

Reflections On Practice

VICTIM SERVICES

**BY REMEDI: RESTORATIVE SERVICES
VOLUME 6**

VICTIM SERVICES

A Collection of Case Studies and Reflections

Volume 6

By REMEDI: Restorative Services

© Remedi

The purpose of this publication is to gather together reflections drawn from our team of Practitioners across the UK. Reproduction of any of the contents by documented permission only

Remedi

The Circle, Rockingham Lane, Sheffield, S1 4FW

www.remediuk.org

Case Reflection 1:

D came through to us as a victim of a serious assault which left her with permanent injuries.

D needed a lot of emotional support after the crime, especially when the police closed the case without charging anyone.

D was a young woman who was enjoying a night out when a fight broke out and a male punched her to the face. D went home and it was not until the next morning that she discovered her jaw was loose. D went to hospital and ended up having an operation and metal plates fitted. The injury caused a lot of damage and changed D's appearance.

D was terrified of leaving her house due to the offender being unknown to her. A lot of emotional support took place with me contacting weekly. With consistency of the support D opened up a lot about her fears and we worked through strategies to help her eventually get back to work and then out into larger public places.

D had a set back when the police closed her case, but I helped her put in a complaint which made her feel heard.

D eventually managed to cope and recover from what happened by working hard on the anxiety techniques we discussed in our weekly sessions and she was then happy for support to end.

PRACTITIONER/S: Hayley Rice

Case Reflection 2:

JW , a single lady aged early 60's living alone in a rural area reports a burglary to the police in that over a period of 2 days an unknown offender by unknown means on 2 separate occasions enters her house and steals nuts from the kitchen cupboard.

JW when called said she would like to talk it through with a caseworker as "she doesn't want to think she's going mad".

Because of Covid we couldn't do a face to face so support was given on the phone .

On first glance you would think that she was forgetful and misplaced the nuts, but on talking to JW she explained the circumstances in a very considered way, even taking a photograph of the cupboard after the first incident.

We also talked about possible vermin which is unlikely as wrappers were left and there was no mess but she has put up cameras so this will show up if it happens again, also considered whether key holders were playing tricks on her . There are only two and she thought it unlikely, but she has now changed the locks. I suggested the possibility of sleepwalking but she no history of this .

She felt she had done everything she could and just had to wait and see what happened. On a follow up call she reported no further incidents and finds she is less anxious. One of her friends mentioned a poltergeist (I had thought of this but hadn't mentioned it) but she says that she doesn't believe in "all that nonsense"

She thanked me for listening and I got the impression others had treated it as a joke which she found upsetting.

PRACTITIONER/S: Hilary Allright

Case Reflection 3:

Burglary. 2 people involved. Derby city.

Client and her partner were home when someone broke into their property. They were left feeling scared and anxious. My client she had just given birth and was struggling. Her partner had lost his job due to Covid-19.

Weekly check in calls with client

Referral to Trent PTS for client, partner and both for couples therapy.

Contact to clients health visitor to discuss client mental health and chase up any information needed.

Upon contact with my client I had noticed she was feeling very teary and isolated. She had mentioned she had been struggling with low moods since giving birth. Client explained her family live in Thailand and was going to support client when she had given birth for 6 month, however, due to Covid, this could no longer take place. Client and her partner had spoken with the health visitor about how they were both feeling. Clients partner had been told to "Man up, he is now the man of the house and the baby could not have two parents that were struggling" - Since this visit there has been no contact from health visitor. I had referred both to TrentPTS for counselling and coupes therapy.

Both are now midway through therapy. Client's partner has now found a new job.

Client is feeling less isolated and is now getting out of the house more often.

Health visitor has been contacted and regular appointments with the GP have been arranged.

Throughout lockdown this family have struggled, however, they are now left feeling more positive and empowered.

PRACTITIONER/S: Sophie Elsom

Case Reflection 4:

Z was referred to DVS by the police following her reporting a stolen roll of carpet. Z did not speak much English and she had recently fled domestic violence in London. She lives with her autistic son and at first phone call has no other support.

Emotional and practical support provided in the form of telephone calls using Language Line interpreter so Z could access DVS fully. It became clear that Z's landlord was not providing a property that may be fit to live in and the handyman took the carpet as he wasn't receiving pay.

