

Sahara Care News

Spring 2024

2024
Great strides into Spring



Sahara Care
Pathways to Positive Outcomes

Welcome

Welcome to Sahara Care's Spring newsletter, bringing you updates on recent events, activities and developments from our assisted and supported living services in east London.

A note from Alan Betts, Director and Nominated Individual

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Sahara Care newsletter. As we find ourselves three months into 2024 with Easter on the horizon, it is a moment to reflect on the strides that we have taken in this first quarter.

The past months have been marked by significant developments, notably our inaugural service within the realm of supported living. We are thrilled to announce our inclusion in the London Borough of Newham's Supported Living Framework, a testament to our commitment and capability in this area. This achievement positions us to receive referrals from the Borough for supported living clients.

Anticipation mounts as we await the outcome of our tender bid for the Barking and Dagenham Supported Living Framework, with the declaration pending for April this year. Stay tuned for updates on this front.

I extend a formal welcome to Paul Ryan, who assumes the role of Operations Manager, succeeding Steve McDermott. Paul brings a wealth of experience and insight to our team, with particular specialism in learning disability. I encourage colleagues to engage with Paul, sharing any suggestions for organisational improvements.

Additionally, I extend a warm welcome to our new recruits, who have joined us through both external recruitment campaigns and sponsorship routes. I eagerly anticipate meeting each of you during my upcoming visits to our services. The success of our staff is paramount, and I urge all our staff to explore development opportunities with your managers to further enrich your careers.

Our organisation continues to make steady progress in terms of our overall quality, evidenced by positive feedback received from local authority quality teams for Sahara Parkside and Sahara House. Congratulations are also in order for Sahara Lodge and Gardens, achieving a remarkable 97% quality score in their latest Newham quality monitoring visit. Kudos to all involved.

In closing, I express my gratitude for the unwavering care, dedication and support extended to those under our care. Together, we continue to make a positive difference in the lives of others. Thank you to staff for their continued efforts and dedication. Here's to a future filled with success, growth and continued excellence.



Introduction to Paul Ryan, Operations Manager

The Board of Directors and staff welcome Paul Ryan to Sahara Care



My name is Paul Ryan, and I am the new Operations Manager for Sahara Care.

I have over 25 years' experience of working within local authority, and care providers within Adult Social Care with extensive experience of working within Learning Disabilities, Autism, Complex Needs, Physical Disabilities, and Mental Health.

I am very much looking forward to getting to know and working with you all going forwards to enhance the lives of the people we support and care for.

A Celebration of Community Cohesion and Aspiration through cricket in East London

Chairman, Terence Brown and Managing Director, Sharon Kaur attend City Hall event to support community cohesion and aspiration through cricket

It was a great honour for Terry and Sharon to join Unmesh Desai, London Assembly Member for City and East at this event which was organised in collaboration with Essex and Middlesex Cricket.

Special guest Nasser Hussain joined a panel discussion on how to continue to activate Women and Girls cricket from diverse communities. The talk included celebrating the connection of school, club and league cricket and the community and performance pathway scheme.



Spotlight on Jason

Jason is a valued client in our Sahara House service, which is located opposite the historic Valentine's Park in the Gants Hill area.

Sophie Coster, Manager of Sahara House is proud to introduce us to Jason, who first moved to Sahara House in June 2022.



He has been busy making lists for staff and his Mum with chosen items that he would like to request. His most recent request has been for a Nintendo switch and PlayStation!

Jason has also developed his daily life skills by making his Mum a cup of tea or coffee and a delicious cheese sandwich. Jason made this independently with only his support staff giving the odd verbal prompt.

Since then, the whole team have been working hard to further progress Jason's general wellbeing, engagement levels and communication.

Jason is non-verbal and since joining Sahara House, his engagement with staff and his fellow service users has improved and this has had a positive effect on his day-to-day life. Jason first started communicating with staff by blinking his eyes and this allowed staff to better understand Jason's needs and choices.

Since late 2023, Jason has demonstrated further communication skills by using hand gestures for 'yes' and 'no' and creating gestures for some of his favourite pastimes and food such as 'snooker' and 'burger'. These are only a small example of certain needs and intensions that Jason has recently been trying to communicate to staff. Jason has also been writing key words on paper and this development is really strengthening the communication between Jason and his support team.



Jason has recently been very busy supporting staff in the kitchen preparing food for meals and he is the first client in Sahara House to offer support with cooking activities. Well done Jason, we are grateful for all your help!

The team at Sahara House enjoy keeping our clients active and Jason has thrived in keeping fit and engaging in lots of activities.



He shows remarkable skills in our weekly 'G Fitness' sessions, where his dexterity, flexibility and balance are developed. He attends regular swimming and yoga sessions and is often found at our communal table with fellow service users participating in games and puzzles.



Jason recently celebrated his 30th birthday. Jason's family organised a big birthday bash which he enjoyed very much with the continued support of his incredible family making it an even more special occasion.

Jason's Mum, Ann shared her thoughts on Jason's journey with Sahara Care.



"At first, Jason was pretty quiet, but with time, has opened up and become more involved in the activities on offer. Whether helping out or joining in game sessions, Jason has found his place and made friends with staff and residents alike. He enjoys exploring and going on walks. It is nice to see him laughing and engaging when staff joke with him. The staff have been there on Jason's journey, cheering him on and offering support whenever needed. Jason is continuously making good progress at Sahara House and feels at home there."

Breaking habits at Sahara Lodge and Gardens

We share news of a brilliant achievement by Robert, supported by a member of our staff team. This story highlights the positive impact that our great support workers are having on individuals under their care and changing their lives for the better.

