

## Moving Forwards Case study - Medway

**Q1. Name**

SH (33701)

**Q2. When were you referred to the “Moving Forwards” Care Leavers Navigation Service?**

July 2023

**Q3. What was life like before you were referred to the Moving Forwards Service?**

I was struggling with my Mental Health. I had become suicidal, self-harming and I was not engaging with Britton House (community mental health team). I felt lonely and did not have anyone I could open up to apart from my PA. I would isolate myself indoors and did not have any interests or reason to go out. I was in a complex relationship with was not stable, triggered my moods and would prevent me from seeing a positive future. I was struggling with my finances, was unable to pay council tax and had just received a 28 day notice from my landlord.

**Q4. What kind of support have you received from the Care Leavers Navigator? What kind of activities/services have helped you the most?**

Throughout support I was in regular communication with my Care Leaver Navigator. I felt I had someone I could reach out to when approaching crisis as well as someone who would just listen to me. I felt I had a connection with someone other than my PA who would give me a positive mentality. Having this also meant that there was more communication between myself, PA and my Care Leaver Navigator which was helpful when my PA was busy.

I was signposted back to Medway Community Health Team and my Care Leaver Navigator offered to attend appointments with me however they also had direct contact with the service and was able to change appointments to telephone calls which made me feel more open and able to receive support and information.

Due to my mental health, I felt unable to be in employment when first referred into the service however was offered help building my CV, writing my CV and going over suitable employment. As I am now more stable in many aspects of my life I am now managing to work 40 hours a week as a general assistant.

I have been on some activity trips with the Moving Forwards Programme which I really enjoyed. This gave me something to look forward to and helped with some social anxieties. It was nice to attend Thorpe Park and the Christmas meal, make new friends and make memories. I also used some individual funding on Cinema Vouchers which was helpful to me to attend a safe environment outside of my home and distract myself when feeling low.

I have recently been referred for the Care Leavers Fund through Kent Community Foundation as I had used up all my furnishings allowance on my previous property assuming I would not move again however due to my domestic relationship I have since been given new accommodation and hoping this will cover the cost of my sofa as it has affected my finances.

**Q5. How has the support received from the Care Leavers Navigator affected your mental and physical health?**

Since being referred into the Moving Forwards Service, I have been able to have regular check ins with my Care Leaver Navigator. On reflection I was able to 'waffle' about my life which made me calmer and manage my mental health better.

Over time my mental health has improved, and I am no longer in crisis which comes from having more stability and dealing with issues such as my housing to reduce stress.

My physical health has also improved as I am not self-harming and I am more active as I am now going out more socially, for work and now have a pet dog to take for walks.

**Q6. How has the Moving Forwards Service affected your use of healthcare? For example, has it affected how often you visit your GP? Or are you now using a service you weren't using before e.g. the CMHT or peer support?**

I re-engaged with Britton House (Medway Community Health Team) after reassurance and support from my Care Leaver Navigator following missing appointments however this has now reduced as my mental health is now improving.

I have also had less visits to A&E which has resulted in being admitted in a psychiatric ward previously due to suicidal intentions where I now feel able to manage my feeling and have more support.

**Q7. What do you think things would be like if you hadn't started working with the Care Leavers Navigator?**

If I had not been supported by the Care Leaver Navigators, I believe I would be struggling. I would have been trying to take on everyone's problems as well as my own until I can't cope and isolate myself. I would not have known who to talk to and would not have been so open about my difficulties. I previously was unable to hold down employment for longer than 2 weeks so could not be in a financial situation to buy myself things and enjoy day-to-day.

**Q8. Thinking about the support you've received, is there anything that could have been done differently?**

I think this service is enough and provides a lot of support and encouragement and I have felt able to reach out to my PA when I have needed this service. I could only say that all services not just the Moving Forwards are not reachable of a weekend. Based on this it can be very hard of these days as there is no one to call and needs don't just turn off over a weekend which having this communication could prevent emotions escalating.