Language line was really useful to get a full picture of how Z had come to our area and what her current support looked like. From Social Services involvement in London and a planned move due to domestic violence Z was told she would have support here but had not heard anything. Her son was not attending school and the lack of routine was affecting him due to being autistic. She did not know anybody, felt very alone and unsure of what to do next. I agreed to ring Social Services which I did and ascertained a practitioner from Early Help team was due to get in touch. I contacted her and explained the situation and interpreter needs which the practitioner was very thankful for. She also stated an Environmental Health Officer was due to do an inspection so there was no need for me to report concerns. Z was very thankful to me of the update that support was imminent for her and her son.

This case demonstrates using an interpreter can help both the client and practitioner to fully understand both sides. It also demonstrates multi agency working and how it benefitted Z and her son.

PRACTITIONER/S: Tanya Earp

Case Reflection 5:

ASB Nuisance – to support one service user in Alvaston, referred into the service by the social housing provider. 1 adult female. ASB from immediate neighbours who live in above flat. Complaints around consistent noise nuisance from loud music, use of communal garden area, abusive behaviour and other low-level ASB incidents.

Emotional and Practical support were provided over the period of 13 months to help the SU to find coping mechanisms to assist her to reduce the personal impact where possible, and to follow up her complaints with the council and housing provider. Both telephone and home visit support were provided.

The SU was targeted by persistent loud music from the neighbours in flat above. They were constantly playing classical music throughout the day and night and left this playing when they were not at home. The SU submitted several noise app recordings to the housing provider, however, these proved to be below the threshold to be considered a statutory noise nuisance and so no support plan was actioned. On working more closely with the SU, it was found that she suffered from a complex range of impacting health issues, including hypersensitivity, which resulted in her being able to not only hear the music, but to ‘feel’ the music through vibrations in the walls and furniture. Being closer to the ground reduced the impact somewhat, and the SU found that her only respite from the constant vibrations was to sleep on the floor of her sitting room, which she found to be both physically challenging and also very demoralising.

The caseworker was able to support with a range of emotional and practical resolutions and to give advice and guidance around complaints towards the housing provider. A successful outcome for the SU was achieved and the SU moved to more appropriate accommodation.

PRACTITIONER/S: Julie Gregory-Bateman

Case Reflection 6:

My client was referred to me as a victim of stalking. The offender was known to her as he was someone she used to work with. This offence went on over a few months where she would see him watching her in the park and in various supermarkets.

My client identified to me that she had been both physically and mentally affected by this and did not want to end up becoming anorexic again. I supported IP to get involved with some talking therapy both for her mental and physical health and I was there for her emotionally.

My client really struggled with this situation to begin with and was fairly apprehensive at first regarding support but after a short while she engaged really well with both myself and Trent PTS for support and talking therapy. The police took the crime seriously and the offender was later arrested and this helped my client move on with her life. Whilst my client was struggling with eating properly when I first met her, she now is very healthy and eats well after we completed a diet plan together. The crime had also put a huge strain on the rest of my clients family members but they now do a lot more activities together and enjoy each others company.

PRACTITIONER/S: Laura Ridley

Case Reflection 7:

Mrs S came to our services in regards to Burglary in the Dwelling. She had her purse stolen which was in the kitchen.

Mrs S was shook up about the incident and appreciated the phone call from Derbyshire Victim Services as she only has son come to visit her and was nice to talk to someone else

I had another check up call for Mrs S who then said she felt silly as she found her purse in a drawer she doesn't usually use. She said she felt very silly and had got her son to help call the police to notify them. She thought she had wasted police time which I said she hadn't and that she had done the right thing because she did think her purse was stolen. We had a little laugh over the phone but Mrs S appreciated the call and said she is fine for support.

PRACTITIONER/S: Leah Taylor

Case Reflection 8:

Burglary. 2 clients

Weekly check in with client starting with telephone then eventually moving on for face to face home visits with client, and his family. Referral for counselling for client and partner and for couples counselling.

Positive encouragement

Timelines (Look through to where client started to where he is now)

Client came through as self-referral from partner. Client was feeling very stressed. Client outlined his sister had pressed charges against his brother for sexual assault and client was supporting his sister with this. Client had progressively become more stressed. He lost his job; his partner was in the last few weeks of pregnancy and they were waiting for his partners via to come through.

