

Vignette twenty-four

The one most recently was a client who has just exited our services. She was a 43 year old woman. She was in our service almost a year and my client was a patient in the local inpatient unit and had just returned into the community. She was not able to communicate very well, unable to read and write, she was profoundly deaf and had no contact with her family. She lacked confidence and had become totally withdrawn. In the last 9 months I have key worked with her and her Psychiatrist and this seemed to work really well. Over the last 12 months I supported her into many community services. To the Deaf Association and we learned to do some basic sign language together and communicate as it was quite difficult, I had to always talk to her face on so she could understand what you were talking about. She had very limited literacy skills so I got her into some literary courses where she go training in how to learn to read and write, doing the literary course on a daily basis. She was terrified of public transport so I went on bus trips with her and she now utilizes public transport as well as she has a taxi chit book. I supported her along to join craft groups where she could meet other people and learn to do some crafts. I set her up with budgeting advice and helped her set up her automatic payments and one of her long term goals was to re engage with her family. They had been estranged for so long and I helped her set up a savings account so she could afford to visit them. I called in the healthy lifestyle coach at ... to help set goals to get her walking. It had been 10 years since this lady had any contact with her family; she had no family or friends here. She had no Community Mental Health nurse so I was her only support in the community. Initially I met with her twice a week and in the first few weeks she did have a Social Worker and Clinical Psychologist, but for the last 9 months I and the Psychiatrist were the only people from mental health services involved. This women lost contact with society initially because of her hearing disability, her marriage had broken down, having to leave her children and then went into psychosis, so ultimately she had become estranged from everybody. I was proud because I had this role to play in her recovery and I think seeing her change from this shy, withdrawn, and very quiet person to someone who went to a Women's Insight course, learned to talk on the phone, was working twice a week, buying really nice clothes, doing her hair and make up, it was truly amazing.