



VPCare News

AUTUMN

Welcome

Our new look newsletter will be issued quarterly. If we have sent you copy it is because we have had a connection with you or you are a current or past customer.

We hope that you enjoy the content which is designed for commentary, discussion and also to let you know about new developments at VP Care. We would like to publish reader's responses to our articles in following editions.

Thank you for reading

If you have any feedback please do contact Louise (contact details p3)

Zero Hours; Dispelling the Myths

by Dr Shelley Parkin

We are all familiar with zero hour's contracts: work that is not based on a permanent agreement. According to some, zero hours contracts prevent people from securing enough work to live on.

Apparently, we as workers, all want the same thing - rigid, employer controlled employment; and all employers are ruthless and give no thought to a workers livelihood.

There are, of course, those who exploit the flexibility that zero hour contracts allow but this is not limited to these contracts.

Permanent employees can also be subject to unfair management. There are also organisations who simply cannot afford to guarantee work; it is truly ad hoc according to fluctuations in work. To force such companies to go permanent could

bankrupt them and create further job losses. Clearly this would be unworkable.

BUT, the lack of a permanent contract does not have to mean a lack of work, but the place of work many change.

Myth 1: "A zero hour's contract means unstable, irregular work". This will depend on who you choose to work with. Like all employment opportunities, you must consider whether a company can meet your needs and whether you can meet theirs.

At VP, we strive to provide good working conditions for our staff and a high standard of care for our clients. This requires consistency and continuity of care. We can proudly state that many of our staff have worked for us since we formed 14 years ago. Many work full-time and those who work part-time do so through choice. We keep an eye on incoming work, anticipate problems, and replace lost work, enabling staff to maintain their standard of living, and allowing us, as a service, to provide the level of care expected by our clients. It simply would not be in our interests to lose good staff.

Myth 2: "A zero hour's contract means you cannot get a mortgage". This is simply not true. Many of our staff have indeed managed to secure mortgages. Being on a zero hours contract does not mean that work cannot be considered regular and long-term.

Myth 3: "A zero hour's contract means no prospects". At VP this is not true. There is no difference between the nature of our work and that of permanent employees. Working for VP also allows staff to move around, gaining invaluable and truly diverse experiences of clients, teams and services. Many of our staff have gained experience which has aided enrolment onto professional training courses. Furthermore, we have been able to promote workers where appropriate.

Myth 4: "A zero hour's contract means poor money". At VP we understand that good staff cost more. Our staff receive an above average rate of pay in comparison to their permanent counterparts. The benefits do not stop at good pay. In comparison with permanent employees, our staff have choice and control over the hours they work, where they work, the type of work they prefer, and when they take their holidays.

At VP, we believe we could actually lose staff through permanent employment as the flexibility that attracted them in the first place would be lost

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Views on a recent documentary filmed inside a residential college for students with learning disabilities. The students are due to leave college with uncertainty over future plans and relationships

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Solution for Case Managers

We can let you know when and where support workers are available based on your preferences. Choose what you want your alert to show and leave the rest to us

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Life Begins Now

by Louise Pittam



Derwen College leavers Lissie and Daniel are still together in their own flats but living 200 miles apart

Life Begins Now, an hour long documentary featuring final year disabled students in their last few weeks at Derwen College in Shropshire. The programme was one of fifteen commissioned as part of BBC Three's 'Defying the Label' season featuring youngsters who have been born with, or who have acquired a disability through accident or illness.

BBC Three devoted their prime time schedule to the Defying the Label season aimed at a target audience demographic of 16-34 year olds. BBC Three controller, Damian Kavanagh said "This incredibly powerful range of programs has been designed to speak honestly to our viewers whilst questioning perspectives and attitudes towards young disabled people in the UK today."

Filmed inside Derwen College, students partied, drank and fell in and out of relationships just like any other student in any other post 16 college in the country. Preconceptions of what living in special residential college for learning disability means consistently challenged as students were shown making out in the grounds, skipping classes and expressing overwhelming un-enthusiasm with mandatory training classes for a career in screen printing.

If you are in the industry you won't have had any of those preconceptions. You already know that younger adults with learning disabilities, autism and brain injuries that live in residential colleges have personality, talent, relationships, aspiration and a whole lot more than even these cameras show. If you saw Life Begins, you will have naturally taken your angle.

