

Issue

A is 20 years old, and has a diagnosis of Learning Disability and severe undiagnosed mental health problems. This can lead to her experiencing high levels of anxiety, where she is unable to regulate her emotions, sometimes resulting in impulsive, harmful behaviour to herself and others. A was placed in a specialist residential placement as a teenager, following assessments indicating she required 1-1 support at all times, often requiring 2-1 support and use of restraint to keep her safe. Not long after turning 18 and moving to a residential home A expressed concerns about this not being right for her and said told us she wanted to move somewhere else.

A's ambition was to live back in Bradford in her own flat. She wanted to go to college, and eventually become a police officer.

Approach Taken

Although there were concerns from other professionals about A's safety, workers from the Preparation for Adulthood Team listened to A and supported her with a variety of alternative options, all without the restrictions placed upon her within previous settings. A chose to move into her own top floor studio flat, and developed her own safety plan and support hours based on her strengths. This was the first time A had gone out in the community alone or spent time in her own self-contained flat. A had lots of self-doubt about her ability to manage independently in the community and so the social worker and the support provider spent a lot of 1-1 time with A talking through her strengths and her safety plan to help her build confidence in herself. By moving away from a risk adverse care management approach and instead using a strengths based approach and promoting positive risk taking A was able to transition into her own accommodation successfully.

A wanted to attend college and a planning meeting was organised with the local college. They were initially apprehensive about supporting A due to professionals previously only recommending specialist residential provision; however, a number of taster sessions for A were organised over the summer to build her confidence in this setting and to support the setting itself. As a result of this A was offered a place at the college for September 2020.

In this case, relationship based work was crucial in supporting A to recognise her strengths and helping her recognise the value in not always making the right choices, but learning from them. Lots of direct work was undertaken with A around her understanding of her rights as an adult and supporting her with decision making. This has resulted in A having much less support, and more freedom, choice and control of her life.

Outcomes/Impact

- A has moved into her own flat.
- A now travels independently around Bradford, and Leeds.
- A has had two successful work placements: one within a garden centre and one in a charity shop. She works here independently.
- A lives close to her family, and visits them regularly
- A is engaged to a partner she met when she moved into her new accommodation
- A has had no physical interventions since moving in to her own accommodation.



The PfA Team also worked closely with local health services to ensure A's access to psychological support, as well as securing additional funding for her care through Continuing Health Care.