Upon meeting client, I spoke with him alone, his partner alone and them both together. His partner was suffering with post natal depression and was told to refer herself to counselling but had not found the time to do so.

On this visit, I went through referral forms and filled them out for his partner. I then filled them out for client also.

Client explained he had tried counselling before but this did not work. Explained to client he could always try it and if it is not working for him, he did not have to continue.

Upon last check in, client has now got full time employment, and himself and his partner are on last counselling session. IP has a positive mind-set and is looking forward to future with his partner and his daughter.

PRACTITIONER/S: Sophie Elsom

Case Reflection 9:

S was referred to DVS by the Family Liaison Officer supporting him after the death by dangerous driving of his Dad outside his house. After months of investigation the offender pleaded guilty at court and received a prison sentence of 3years 9months.

Emotional/practical support provided in the form of visits and calls.

Support informing agencies of Dad's death eg DVLA, Pension and completing benefit applications eg PIP

Referral to Derbyshire Carers and support attending coffee mornings

Referral to bereavement counselling and RJ team

Support for personal statement and court process

This case was a balance of emotional and practical help for S and his Mum who he lives with. Weekly visits were made where we talked through emotions and I supported them to complete paperwork of which there was a surprising amount. Multi agency working with FLO ensured they received updates. I ensured they were getting all the financial help they were entitled to and supported them in the insurance claim and PIP forms. We rang Cruze together to arrange counselling. S was struggling with the life change to Carer for his Mum so I arranged for a carers assessment to be carried out and we found a coffee morning so S could spend some time outside the home. Gradually less emotional support was needed and support moved to telephone while waiting for sentencing. RJ referral followed but has not gone ahead. S was ok with this as we hadn't raised expectations and now feels able to continue with life.

S feedback: 'Thank you so much for all your help, I don't know how I would have coped without you'. From FLO: I have just spoken to S, he couldn't praise you enough!! He is very grateful for your help.

PRACTITIONER/S: Tanya

Case Reflection 10:

Criminal Damage (to her vehicle) by known perpetrator as witnessed by her family and herself. The perpetrator used a metal bar to smash the front and rear windscreens and then quickly drove off before the police arrived.

I was supporting 1 individual.

The client had not been communicated with at all about the incident and what was going on. From her accepting support from our service, we developed a great relationship. I got her to trust the system more and to feel that she is not alone through any of this.

The change I have seen in the client in just a month has been amazing. She went from being anxious all the time to being more relaxed and positive. She is ready to put the incident behind her and begin to start living life again. Whilst she can never rule out another incident, she no longer lives in total fear. Since this change in attitude, she has found that more positives have come her way and lots of people have rallied around her. Talking through the incident with me allowed her to have an outlet to express her thoughts freely which really helped her. My involvement also meant that she did not have to deal with the police side of things alone which stopped her feeling overwhelmed.

I found this case to be one that has stuck with me and should be celebrated because she went from being completely done with trusting others and the system to realising that there is support available through our service and that we do care!

PRACTITIONER/S: Kayleigh Simmonite

Case Reflection 11:

SU and family suffered ongoing ASB from neighbours next door including verbal abuse, waste being thrown over boundary, physical assault, malicious communications.

I provided emotional check in calls to SU. I supported her in documenting evidence for the police. Neighbour made counter allegations which were charged but thrown out by CPS, I supported her at court. I liaised with police and supported SU in raising concerns over delays in the investigation.

SU and husband had suffered a breakdown in the relationship with the next door neighbour. This individual had begun to abuse alcohol and her behaviour deteriorated. Verbal abuse, malicious communications to SUs employers, assault and even spraying her young children with a hosepipe caused the SU a great deal of anxiety. This was during the first lockdown and SU felt there was no escape from the situation, so ultimately they put their house up for sale, although aware they had to declare the ASB. I helped SU get updates from the police and followed through to court. I supplied letters of support to her solicitor and raised the issue at the ASB tasking meetings as the offender was also becoming well known to police. SU managed to sell their house and move, and we started some emotional activities to cope and recover. All charges against SU were dropped, and after a successful complaint to police, the offender and her husband were charged with 3 counts of assault and harassment and are due in court in February.

