

Record grant for helpline group

THE West Lancs Disability Helpline has just received a £500,000 lottery grant – the biggest lottery grant ever awarded in the north west under the Advice Plus funding stream.

The funding will help the charity to support its work for the next five years, providing specialist information and advice to people with disabilities and carers.

West Lancs Disability Helpline was established in 1981 to provide high quality, free, confidential information, advice and support to people with disabilities and carers in West Lancashire. It enables them to make informed choices about how they wish to live their lives. The charity now has four prestigious awards for excellence.

The latest grant will mean the helpline will be expanding its services to secure clients' welfare benefits much faster than before after completing their claim forms; set up three outreaches in Ormskirk, Downholland and North Meols and offer a complete welfare benefits service.

The service will mainly be delivered from the helpline's Sandy Lane office at 49 Westgate in Sandy Lane, Skelmersdale.

The helpline currently deals with over 3,000 enquiries each year and generates almost a

million pounds in welfare benefit income.

Tony Lewis, manager of the West Lancs Disability Helpline said: "We want to maximise people's welfare benefits income - but faster than ever before. This will reduce poverty, widen choice, increase independence and raise quality of life."