

3.4 Story 4: Anna Rumik, Lead Clinical Nurse, Primley Court Nursing Home

Primley Court Nursing Home in Paignton, Devon, offers specialist support and care to those with an enduring nursing condition or for people requiring higher personal care. Care is delivered by professionally trained staff teams who are experienced in advanced dementia care, complex nursing and clinical management of conditions, disease, disorder or injury.

Anna is the clinical lead nurse at the setting, and has worked there for two and a half years, responsible for helping the manager in her duties alongside her role as lead nurse.

Anna's Story

When I was asked if I wanted to be involved in the project I thought why not? I was interested to see how it could benefit me, and the setting. I thought it would be a *unique opportunity to see things from a different perspective*.

I hadn't really been thinking about what creativity in my role could mean, but I was hoping to gain some *different points of view*, to think about how we are doing in our home – we are usually so busy *going with the flow* that we don't have much time to stop and think about it.

I was never happy with my leadership skills, I was always too soft, people came to me with all their problems and *I struggled to get the balance right*, between talking and understanding but also to do what needs doing for the business.

Taking part in the project put me out of my 'safe zone'; it was definitely not things I am used to doing. I don't like the word creative, I'm not a creative person at all, but there was a real value in having the time to look at my practice from different angles.

The tasks we did gave me an opportunity to really reflect on how I do my job...it definitely helped my confidence. There was one exercise, walking together in a line across the room; the first time we did it I was very worried, I wanted to walk at the same time as everyone else, I wasn't really sure why. However, when we repeated the exercise on the last day I just started walking whenever I felt like it. I thought to

myself *well if I'm the only one that walks, what's going to happen?* I took a risk and I didn't mind, it was a real shift in confidence!

It was really good to *stop and think outside of the box*, and to think about how I approached different situations. I appreciated the moments of reflection, and to be able to *share those reflections* with others who are in a similar position.



I came away with some clear benefits in my mind. Firstly, *I've learnt to slow down*, I actually take my lunch now, maybe 5 to 10 minutes and just sit down, and I would never stop before. Secondly, by slowing down *I stop and talk to people*, I get more of their opinions, and I can have a better exchange of information, and thirdly, *I am reflecting on my practice*.

This is all connected for me... if I give myself a proper break, if I stop and talk to people, *I understand more, I hear more*. The biggest benefit comes from *learning to nurture myself*. At the start of this programme I didn't know how I was going to benefit; there was no certificate. Now I realise the benefits for me were on an emotional and social level, and that *feeds my practice*.

Our mini commission was a real eye opener. We had a musician, Louis, come in and work with a resident called John. John suffers from a lot of bad hallucinations, he screams and shouts throughout the day. Louis just sat down and started playing his guitar, and then John started singing!

Not with words, he has lost the ability to use words, but he was trying to follow the music with his voice, changing pace and tone as Louis changed the music. He never shouted, he didn't get agitated; it was like a different John. We could see he loved it, this was a very good output, and the benefit for John was just incredible!

As a result of this we are going to make some big changes with the budget, we are going to use this idea of one to one sessions with artists for people who are quite impaired, this is very personalised care, its taking our idea of activities to a completely different level. We will continue to use artists because they have those very special qualities and skills.