

Who is being nominated?

Laura Pluck

Organisation

Loretto Housing

Award Details

Category

Category 1: Living the Codes 2019

Q1: Overview

Loretto Housing's Tenancy Support Service - part of Wheatley Group provide support on an outreach basis to group tenants for an average of 8 weeks to people in their own homes, where the tenancy may be vulnerable or at risk or where people are experiencing a crisis. Alan Ross and James Donnelly are support staff who work in this team.

Alan has 12 years service with Loretto, working mostly in Mental Health. James is with Loretto for a second time and spent time working in criminal justice as a social work assistant.

Alan and James work with individuals and support them to achieve positive outcomes; using policy and practice to the advantage of the people we work for. They do this by demonstrating commitment to learn and participate fully in any work that will extend their knowledge.

Alan has been a mentor for our newer and less experienced staff; he's showed patience and understanding to colleagues whilst maintaining a high standard of his own practice. James showed initiative in collaborative working with our group colleagues and has taken on the role of 'promotion lead' within the south team.

Q2: What did you do?

Alan and James began working with R and described using a 'sensitive approach' due to the complexities within R's life. R had a long history of not engaging with services and felt reluctant to engage to begin with however Alan and James spoke about the service and what it has to offer. R felt remorseful and ashamed of the situation he was in, had considered suicide on a few occasions. Alan and James treated R as an individual with compassion, dignity and respect. R was made to feel there was no judgment to his situation.

This type of practice is embedded in every day working with Alan and James who treat all people we work for as individuals, they strive to protect and promote the rights and interests of people who use services such as R.

The Tenancy Support Service uses Tenancy Star. The Tenancy Star was developed for tenants living in social housing or in private rented accommodation who may be at risk of losing their tenancy or experiencing other difficulties. This star was developed and trademarked by staff and the people we work for in Loretto Care and Loretto Housing in collaboration with Triangle. It is an innovative tool for supporting and measuring change when working with individuals.

R felt that he had lost control over many aspects of his life, this tool and the delivery of the support from Alan and James empowered R to identify the areas he needed support with and work to his own action plan. This promoted the independence of R and empowered him to understand and exercise his rights. The plan gave R control, responsibility and tasks to work on and gave R a bit of focus again in gaining control of his life.

TSS also uses Triangle Risk Reader which is designed to help people we work for and staff to identify areas of risk within a person's life and develop a plan to help them stay safe and manage their own risks whilst promoting a risk enablement approach within our practice.

Alan and James used Risk Reader with R and to support R to recognise the risks within his life. They supported R to think about ways to reduce risk in his own life and supported him to manage this without restricting his liberty. Alan and James worked in a way with R that respected his right to take risks and support him to work positively with potential and actual risk to himself.

When Alan and James reflected on working with R and discussed how they managed to support R to change his view on engaging with services, they said 'we were open and honest with R, we turned up when we said we would and just treated him how we'd want to be treated, we listened and let him do the talking, he directed the support'. This type of approach is second nature to both Alan and James who demonstrate how entrenched the codes are in their everyday practice.

Q3: What did you achieve?

R was supported to work with his Tenancy Star Action Plan, this detailed the part that Alan and James would help with and what parts R would do himself. Alan and James worked in partnership with R also to work openly and co-operate with each other and work respectfully. Alan and James worked to R's pace and ensured that R did not become overwhelmed withdraw from the support.

The outcomes achieved with R were significant. R was destitute when he first began to work with Alan and James, no money or food and a lack of clothing. R had been provided with different agency out of hour's numbers for when he was in crisis which he said was a comfort to him.

R was supported to access food banks. Alan and James supported R to apply to Scottish Welfare Fund; R was successful in being awarded £150 to buy himself new clothes. This helped R to feel more confident and enabled him to feel dignified in being able to purchase clothes.

R was supported to contact DWP for PIP forms and was referred to GHA's Welfare Rights Adviser who supported him to complete and submit the form to give him the best chance to having a successful claim. R was also supported to access legal advice for his housing matter. As TSS is a short term intervention service, our work is to help identify suitable referral pathways for longer term support. R was referred to another care provider who could offer specialist support with drug addictions and was supported to re-establish contact with his social worker.

At time of discharge R had dramatically decreased his intake of drugs and alcohol and was engaging really well with all services he had been referred to. He had been attending appointments, court hearings and was participating well in all aspects of turning his life around.

Through the support from Alan and James, R's relationship with his housing officer had improved and R began to take part in discussions about his rent and agreed to a payment plan which prevented the court proceedings from going any further. This enabled R to continue living in his home and avoided any more unsettlement and stress. The housing officer herself stated 'I have no doubt the work done by Alan and James is what got him back on track.'

Alan and James have demonstrated through their practice how the codes have been followed by ensuring they have put R first. They treated him as an individual, upheld his dignity and privacy & promoted his rights. They encouraged R to take control of his life through their own skills, experience and using the art of conversation but also by way of having a clear and in-depth support plan that was co-designed to give R the control of the what, how and when.

This enabled R to have a massive positive impact on his overall Health & Wellbeing.

Q4: Why should you receive an award?

Alan & James represent the Tenancy Support Service and demonstrate our Aims and Objectives in their daily practice and the codes of practice that underpin them. Alan and James continually work with vulnerable people in a manner that makes them feel that 'it's ok not to be ok'. R was referred to us as 'a soul in distress'. R was at a critical moment in his life and had it not been for the dedication and commitment from Alan and James to strive for positive outcomes for the people we work for, R told us his life may have taken