Robert, who is a resident at our Sahara Lodge and Gardens service in Forest Gate had been a smoker for over 40 years. His habit saw him getting through more than 2 packets of cigarettes a day! This was obviously influencing his health and Nilesh, a Team Leader of the service at the time, decided it was time to act and help Robert kick his dependency.

Nilesh first approached Robert about the idea of stopping smoking back in February 2022 and through hard work and perseverance persuaded him to give it a try. An appointment was made for Robert to attend the Stop Smoking Clinic in April 2022 and this was the start of the journey for Robert and Nilesh as they worked together with the huge aim of getting Robert to give up cigarettes.

Following the visit to the Clinic, Nilesh supported Robert to purchase nicotine patches and gum and over the next few weeks, Nilesh tirelessly supported Robert through his withdrawal symptoms and emotional outpouring. Robert has mental health conditions that made the situation difficult, but Nilesh worked through this with Robert with an unrelenting attitude.

Robert enjoys numbers and so Nilesh produced a simple spreadsheet that showed Robert how much he would save each week by quitting and they spent time talking about the added benefits this would bring.



Strategies were put in place by Nilesh to distract Robert when his craving became unbearable. This was an all-consuming task for Nilesh, but he continued to support Robert with the help he needed as well as meeting his other Team Leader targets.

With support, Robert has managed to reduce his daily level of nicotine gum and we can proudly announce that his GP has confirmed that Robert is now classified as a non-smoker!



Nearly two years after Robert commenced his journey, we asked Janette Neal, Manager of Sahara Lodge and Gardens for an update. Janette told us, "I am pleased to report that Robert remains a non-smoker and his health has improved immeasurably. Robert is also benefitting financially and has made huge monthly savings enabling him to pursue activities of his choice without having to worry about the affordability. Robert's self-esteem has grown, he is proud of his achievement and never misses an opportunity to tell people that he no longer smokes!"

Interview with a recruit to Sahara Care Parkside

Lesley Wickens, Manager of Parkside interviews Nigel on his experience of joining Sahara Care

To meet demand for qualified and experienced employees, a number of staff have joined Sahara Care under the Health and Care Worker visa scheme. Nigel took up this opportunity with us in May 2023 as a support worker at Sahara Care Parkside and has since been successfully promoted to Senior Support Worker. Lesley took the opportunity to chat with him on his reasons for working overseas and experience of Sahara Care and the UK.

Why did you want to work abroad?

Nigel's mother is someone who he looks up to and has great respect. She works in their community as a public health nurse and Nigel saw her as a positive role model whose footsteps he wanted to follow. The opportunity to work in London presented an exciting career path for Nigel to follow his ambition.

Why choose London?

Nigel has always been fascinated with UK history and culture. When he first saw London Bridge, it reminded him of the nursery rhyme that he had learnt as a child and that had sparked this interest and desire to move to London.

Why choose Sahara Care?

After seeing the profile for Sahara Care, Nigel thought it was the best match for him and just went for it. He has no regrets and has found that this was the right choice for him. Nigel considers that Sahara Care employees are valued and enabled to deliver person centred care as the focus is on the service users.

Is it living up to expectations?

After nearly a year, Nigel feels that his choice was the correct one and he is in the right place for him. Having the opportunity to apply for promotion was a delightful surprise and he is grateful his potential is being recognised.



What is the hardest things about working so far from home?

Nigel shared that he was initially homesick as he knew no one and was "missing all the loves of my life and my family back home." Being able to talk with home and have regular contact eased this pressure. Now that Nigel's partner has joined him it is even better as he able to share the London he has grown to love with them.

What are the positives about working in London?

Nigel is working his way through all the tourist spots in London and further afield. His favourite was the Lake District as "It was heavenly." Being Abbas' keyworker, helping him achieve his life goals and broadening his life experiences highlights the positive aspect of his work.

CPI Training

Over the past few months, our staff have been studying and training hard for their Crisis Prevention Institution (CPI) qualification

CPI training provides the de-escalation techniques and person-centred behaviour management strategies you need to create a safe and caring work environment. Staff across all our services have been completing study material and taking part in practical training to gain their certification. The sessions have been delivered by Sophie, Manager Sahara House and Arnold, Team Leader Sahara Parkside.



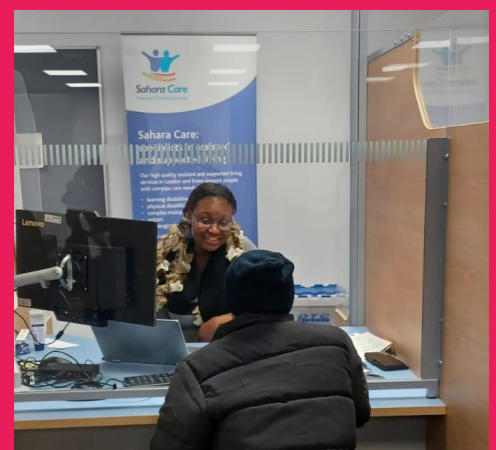
CPV

We continue to support Care Provider's Voice recruitment forums

The vision of CPV (Care Providers' Voice) is to create a strong network of empowered providers, partners and valued workforce to collaborate and celebrate the care sector.

CPV have valued partnerships with local boroughs and organisation such as the London Boroughs of Redbridge, Barking and Dagenham, Havering and JobCentrePlus, Skills for Care and the Department for Work and Pensions.

We thoroughly enjoy working with CPV and have benefitted from attending their local recruitment forums which are held regularly in the local boroughs and have the aim of matching candidates to employers within the care sector.



Some of our favourite moments from the past few months!

Valentine's Day



Pancake Day



Cinema Day Out



Ice Cream Sundae



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