



Case Study: Hassan – supporting a new start in the UK

Hassan (name changed), a 32-year old client from Eritrea approached ICOS shortly after moving into his new home. As a newly arrived in the UK, Hassan faced several challenges in adjusting to life in a new country and needed support to establish a stable and a life different from the one he knows.

Hassan initially contacted ICOS seeking support in accessing free essential furniture for his unfurnished home. At the time, he only had a bed and a cooker. To move forward with the application, recent bank statements were required. However, obtaining these proved challenging due to Hassan's unfamiliarity with the UK banking system and difficulties navigating online banking platforms. Ewa, one of our dedicated project workers, stepped in to assist. She first attempted to reset Hassan's online banking login details but discovered the registered contact number was incorrect. After calling the bank's helpline, Ewa was advised that changes could only be made in person at a branch. At the bank, they successfully updated the mobile number, but there were complications with updating the address. A follow-up visit to amend the address was unsuccessful, as Hassan's passport was not signed and therefore not accepted as valid ID. Ewa, accompanied him to the bank again, and after persistence, both the address and contact number were successfully updated. As a result, the bank issued a three-month bank statement, which enabled progress with the furniture request. Despite these efforts, there was a delay in the delivery of the furniture. Ewa then followed up directly with the local council to resolve the issue. As a result, a confirmed delivery date was provided to him, giving him piece of mind and a clear expectation.

Our client was also struggling with the Universal Credit application process and had difficulty completing his GP registration. Ewa worked closely with him to complete both applications, ensuring he was able to access the financial and medical support he needed. ICOS also helped Hassan to complete and post his Work Capability Assessment questionnaire, an important step in assessing his ability to work and accessing the appropriate benefits. He also brought in a largely completed Personal Independence Payment (PIP) form. Ewa provided him with step by step guidance on how to properly complete and submit the application.

Additionally, Hassan was referred to Unity in Community, where he received gas and electricity vouchers to help with his immediate utility needs.

Thanks to the support provided by ICOS, our client was able to complete key benefit applications and move closer to financial stability and independence. Although the journey involved multiple hurdles, the tailored support he received helped him feel more confident and settle in his new life in the UK.