Research Quality), Faculty Research Centre for Business in Society, Coventry University; and Professor Richard Tomlins, Research Associate, International Centre for Transformational Entrepreneurship, Coventry University and Director of Cohesia.