



# VP Complex Care Newsletter

*A cost effective alternative to Nursing or Residential care*

## VP Complex Care host a meet the meerkat day

By Toni Saxton

### **What do you mean Meerkats can't be Support Workers?**

Well, I suppose they can't reach door handles, or make food, or lift anything above our knees. Perhaps they can't join the VP Forensic employee list, but they were the perfect antidote to the Monday morning blues.

In case you missed our emails, tweets, Facebook announcements.... recently we held a meet the meerkat event for some of our clients here at the office.

Fred, Betty & Barney are three energetic meerkats brought to us by Hawks of Steele. Their handlers informed us that these siblings had been abandoned by their parents shortly after birth and sadly the pups were losing weight, being ignored and on their way to the meerkats' pearly gates. So they rescued and hand reared the litter, morphing the siblings into exciting curious meerkats who enjoy the company of humans.



It was our Director, Phil Walters, who first saw the meerkats whilst visiting Hawks of Steele. After asking a couple of questions he decided to give our clients the opportunity to meet these wonderful creatures. We admit that inviting meerkats into our office appears to be random. And yes, it could be a veiled excuse to play with some cute animals. However, after seeing our clients and their support team coming together, playing with the meerkats, meeting new people, it started to make more sense.

For people with a mental health illness, learning disability or an acquired brain injury, new experiences can be difficult to undertake. Without a safe environment to be in and their required support network, new experiences can be unenjoyable and intimidating. With the meerkat visit booked Phil extended the invitation to our clients to come meet these marvelous creatures. Yes, this made the office staff extremely happy – but more importantly, Phil encouraged our clients to meet one another; people with a variety of abilities, in one room, enjoying the same activity.

What I saw was a day where clients and support workers could mingle and share a similar experience. The meerkats broke down any inhibitions and barriers we all had, they climbed on tables, heads, wheelchairs and climbed into a couple of handbags escaping with anything shiny they could find! Every single person left with a smile on their face and perhaps our clients grew in confidence. We hope that they are encouraged to try out other activities.

Overall I left work that day, feeling like I was part of a community. The focus was on engagement and laughter, not on KPIs

or profit. On reflection, I am happy to know that I work for a company who effortlessly embody that disabilities are not limitations. This ethos is spearheaded by our Director. In arranging a seemingly simple event, Phil thought outside the box to connect and encourage our clients.

It was with the help of the most unlikely creature that the day was a success. Thank you to all that attended and enjoyed the hilarious antics of meerkat

## VP Complex Care

Nationwide providers of specialist community care and rehabilitation

For any queries relating to setting up any support package please do not hesitate to contact us with your referral.

Units 11, H20 Business Park, Lakeview Drive, Sherwood Park, Nottingham NG15 0HT

Tel: 0870 850 4265

Website: [www.vpfn.co.uk](http://www.vpfn.co.uk)

Email [community@vpfn.co.uk](mailto:community@vpfn.co.uk)

**The positive feedback keeps coming.....**



The level of G's verbal aggression has been intense on occasions and the breakdown of relationships has been quick. VP have replaced staff and they have remained positive in their outlook and determined to make G's support a success.

R – Specialist Learning Disabilities Community Nurse

## Care Provider V Direct Recruitment

By Samantha Harper

I often find myself in a discussion with Case Managers, Solicitors and Social Workers as to whether it is better to directly recruit or have a care provider.

Obviously any care provider will tell you that direct recruitment **"has too many negatives, it will all go wrong, you should never consider this as an option, just get it out of your head, change your plans to include a care provider, you will be much better off."** Whereas those responsible for the budgets and ensuring that our clients have a financially stable future will tell you **"direct recruitment is more affordable and that is what must be done"**.

In the meantime case managers are in the middle trying to establish a way forward. Certainly as a care provider we would like our clients to consider using our services. However, rather than work against direct recruitment, here at VP we understand that each client requires individualised support and sometimes this includes a care provider and sometimes it does not.

Instead of using scare tactics to sway you into using a care provider, we simply state that if you are considering direct recruitment, the timing must be right for the client, it must be appropriate to meet their need, and..... *how would you like a little help to get there?*

Many of our clients have experienced an enormous life changing event and the idea of support can feel invasive, unnecessary and embarrassing. For those who had a considerable amount of independence prior to their injury, accepting support requires a significant amount of adjustment. This is not always easy and those that have been impacted in substantial ways can find this all the more difficult. Inevitably this leads to a reluctance to accept support and can mean that clients can request multiple changes to their support package. As a result, some clients are not always in a position where direct recruitment is a suitable option. For many clients with an ABI / TBI establishing a stable support package can take some time. Many of our clients

can experience several changes in their staff team as a result of the complexities of their needs and behaviour.

To complicate matters further, what happens if the client and the staff just don't click? We have all been in the position when the person we place, on paper undoubtedly appears to be a "home run". However, it just doesn't go to plan. In order to offer a different support worker we must first remove the existing member of staff. As I am sure you can all testify this can be an absolute HR nightmare and all we are trying to do is give our clients what they want and need. This again leads to more time, more cost and more frustration. The clear benefit to using VP is that we will take care of this for you and your client. You would simply need to tell us what the preferences are and we will seek to place another person.

