

Expanding PA Training Programmes to Adult Services

Warwickshire has a longstanding training programme for PAs and carers of children with complex needs. It has recently been exploring how to expand this approach to support PAs for adults too. Using patients transitioning from child to adult services as an organic way to roll out the programme.

This story follows one of them...

Transition offers Opportunity

Community Children's Nurse Jacqui Giddings has worked with Manish Modeshia since he was 10 years old. Born with muscular dystrophy Manish, now 20, has a number of complex needs, including overnight ventilated support, and as a child would regularly spend weeks in hospital.

“When Manish turned 16 we started to prepare for his transition to adult care and look at what form of support would best meet his specific needs. Quite quickly we all agreed that Manish would really benefit from a Personal Health Budget (PHB).”

Jacqui Giddings, Community children's nurse, South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust

A PHB would give Manish a huge amount of flexibility in how he received his package of care. However, this freedom needed to be underpinned by a clear understanding of which tasks could be safely delegated to a PA. This was something Jacqui and the team were acutely aware of, thanks to their own well-established programme in this area.

As the team adapted their services' programme to Manish's new adult package of care, they applied tried and trusted criteria to assess if a task could be delegated to a PA. This included carrying out tasks to meet a predictable need, being able to translate tasks into clear protocol and being able to safely deliver prescribed responses in set situations.

A Person-centred Recruitment Process

The team determined that all Manish's needs could be delivered by two Personal Assistants. At this point Manish became much more heavily involved in the process; writing the job description, and conducting interviews.

“Manish was very clear on what was important to him. And one of the most valuable things was to find people to look after him who had a sense of humour.”

Jacqui Giddings

Once appointed, Jacqui trained Manish's two PAs to deliver the same high standard of care he had been receiving from her staff. Since then she has continued to provide support through regular meetings every six weeks, ongoing training, and constant availability over the phone to assist with any issues.

“When I started we went through what the NHS staff had done for him previously and I was trained on all the NHS competences for his ventilators, feeds, and general nursing care. Manish has also been very good at sharing his healthcare needs with me himself.”

Dan Cox, Manish's Personal Assistant





“We’ve always understood that whilst tasks of a higher level can be safely delegated, delegation is very different to training. It includes training, but also requires observed practice, working with a PA until they’ve got the competence and confidence, and then offering ongoing support and training.”

David Widdas, Consultant Nurse for Children with Complex Needs, South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust, South Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Partner Trust

Outcomes and Benefits

Manish is now not only well supported at home; he also has greater access to activities in the community. Plus, when Manish was recently admitted to hospital, his PAs were able to stay with him overnight; offering added care from familiar faces.

“In my opinion it’s been a very positive experience and it’s given this young man the opportunities I don’t think he would have had from any other type of package. I definitely think it’s something that should be explored further.”

Jacqui Giddings, Community Children’s Nurse, South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust



Manish with his Dad and Dan Cox, his PA

“Dan and I go out on trips. We went to see Man United, some comedy, and we’re going to the cinema.”

It’s going really well. My Dad gets a nice rest and I know someone’s there when I ring my bell.”

Manish Modeshia