PRACTITIONER/S: Charlie Hamilton Kay

Case Reflection 12:

D's son was sentenced to 14 months for an offence on 24th September. He was also given a 5 year restraining order resulting in no contact with D for 5 years. D was devastated by this and wanted the restraining order revoked but had no idea where to start.

I was honest from the beginning explaining that this was something I would have to research as I had never worked a case like this before, which D was fine with. I delved deeper into the reasons behind the order and why D wanted it revoked, ensuring her safety.

I researched the law and how to challenge a restraining order. In between researching I emotionally supported D and helped her open up about her sons criminal behaviour.

It was apparent that he was of no harm to D, the harm was more to himself. He was a drug user who broke the law to feed his habit. He had never hurt D but because she would help him with money (so he did not have to go out and break the law) the judge put the restraining order in place so that he had nobody helping him with his addiction.

D drafted a letter as to why she wanted the order lifting and through contacting various people in the CJS she managed to get a court date.

The court date came and D stood in front of the Judge with the letter we had spent so long drafting and he revoked the order.

D is so happy and she was then allowed to send her son a Christmas card after having no contact in so long.

D can't wait for him to be released so she can see him again.

PRACTITIONER/S: Hayley Rice

Case Reflection 13:

SR is slapped on the forehead and threatened with violence by a neighbour. Enquiries show this is not the first incident and other residents of the street have been victims of ASB

In the initial phone call it was clear that the neighbour has been threatening over a couple of months because he thought SR was a paedophile. SR wanted to move but couldn't register on Home Options because he had no internet access.

I liaised with High Peak housing .

With SR's permission I contacted Claire at High Peak housing as normally if a client hasn't got internet access they would attend at the Town Hall or council offices to use the tablets provided there to register for rehousing. As the town halls are presently all closed this is not an option. Housing hadn't put an alternative in place and arranged to call me back. After speaking to the neighbourhood officer who said that there were quite a few issues with this location Claire arranged for someone to call SR in order to make the referral.

SR was happy with this outcome as he felt it improved his chance of housing listening to his issues and him getting suitable accommodation more quickly and he thanked me for arranging this on his behalf.

PRACTITIONER/S: HA

Case Reflection 14:

ASB Personal – to support service user in Ilkeston, referred into the service by the police. 1 adult male. ASB from immediate neighbour who lives in an adjoining bungalow. Complaints around consistent noise nuisance from early morning – going to work activities, rubbish thrown into his garden area, and verbally abusive behaviour.

Emotional and Practical support provided over the period of 4 months, including safeguarding procedures and several layers of multi-agency collaboration to support this. Also, help to follow up his complaints with the council and housing provider in terms of the ASB and other complaints around the maintenance of his property.

Initially, the case was referred into the service around localised low-level neighbour ASB issues. However, the first conversation with the SU revealed a very real risk to life due to the impact that this was bringing, on top of an already set of complex feelings, relating to the day-to-day challenges he faced in and around his property. The SU felt that he was not being listened to or supported by his housing provider, and so had planned and circulated details of how this would be brought to a close by his own actions. The caseworker provided intense and sensitive telephone support, including daily contact to monitor thoughts and feelings, and continually risk assessing and communicating with the other supporting agencies, for the best help and guidance. The caseworker was instrumental in reducing the imminent danger to the SU by employing learnt Remedi techniques, and working with the guidance of DVS line-management.

The caseworker was able to support with a range of emotional, practical, and safeguarding resolutions and to give advice and guidance around complaints towards the housing provider. A successful outcome for the SU was achieved and the funding obtained for the necessary home adaptations and upgrade of the property.

PRACTITIONER/S: Julie Gregory-Bateman

Case Reflection 15:

This was a burglary in a dwelling where car keys were stolen whilst the family was sleeping to subsequently steal the car from the drive. I supported the mum whilst a colleague supported the 6-year-old son.

I sought to help the service user become more comfortable sleeping at night and not constantly being on edge fearing that it would happen again. We kept in contact fortnightly and the service user would tell me what new challenge she had set herself (and her son).

