

TURN2US INSIGHT BRIEFING: CORONAVIRUS

(17th April 2020)

The surge in demand for Turn2us services has been unprecedented since the start of the public health measures in the UK to deal with the coronavirus pandemic. This insight briefing aims to provide you with an overview of both the demand for our services during this time, and the national picture of how it is impacting the lives and livelihoods of the UK people.

TURN2US
FIGHTING UK POVERTY



3.46M

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Credit claim



CORONAVIRUS AND ITS IMPACT ON UK HOUSEHOLDS

Turn2us commissioned **Censuswide to survey 2,000 working-age adults in the UK, to understand the economic impact of coronavirus on people's employment. The results show a stark impact of coronavirus on people's income and their ability to afford household necessities.**

The impact on our welfare state is set to be significant. Based on the national survey:

- **15%** of UK working age adults plan to make a Universal Credit claim, as a result of coronavirus. Younger people are those most likely to need to claim Universal Credit, with **28%** of 18-24-year olds planning to make a claim.
- Turn2us estimates that over 3.46 million households are planning to make a Universal Credit claim as a result of coronavirus. According to the DWP, over 1.4 million people have already done so.

- The people most affected financially by coronavirus are those who are already disadvantaged. Over three-quarters (**78%**) of workers on zero-hour contracts have already had employment affected by coronavirus, compared to **53%** of employees.
- Younger people's employment has also been more affected. **55%** of 18-24-year olds have seen their employment affected, compared to **27%** of people aged 55-65.
- The household type seeing the biggest financial shock due to coronavirus are single parents. In April, **42%** of single parents are anticipating living on less than £500 per month, compared to **30%** in February. That means an additional 216,000 single parents will be living on extremely low incomes.

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MORE THAN 1 IN 2

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MEETING NEED THROUGH OUR SERVICES:

Between 16th March and 15th April, almost two million people visited our website for information on coronavirus, to check their benefit entitlement, or search for grants to help them during Covid-19.

There has also been a **438%** increase in people checking their entitlement to benefits, with over 680,000 households completing a benefits calculation. During the same period, over 140,000 households searched for a charitable grant: a **109%** increase in demand for financial support.

Our helpline has been experiencing a similar increase in demand. In March, 9,194 people tried to call the helpline for support – a **37%** increase from February. We also saw a 90% increase in demand for webchat support.

In response to this increasing demand and need across all our services, we have been working to expand capacity and make sure our information is as up-to-date as possible.



This includes changes to our Benefits Calculator, in line with the roll out of related schemes and benefits by the government.

We have also expanded the opening hours of the helpline in order to make sure people can access the support they need; when they need it. This includes both longer days and the addition of Saturday operating.

Since the start of the pandemic, we have awarded 547 grants to people or families in need, totalling £438,024.45. We have seen an overwhelming need for our new Covid-19 Grant Fund, which offers £500 crisis grants to people whose income has been severely affected by coronavirus. In the first two days of the fund, we received 4,500 applications for support and it has now been temporarily suspended.

This fund, which went live just one week ago, has already made 232 awards, totalling £116,000.

THE TURN2US CORONAVIRUS APPEAL:



In association with the Telegraph, we have launched an emergency crisis appeal to help people facing financial devastation due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Since the crisis began, we have been overwhelmed with calls and visits to our helpline and website services by people in desperate of information and support on where they can go for help.

Some of these people are worried that they don't even have enough money to put food on the table for the families.

The Turn2us Coronavirus Appeal will provide crisis grants to help people who are unable to work and who need money to pay bills or make essential purchases.

It will also help us provide increased support to people needing information and advice by expanding our online support and extending our helpline hours.

To find out more about the appeal, visit turn2us.org.uk/together

MAKING A DIFFERENCE TO REAL LIVES

Natalie Raeside, from Ayrshire in Scotland, is a self employed painter and decorator. Due to the government measures take to stop the further rapid spread of the virus, she had to stop working. As a single parent with a school age daughter, and currently with no income, she has had to apply for Universal Credit to help get by until the government's self employed support is paid out in June. Even with the calculated payment amount, she and her daughter will not have enough to manage bills and feed themselves.

Natalie learnt of the Turn2us Coronavirus Grant Fund last week, through a Facebook group. She applied and within 24 hours Natalie heard she was to be given the £500 flexible grant to help her cope during this challenging time. She was amongst the first four people to be given this financial lifeline – a grant fund made possible by the Turn2us Coronavirus appeal.



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Talk to us:

We have dedicated team members who oversee our policy, media, fundraising and insight work. To find out more about our data and insight, or the many different ways you can get involved in our appeal, please get in touch by emailing us on partnerships@turn2us.org.uk

For media enquiries, call the press office on 07807 967475.

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