

Changing Futures

— Stoke-on-Trent —

Case Study: Delayed Hospital Discharge

History

Dawn* had good up bringing, is educated to Degree level, she was employed, owned a mortgaged property and has no children. She was introduced to drugs by her brother. She subsequently lost her employment due to substance use.

Dawn's brother was sexually abusive, violent and often carried weapons. She was financially exploited by her brother and his partner. They stole all her belongings and attempted to cuckoo her property. She has another brother who is in prison but she has a positive relationship with him.

Dawn was diagnosed with PTSD and paranoia due to her brother's abuse. Following her mental health decline, she was sectioned to hospital three times. She was released on a Community Treatment Order (CTO) and was on daily methadone script and Depo. Her brother was arrested and given a probation order not to have contact Dawn but repeatedly broke probation.

Dawn Joined the Changing Futures case load in December 2023, she was still at her property and had a new Social Worker and was still maintaining her scripts and depo. However, in January 2024 Dawn breached conditions of her CTO, by refusing the Depo due to its side effects and was sectioned back to hospital.

The Changing Futures Case Coordinator, Social Worker and Dawn were involved in weekly ward reviews. It was highlighted that her return to her property was the cause of her mental health relapses. The locks were changed on her property and her brother's probation officer was contacted. Her brother breached the ward at the Hospital to gain contact with her and was arrested.

Barriers

Dawn returning to her property was impacting on her mental health recovery, both from fear of abuse from her brother but also from being encouraged to fall into old habits by negative friends. Dawn was keen to find new accommodation and sell her property and not go back and did not want to live in Stoke-on-Trent any longer and to break from her old lifestyle. Dawn was advised to not tell people her new address and break ties with negative

friends on face book. Dawn's depo medication was reviewed and changed which suited her better.

Dawn's mortgage provider was due to start litigation over her mortgage arrears. However, the Changing Futures Case Coordinator was nominated as third party to liaise with mortgage advisor. The mortgage provider was very understanding and agreed to give Dawn breathing space with view to her property being sold. Housing benefits agreed to wave her property, with evidence that it was being sold and accessed housing benefit.

While still in Hospital, Dawn was deemed fit for discharge. However, did not want to return to old address. The Doctor listened to Dawn's needs and delayed her release to her old property, so alternate appropriate property was found.

All refuges were contacted but none would accept her, due to complex mental health and drug issues. A referral was sent to 'No Woman Turned Away' to support Dawn in accessing refuge spaces. There, are only a handful available in the country and no spaces were available. A Care Act Assessment was completed which, which highlighted Dawn had support needs to access accommodation.

Outcomes

- Hostel accommodation was found for Dawn at Staffordshire Women's Aid.
- Dawn's new depot medication is working and her mental health improving.
- Dawn has been clean since January 2024.
- A self-contained, supported living property was identified in Leek with 10 hours of support per week.
- Dawn's focus in Leek is to get involved in community activities, volunteering, refresh her driving lessons and eventually gain paid employment.
- Housing benefit agreed to wave her property, with evidence it was being sold and accessed housing benefit.

Learning

- The flexibility provided by Dawn's Doctor, to delay her discharge from hospital in order to ensure she did not return to an unsafe environment which would have been detrimental to her mental health was instrumental in her recovery journey.
- Key learning was building strong relationships with Dawn's Social Worker and Doctor at Harplands Hospital.
- Having a Changing Futures Case Coordinator be able to advocate for Dawn with her mortgage advisor and the Benefits Agency was key in allowing Dawn to access alternative accommodation.

** Customer name has been changed to protect identity.*