Over the course of about 12 weeks, the service user has really benefitted from our regular contact and has constantly been motivated to challenge herself in making steps to get back to 'normality'. She no longer keeps a chair against the door, nor does she constantly check the CCTV. She has also been empowered to seek help from a therapist through her GP. She now makes sure that she checks in on her mental wellbeing and tries to ensure she lives as stress-free as possible. I am really proud of our work together and I am so happy to see her settled and feeling safe in her own home again. This incident really shook the family, and she has done so well to cope and recover. She is extremely grateful for DVS support and is now ready to stop ongoing support and put this behind her.

PRACTITIONER/S: Kayleigh Simmonite

Case Reflection 16:

My client was referred to me as a victim of malicious communication as she was receiving unwanted text messages of a malicious nature.

My client identified to me that she had been both mentally and physically effected by this. My client's anxiety had returned because of this and in turn she had reverted back to using drugs which then only made her anxiety worse.

My client really struggled mentally and physically after receiving these unwanted malicious text messages however she recognised that she did not want to become a drug addict again and so I supported her to get signposted to a drug recovery agency and she began some telephone support sessions with a drugs worker and she has now been clean of any drug for 2 months.

PRACTITIONER/S: Laura Ridley

Case Reflection 17:

Hate Crime. The client was a victim of being shouted at in residential street by her neighbours, mainly being called racist names, causing stress and anxiety.

The Client wanted mainly emotional support from Derbyshire Victim Services. I called her on agreed dates and times. This boosted her mental health.

Prior to the incident my Client had only just under gone a c-section with her first baby. The added stress onto her did not help with the new mum worries and emotions. I would call the Client on a fortnightly basis but also made sure she knew she could always call the office number if she needed me sooner, which gave the Client the hope of knowing someone is always there for her. In my last call with the Client, she expressed how much these calls helped and explained it was nice to know they are kind and caring people out there. I believe this piece of work needs to be celebrated as it shows that phone calls can make that much difference in a person life.

PRACTITIONER/S: Leah Taylor

Case Reflection 18:

ASB, one client. Clients home/ mums home in Derby City.

Brief Outline of the work undertaken:

Weekly check ins with client

Home visits

Regular contact with GP

Regular contact with complex needs assistant

Referral to refuge

Referral to Adult Social Care

Timelines

Diary

Crafts

Client was referred early 2020. Client experienced ASB from neighbours later moved to parents house through lockdown and was still experiencing ASB. After contact GP I had identified client often experiences episodes of psychosis. Client hears voices as well as hallucinates. Client also has autism and struggles processing information. A referral to ASC was made. From this assessment a complex needs assistant was assigned and recently a MH support worker. The support worker will be attending clients home address for two hours every morning in order to gain routine and help with supporting clients MH.

The referral to refuge has given client the option for counselling from a previous relationship which is also helping with this. Regular contact with clients GP has outlined client often gets infections which contributes to confusion and possible psychosis client has experienced. Client has a check in with GP every three weeks. During visits I outlined with client that they struggle communicating how they feel, therefore we use arts and crafts to display this.

Client will be moving back to her flat shortly with the help of ASC, MH support, support from GP and complex needs assistant. Client has improved massively on MH and outlook.

PRACTITIONER/S: Sophie Elsom

Case Reflection 19:

S obtained our number from the national Victim Support helpline and wanted support following her son witnessing the murder of his friend and being stabbed himself where they used to live. They moved to Derbyshire to escape witness intimidation and start a new life.

Emotional/practical support provided on the phone.

Signposting to Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund

Informing her of how her son can access bereavement counselling when he is ready.

Supporting her in ways to help her son attend court and open up to her about his feelings around the crime.

This case was a balance of emotional and practical help for S who was struggling to support her son through what had happened to him. The investigation and court process had been affected by coronavirus restrictions with the process taking longer than usual and elongating the stress for the victim. He had to cope with the criminal justice system alongside trying to cope with the death of a good friend. S needed support while she was fighting for her son to be supported giving evidence and feeling safe. Emotional support was provided around helping her to see she was doing all she could to support her son while also looking after herself and settling into a new area during a pandemic when community groups are much reduced. DVS support gave her the opportunity to offload and realise what she was achieving.

The court case was adjourned again but S felt she didn't need the DVS support to continue as she felt empowered and more confident. She had our details and counselling services in her area for her son should he need them and they were feeling more settled in their new home.

PRACTITIONER/S: Tanya

Thank you to all of our colleagues and service users

