



Willowbrook
Quality Homecare



Case Study 1: Enhancing Communication and Independence in an Extra Care Scheme

Background:

A service user had been residing in a rehabilitation unit due to the severe impact of a stroke, which left her non-verbal with poor mobility. The hospital staff, including speech and language therapists, reached a point where they could no longer make significant progress in her rehabilitation within a hospital setting and agreed that she would benefit from housing with onsite care staff; this led to her transition to the Extra Care scheme at RH.

Initial Challenges:

Upon her arrival at RH, the extra care team faced significant challenges in communicating effectively with her. This communication barrier led to extreme frustration on her part, as she resorted to pointing at items to make her needs understood. It was evident that this method of communication had a negative impact on her sense of self and her ability to feel independent and understood.

Innovative Solutions:

To address these challenges and enhance her communication skills, the extra care team, together with the management team, developed a series of laminated cards with keywords. Each employee read these words with her during every visit, supporting her efforts to regain some of her speaking abilities.

Progress and Positive Outcomes:

Over the next two years, the extra care team remained dedicated to their support, and our service user gradually regained the ability to communicate verbally with simple words and phrases such as "drink," "food," the names of our care team, and requests to go to places like the hairdressers. This progress significantly improved her independence and control over her life, leading to a lasting and positive impact on her well-being.

Continued Support:

To further support her, we ensured consistency by assigning a regular set of care team members who thoroughly understood her needs and abilities. These staff members also encouraged her to use a pen and paper to write down words and phrases, promoting

independent communication. The team kept daily detailed notes to monitor her emotional state and document any concerns or displays of high emotion, providing valuable insights into her progress.

Results and Evaluation:

An audit of her care reviews revealed a significant reduction in her frustration levels over time, correlating with her improved communication skills. This reduction in frustration highlighted the effectiveness of our tailored approach in enhancing her quality of life and emotional well-being.

Conclusion:

This case study underscores the importance of personalised and consistent care in improving the lives of individuals with significant communication barriers. The continued dedication to our service users' progress and the innovative strategies employed by the extra care team at RH have restored some of her communication abilities and empowered her with a renewed sense of independence and self-worth.

We remain committed to supporting her ongoing journey towards greater independence and capability.