



Meeting the challenge of COVID-19

Learning and practice



How a residential practitioner at Glasgow City Council offered a young person a place to stay so she could take up a new job

What was the challenge faced?

COVID-19 has caused disruption to many aspects of our daily lives. During the height of the lockdown restrictions, 17 year old Daisy*, who lives at the Monreith Road Care Home for children and young people, secured a new job at an elderly care unit. While she was excited to start, during the induction she found out that a number of residents at the elderly care unit had tested positive for COVID-19, and some had sadly already passed away. It became apparent that working at the unit would be high risk both for her and for the other children and staff at Monreith Road, some of whom had underlying health conditions. A risk assessment was carried out and it was determined that there were two options: either Daisy would have to forgo her new job or she'd need to move into alternative accommodation temporarily; for example her own flat, or a Bed and Breakfast. However, there were concerns that independent living at this stage wouldn't provide the additional support she needed.

What change in practice took place?

A Senior Residential Practitioner at Monreith Road, Lesley, stepped in and offered Daisy a temporary stay in her home, which only she lives in at the moment. After getting initial agreement from senior colleagues, an assessment was carried out with Lesley. Daisy was also overjoyed by the offer and made it clear it was her preferred choice. Before she moved in, Lesley adapted her home so the correct PPE was in place so that they could both adhere to Scottish Government guidance. Lesley and Daisy both had a COVID-19 test to ensure neither tested positive for the virus, and have continued to do so regularly. Once Daisy was in and settled, she was able to start her job and benefit from Lesley's additional support and help in adjusting to her new routine.

Who was involved in making the change?

A residential practitioner providing a home for a child or young person, albeit temporary, is not usual practice, and decision makers had to be involved and consulted to consider Daisy's best interests. The Head of Service agreed that the proposed plan could be taken forward. References were provided by other practitioners, a social worker carried out an assessment and a decision-making panel was held with Lesley, Daisy's link worker, a retired social worker, a team leader, an assistant service manager and a representative from Barnardo's. Although some were concerned about how unusual this situation was, the panel came to unanimous agreement that this would be the best way forward in the circumstances.

What difference did this change make?

Lesley's offer of a nurturing home environment and constant support has had a huge impact on Daisy. She was able to settle in her new job quickly and has now passed her probationary period and has a permanent contract in place. She has also started her SVQ2 qualification. With Lesley's support, she now has a stable routine in place and has also started opening up and talking about her own past. Lesley has received great support from her colleagues, both practically and emotionally. She has been able to adjust her start and finish times when she is supporting the young person and they check in regularly to see how she's doing.

More information

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*The young person's name has been changed to protect her privacy.

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