

Alice's Story

Born in Aberdeen, Alice described sexual abuse, physical abuse and neglect during her childhood; she describes her father as a violent and aggressive man, who was abusive towards her mother, herself and her siblings. Alice found it difficult to cope with the violence that she witnessed and experienced. As a result, she started to act out. Accommodated to local authority care during her teenage years leaving care at age 16; her foster carers withdrew support due to her behaviour.

Financial / Education

- ◆ Left school unable to read and write with confidence.
- ◆ No formal qualifications.
- ◆ Minimal work experience.

Substance misuse

Began drinking and using cannabis with peer from the age of 14, speed and acid used recreationally. In 1999, she discovered that her partner was abusing Valium and heroin. On his instruction, she smoked heroin and provided a 'dirty sample', in order to get a methadone prescription. Although the methadone was meant for her boyfriend, she quickly became addicted, progressing on to heroin.

Engagement

Consistently failed to adhere to court orders and consequently accrued a large amount of breach offences. She failed to engage with Criminal Justice Services in any meaningful way.

Family

- ◆ Volatile and sporadic relationships with her mother and siblings.
- ◆ Minimal contact with her daughter, who struggled with Alice's presentation and instability.

Health

Alice received hospital treatment in childhood. She suffered from migraines, head injury and concussion. Suffered from hepatitis C and had major dental issues, due to ongoing drug misuse. The impact of drug use has been significant to her mental and physical health.

Mental Health

Was first referred to Clinical Psychology when she was 13 years old, was again referred in 2003, Sept 2013, and Feb 2016. Each time disengaging with little if any progress made.

Stated she 'gave up', hating her life when her daughter was taken into paternal grandparent care. She has been diagnosed with depression and anxiety and was prescribed medication for these.

Offending behaviour

- ◆ Formal convictions in all but four years since teenage years.
- ◆ Previous convictions include breaching Probation Orders, Resisting Arrest, Theft, Assault, failure to attend Diets, breaching Bail Conditions, Attempting to Pervert the Course of Justice and Breaching a Restriction of Liberty Order.

Since working with Glen Clova

The Glens' approach is relationship based – using a person-centred approach and trauma informed practice to help build open, trusting relationships to support women like Alice. Therapeutic relationships, practical and emotional support is provided and more readily accepted. Thinking about a gender specific response, establishing a care package for the woman involving partner agencies means a holistic approach is taken and the woman receives the specific services she needs at the time she requires them.

Financial / Education

- ◆ In receipt of Universal Credit and PIP
- ◆ Needs support to manage tenancy and mail

Substance use

Over the last four years, Alice has been in receipt of a methadone prescription (apart from a one month period after providing a 'dirty sample'). She has achieved sporadic periods of stability, although was candid with regards to her occasional use of heroin and Valium at times of stress. Her long-term plan is to reduce her Methadone prescription over time and to become clean of illegal and illicit drug use. Alice has weekly drug tests, to motivate her.

Engagement

Due to COVID 19 and period of lockdown, Alice struggled to maintain relationships with her workers over the telephone.

The impact of the reduction in services had a significant impact on Alice's ability to cope with daily stressors. This resulted in relapse in substance use, breakdown with relationships with both family and workers, increase in sense of isolation and apparent offending behaviour.

Family

- ◆ On going contact with her mother.
- ◆ Maintaining family relationships, close and regular contact with her siblings.
- ◆ On-going contact with her daughter.

Health/Mental health

- ◆ No longer hepatitis C positive.
- ◆ Reduced physical health needs.
- ◆ Reduced contact due to progress.
- ◆ Attends appointments much more regularly with prompts and reminders
- ◆ Dental treatment complete
- ◆ Completed CBT work with psychologist which lasted over as year
- ◆ Takes medication for diagnosis

Offending behaviour

- ◆ Has no outstanding matters to be heard at court
- ◆ Successfully completed a diversion from prosecution

Alice has required a lot of 1:1 support from workers in order to "re-build" their situation and explore the limited opportunities available to them at this time in order to be safe, healthy, active and responsible and to feel respected, nurtured, included and a sense of achievement.