

3.1 Story 1: Michelle O'Sullivan, Manager, Three Corners Nursing Home

Three Corners Residential Nursing and Care Home is a 46 bed private nursing home serving the Torbay area. It aims to provide a homely, happy and secure environment with a high standard of nursing care.

Michelle O'Sullivan has held the post of care home manager for one and a half years; she had previously been working at the home for the past 12 years as a carer. Although having a good understanding of the home itself, Michelle was keen to take part in the programme to help her develop her role as manager.

Michelle's Story

I'm experienced as a care worker, but have only been the manager here since April 2017. I'm still learning and it's still quite new to me, it's been quite difficult being the manager, giving the support and learning about the role.

This programme seemed like a good opportunity for me to question why things are happening. Things here have just sort of plodded along the way they have always been so I was interested to have some idea of what could be changed, what could I take away to help me *make* changes.

Taking part in the project I realised *I never really thought I was creative* in my work because I never really saw the home as a *creative place*. I started to realise it's not about changing things necessarily but about asking *what's the creative way I can make life a bit better for everybody?*

I had this *moment* at one of the away days, where we were in a group and we could only talk if we were holding the teacup and it *clicked*, I realised I could use that in my home. We have some really stressful times here, people might pass away, we might get complaints or challenging residents, and staff get very stressed. I was thinking how good it would be if at the end of a handover session *everyone had a minute each*, while holding the cup, to tell me how they feel.



I discovered a lot about myself. I've realised that there are some good points about the way I manage but also there are *different ways* of managing. I'm learning to adapt to how people respond to me and speak out more.

By the end of the programme I really felt as if I could be *open about my challenges* and share things, *it felt really safe and that was a special thing*. It's been really good for me to look at different ways of doing things, how to get people motivated, how to develop things.

I feel more confident now, being part of the group helped me realise that everyone has the same problems. It was an unusual *out of the ordinary* experience and it definitely helped my *communication and listening skills*, and thinking about how things *feel*. In my head, at the start, I thought I'm either going to be painting or dancing, I didn't do any painting, but *I did do some dancing!*

Our mini commission was about addressing individual need. We have a lady who doesn't come out of her room often; I wanted to look at doing something to engage her. I knew she used to be a ballroom dancer so we used Rosie, a dance artist. Rosie went into her room with a carer and together they did some waltzing and a little bit of jiving. Rosie showed us how you can get movement into everyday activities, like getting dressed, using simple arm movements.

I want my staff to realise that there are *always opportunities* for one to one activity, it's not just about sitting in the lounge playing a game. Every time you are doing something with a resident like putting on cream, or talking to them, that's an opportunity for *one to one* activity.