Steven's bus journey to the supermarket with his 2:1 staff would probably provoke some commentary among providers of community support, especially those of transitional age younger adults. It is reasonable to ask why the staff needed to wear their ID badges on display whilst in the community and to also discuss other practice that could make people stand out as a support recipient more than is necessary.

Steven's experience demonstrated the importance of individualised staff matching and support by rapport so you don't look like you're shopping with Nan or invite any other inappropriate attention because of poor staff technique.

It was hard not to feel saddened by the separation of college sweethearts Lissie and Daniel. Lissie was filmed preparing her moving on plan with a tutor, part of which included housing and wanting to live with Daniel, which he reciprocated.

For Lissie and Daniel, living together and relationships after college didn't seem to be explored in the program, which lead me to believe that somebody somewhere might have opposed their plans – including their secret engagement. The couple ended up 200 miles apart were filmed at the end of the program having a supervised visit. The viewer doesn't know if any more is being done to achieve their goals and as such are left hanging and feeling slightly

confused and cheated - possibly like Lissie and Daniel.

With less reliance on popular sensationalism than other channel's presentation of disability or the benefits crisis, Life Begins delivers the main brief to its target audience. Whether intentional or not, it also draws out discussion on practice, choice, or lack of choice for young adults with learning disability in transition and the need for good transition.

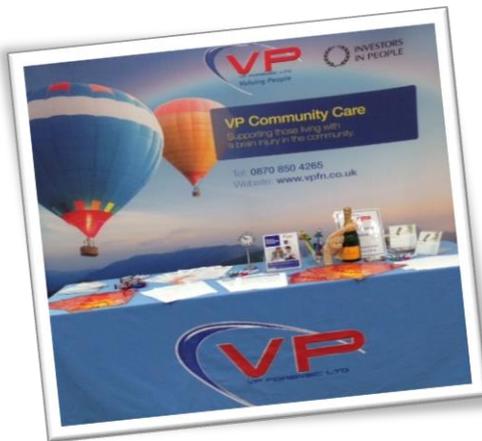
Regardless of client age group but of highest importance to young adults in transition, VP Community Care always approaches support with person centred client-staff matching and a discreet approach to support. At the centre of our care is valuing the importance of living ordinary lives like everyone else with the right to relationships, choice and control in the least restrictive way possible.

Life Begins Now

BBC Three Thursday 4th
August 9pm

Watch on BBC iPlayer Catch Up

VP Event Fixtures



Our new fabric stand for 2015 which is like a stretchy duvet cover on a tent frame. It's super light and the design was chosen by Director, Phil, who is also has a talent for selecting our giveaway items

2nd September

East Midlands Acquired Brain Injury Forum
(Hosted by VP Care)

30th September to 1st October

The BIRT 2015 Conference 'The Future of Brain Injury Rehabilitation' (Hilton Deansgate Manchester)

8th October

'Bringing People Together' Event for Mental Health Professionals and Service Users
(NCVS Nottingham)

12th November to 13th November

TOGETHER Conference 2015 (BABICM CMSUK VRA)
(Nottingham EMCC)

Solutions for Case Managers

We are currently offering case managers availability bulletins for current and new support workers according to location and other key skills/attributes or specific requirements. We receive quality new applications every day in all areas of the country. By being able to advance notify you with key information around resource availability and location we are helping people to start planned/unplanned support sooner.

To receive a sign up form please contact Louise on 07961 741020 or email louise.pittam@vpfn.co.uk

Clinical Services Update

Our Clinical Psychologist has been admitted to Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society (BPS). Associate Fellow status (AFBPsS) confirms recognition of her specialist knowledge, experience and contribution to the field of Psychology.

Dr Shelley Parkin is already a Chartered Member (CPsychol) of the BPS. This is their gold standard and confirms recognition of the highest standard of psychological knowledge and expertise.

If you would like to know more about our psychology services, please call us on 0870 850 4265 or visit our website where you will find our psychology page and brochure.

VP Community Care

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To respond to issues raised in this edition please contact

Louise by phone or email louise.pittam@vpfn.co.uk

CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICES

We provide support with:

- Developing/regaining skills
- Anxiety
- Depression & self-esteem
- Relationships
- Physical health & disability
- Post-traumatic stress
- Anger management
- Behavioural difficulties
- Carer distress
- Grief & loss
- Cognitive difficulties
- Physical & sexual abuse
- Eating disorders



The
British
Psychological
Society

Chartered Psychologist

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