Rebuilding Futures after Meningitis
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**Background**

The impact of meningitis can be devastating, leaving families bereaved and individuals living with life-changing after-effects. In 2013 Meningitis Now launched its Rebuilding Futures Fund to help address the support needs of those affected by meningitis.

**Aim**

To provide a flexible and bespoke fund enabling each person or family to apply for up to £1,000 towards the support or practical help they need most. The fund comprises four award categories: Health & Wellbeing, Opportunities, Specialist Equipment, and Bereavement.

**Health & Wellbeing**

Improving the emotional and physical wellbeing of those affected by meningitis and their families.

Examples include:

- Creative therapies
- Complementary therapies
- Talking therapies
- Health and exercise

**Opportunities**

Providing help towards education, learning, development and retraining.

Examples include:

- Education support
- Technology to support learning, such as laptops and iPads
- Tuition and re-training costs

**Specialist Equipment**

Helping to enhance the quality of life of those living with the effects of meningitis.

Examples include:

- Specialist bikes and trikes
- Specialist beds
- Sensory toys

**Bereavement**

Helping families to find the strength to face the future and rebuild their lives with hope.

We offer funding towards:

- Funeral costs
- Headstones
- Bereavement counselling

**Evaluation**

To determine the outcomes and impact of the Rebuilding Futures Fund, data was collected on the application form (baseline) and evaluation form. This included the Measure Yourself Concerns and Wellbeing (MYCaW) questionnaire.

Applicants were asked to think about how meningitis had affected them and state one or two specific concerns that they most wanted help with. Applicants were also asked about their wellbeing by using the question “How are you feeling in yourself?”

Concerns and wellbeing were rated for severity using a seven-point Likert scale. Concerns were rated as 0 - meaning ‘not concerned at all’ - to 6 - meaning ‘as bad as it can be’. Wellbeing was rated as 0 - meaning ‘as good as it can be’ - to 6 - meaning ‘bothers me greatly’. Wellbeing was rated as 0 - meaning ‘not concerned at all’ - to 6 - meaning ‘as good as it can be’.

In-depth phone interviews were also conducted with 16 people who had received support through the fund.

**Key outcomes**

Full evaluation data was received from 55 people.

Meningitis Now commissioned Chrysalis Research UK to independently analyse this data.\(^{(1)}\)

- 98% of people said that the support they received via the Rebuilding Futures Fund helped them.
- 93% of respondents stated that it had ‘helped a lot’.
- 95% of people felt that their award had made a difference to them and their life, with 91% stating that it made a big difference.
- Concerns negatively affecting people’s lives and/or wellbeing were fully or partially alleviated with a 2.7-point decrease on the MYCaW severity of issues scale.
- There was evidence of a noticeable improvement to the wellbeing of award recipients and their family members with a 1.7 increase on the MYCaW wellbeing scale.

**Future plans**

The evidence from the evaluation data has demonstrated that the Rebuilding Futures Fund has made a significant positive impact on individuals and families affected by meningitis. Meningitis Now continues to offer the Rebuilding Futures Fund as an integral part of its support services.

**Funding**

Meningitis Now has received donations from many funders to support this new programme, including The Worshipful Company of Butchers, Roysd Withy King and the Sobell Foundation. A full list of funders can be found here: www.meningitisnow.org/rff-funders

**References**


\(^{(2)}\) Rebuilding Futures Fund Impact Report 2019-20, produced in collaboration with Chrysalis Research UK.