With much of the responsibility of direct recruitment falling to case managers to source staff, complete their recruitment process and take on the ongoing management of a support team, this takes up a significant amount of time and resources. This leads to less case manager time being focused on rehabilitation, and more time on recruitment potentially delaying a client's recovery. With this in mind, are we really making the best of our resources?

### What we can take care of as a care provider:

- Competency based interviews
- Meet and greets directly with clients.
- Thorough recruitment process including DBS checks, references and right to work.
- Annual Mandatory training.
- Training delivered by Clinical Psychologist Dr Shelley Parkin, Branch Manager, highly qualified Trainer and Care coordinators.
- Weekly paid staff, Pension scheme and holiday pay taken care of.
- Fortnightly supervision and Annual appraisal.
- Registration with the CQC to ensure standards are continually met.
- Complaints handling, including performance management procedures i.e. Disciplinary procedures

In cases of direct recruitment all of these elements would be sourced and managed by the client or the Case Manager. By utilising our services, a case manager is able to concentrate on supporting the rehabilitation process,

and liaising with the MDT; the stress of recruitment would be taken care of.

Secondary to this, what happens if the client and the staff just don't click? We have all been in the position when the person we place, on paper undoubtedly appears to be a "home run". However, it just doesn't go to plan. In order to offer a different support worker we must first remove the existing member of staff. As I am sure you can all testify this can be an absolute HR nightmare and all we are trying to do is give our clients what they want and need. This again leads to more time, more cost and more frustration. The clear benefit to using VP is that we will take care of this for you and your client. You would simply need to tell us what the preferences are and we will seek to place another person.

### But what about those that are ready to explore direct recruitment....?

When the time is right, VP have supported individual clients to find a support worker.

We can work on a temp to perm basis. We source the candidates, complete the full recruitment process, provide mandatory training, get the staff started and monitor the first few months. This is an ideal route if your client would like to "try before you buy". If your client is completely happy with the staff member all we require is 12 weeks' notice when they will continue to work for VP and then they can transfer to direct recruitment for **FREE**.

Alternatively, we can resource staff for your client to recruit directly straight away. This permanent recruitment does not come with the benefit of VP completing the recruitment process or the training but it does take away some of the stress that comes along with advertising and resourcing potential candidates. For this VP would be paid a one off recruitment fee.

Whatever your needs; whether they are a full bespoke package of care, agency use to cover shortfalls or help to find the right staff to directly recruit, we can support you. To discuss your clients' needs:

You can call us on 08708504265  
or  
email our dedicated team  
community@vpfn.co.uk

## Meet a Member of the VP Team

Name: Danielle North

Position with VP: Care Coordinator

### How long have you been at VP?

I have worked at VP for 2 years and 3 months.

### How did you get into care?

After completing my Psychology and Criminology degree I came into care because I wanted to gain some experience as a support worker, with the initial intention to build upon experience and go into Forensic Psychology. However, I fell in love with working with people directly, walking out of the door at work and feeling that I had achieved something and made a difference to someone, even if in a small way. I quickly established a new plan to work my way up to having a real impact, hoping that every day I would continue to take at least one positive home that would make me smile.

### What does good quality care mean to you?

Happy clients. I know we have provided good quality care when we have happy clients, including the people we support and people we work with.

### How do you feel about working with clients who display behaviours that challenge?

The challenging situations we have experienced, read or heard about never scare us off, it just means each day is different and you need to have a team of colleagues who share that interest. You can share ideas to problem solve such situations, which VP have and together we work to safely support and manage challenging behaviours.

### What is your experience of working at VP?

Enjoyable. VP want to make a difference for their clients and involve them with all aspects of their care/support where possible, encouraging them to manage their care/support and be involved with identifying a support team from the beginning and throughout. VP not only provides support to their clients, but also to their staff, whether in the field or in the office and this experience makes me feel glad to be a part of a team that actually cares.

### What would you like the future to hold for you?

I want to be happy and successful, being happy in what I do and feeling I have achieved something.

### What interests you most about health and social care?

Being able to help others and enable them to live a good quality of life within their own home.



Quote that Danielle lives by:

*'Everything happens for a reason.'*

Danielle can be contacted on 08708504265

Or via email [community@vpfn.co.uk](mailto:community@vpfn.co.uk)

Look out for further "meet the team" profiles on our website [www.vpfn.co.uk](http://www.vpfn.co.uk)

## VP Training

As an independent training provider we can provide flexible and cost-effective training for your existing staff at your organisation including:

- No force first – passive supports, conflict management, de-escalation
- Therapeutic management of violence and aggression and breakaway
- Moving and handling
- ABI, Autism, learning disability, mental health training
- First aid – emergency, at-work and paediatric

To make a query please contact our office or email [vp@vpfn.co.uk](mailto:vp@vpfn.co.uk)

## VP Event Fixtures

### 14th September 2017

Headway Lincolnshire  
From Roadside to Rehabilitation  
The Showroom, Tritton Road, Lincoln

### 14th September 2017

ABI Solutions  
Tech Con 2017  
The Pullman International Hotel, St Pancras, London