

Community Navigator

Case Study

Community Navigator: Karen Brown

Locality: Three Rivers

Referrer: Practice Nurse at GP Practice

Brief description of presenting issue and why the referrer made the referral:

'Lorna' is struggling to care for her husband who has Frontal Lobe Dementia, Alzheimer's and Diabetes. She is depressed and needs emotional support, someone to talk to and support her as a carer.

Initial thoughts and discussions from the referral visit with the Client, including additional needs identified over and above the presenting needs:

When I first spoke to Lorna to explain my role and arrange a visit she sounded very low. She said she was finding it very difficult to look after her husband and was surprised that a service existed to help her. On arriving at her home her body language was that of someone who had the 'world on her shoulders'. She still couldn't believe that there was someone available to sit and listen to her and who was willing and cared enough to help her look at ways of coping with her situation.

Lorna has looked after her husband, Ray, for 10 years with little help from outside agencies. He locks her out of the house sometimes and is inclined to dismantle electrical appliances, door locks, toilets and other household objects and then can't remember how to put them back together. She is finding the repetitive nature of his illness frustrating and increasingly difficult to manage.

Ray was always proud to be the 'Man of the House' but Lorna finds the role reversal a burden and it fills her with anxiety.

Ray visits a day centre 2 days a week, which he enjoys, and Lorna accompanies him to Singing for the Brain sessions. Lorna does not feel she can send him anywhere else but cannot face the days when they are at home together. She feels guilty for not being able to cope with Ray's condition.

Lorna needs support as a carer but also help with her anxiety and depression. Ray needs more supervised activity. Lorna should be encouraged to put her own needs first to enable her to cope better when they are at home together. She was not aware that her surgery has a Carers Champion and was signposted to this service.

Insert title of your report here

Agreed actions with the client and the outcomes of these actions:

After some discussion Lorna could see that she was not giving her own needs any priority. The fact that Ray enjoys going out and is very sociable meant that he would not resist going to more activities. It was suggested that Lorna look at W3RT Five Way Friends Club in Chorleywood and Age UK Clitheroe Centre in South Oxhey as additional activities for Ray. Lorna completed an application form for Five Way Friends during the visit and I delivered it by hand to W3RT.

Lorna had already registered with Carers in Herts but had never really made any contact with them so I encouraged her to renew her contact with this organisation.

By the end of the visit Lorna was visibly more relaxed and smiling. Her feelings of guilt were gone, she realises that by looking after her own needs she will be able to manage so much better. She was so pleased and grateful for the support offered.

Since the visit Ray has already been to Chorleywood Five Way Friends and is waiting for a visit to the Clitheroe Centre. In addition Lorna has agreed for me to make a referral to Community Services Wellbeing Team for CBT sessions which will help treat her anxiety and depression and help her to deal with her problems in a positive way.

Since the visit I have spoken to Lorna on the phone and she says she is feeling much better supported, she is so grateful for Community Navigator input. She says she still can't believe there is help out there for people like her.

Any feedback received from the referrer: Not as yet