



Kristy Blaen
Lead Occupational Therapist/ Case
Manager
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Base: Langholm, Dumfries and Galloway

A Chance
for life

Professional Qualifications

BSc (Hons) Occupational Therapy – Carlisle (University of Lancaster) 2009

Memberships

British Association of Occupational Therapists (BAOT) – Reg no BT0239763
Health & Care Professionals Council (HCPC) – Reg no OT 60132
British Association of Brain Injury Case Managers (BABICM) – Reg No 0677
Case Management Society UK (CMSUK) – Reg no 15-1494-CM

Current Position

I work for A Chance for Life Ltd currently as Lead Occupational Therapist and Case Manager for the regions of Cumbria and Scotland. I began working as an Occupational Therapist in 2009. In 2011 I moved into private neurorehabilitation, expanded my skills and started working as a Case Manager. I work with children and adults who have a range of complex and severe brain injuries and orthopaedic conditions, both pre- and post-litigation.

My role includes:

- Working in a client-centred way to identify goals and meet an individual's needs;
- Establishing positive relationships and helping educate clients and families about brain injury and supporting them through the legal process;
- Carrying out Immediate Needs Assessments and preparing reports and costs;
- Sourcing and co-ordinating multi-disciplinary teams, liaising with solicitors, insurers, education authorities and statutory providers;
- Recruiting, managing and supervising Occupational Therapists, Case Managers and Rehabilitation Support Workers;
- Setting up and reviewing client-centred goals and programmes, including case management plans;
- Carrying out physical and cognitive occupational therapy assessments, preparing reports and establishing therapy programmes;
- Assessments for specialist equipment i.e. seating/ wheelchairs/ adapted vehicles;
- Working alongside architects designing and implementing housing adaptations;
- Training support teams in the use of specialist equipment, forming guidelines and completing risk assessments;
- Leading the OT clinical team and management of my staff team in my area.

Key achievements

- I have helped a young adult who has physical difficulties and very limited communication to access new technology that enables him to communicate wants and needs to his family and friends, and make his own choices. This also enabled him to play an active part in his own rehabilitation.
- Working alongside an architect and physiotherapist, I have assisted in the planning and coordination of housing adaptations that have enabled a young child with behavioural difficulties to access safe, soft play with his younger sibling.

- I have set up and managed a multi-disciplinary team assisting a young adult's successful return to work. Throughout this process regular goal setting reviews, and collaboration between an independent work place risk assessor and employer were key to managing an appropriate, phased return.
- I have successfully helped clients with complex needs to plan, risk assess, organise and go on holiday abroad, with the appropriate level of support.

Professional Pathway

2006-2009 - Student Occupational Therapist and Brain Injury Support Worker

I graduated in Carlisle at the University of Lancaster in 2009 after completing a 3-year honours degree in Occupational Therapy. I completed my elective placement within paediatrics which has always been a key interest. Whilst at University I worked part time as a brain injury support worker. I gained valuable skills working with clients and their families, providing rehabilitation services in the home as well as supporting clients to integrate back into the community.

2009-2011 Occupational Therapist, Acute Rotation

At NHS Dumfries and Galloway, I gained considerable experience within inpatient neurological rehabilitation, orthopaedics, medical and surgical care, and elderly medicine.

2011-2017 Specialist Occupational Therapist/ Case Manager – A Chance for Life Ltd

Working with children and adults with acquired brain injury pre and post litigation. Supporting clients and their families with education of brain injury. Setting up and managing multi-disciplinary teams and support teams. Carrying out SMART goals with clients to progress their rehabilitation. I also assisted in setting up the South Cumbria Headway group in Kendal and acted as Vice Chairperson from September 2013-October 2014.

January 2018- July 2018 Acting Lead Occupational Therapist and Case Manager - A Chance for Life Ltd

Continuing with my professional role alongside leading the therapy team. Leadership role involving supporting and supervising staff, managing ongoing continuing professional development needs of the therapy team, and progressing clinical governance in the company.

August 2018-Present Lead Occupational Therapist/Case Manager – A Chance for Life Ltd

Combining my professional OT and Case Management clinical roles alongside overseeing the OT service as a whole and management of the clinical therapy team in Cumbria and Scotland.

Continued Professional Development in the last three years

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| 2020 | Brain Injury Information Day, Digby Brown Solicitors
"A Day in the Life of an OT/CM" presentation given to University of Cumbria MSc OT Students
"Self-rating scales" internal ACFL presentation delivered to clinical team
"Pressure damage and pressure area care" internal ACFL presentation attended Calvert Trust Reconnections webinar |
| 2019 | Compass 6 months OT Pilot project completed, Dumfries
ABI training day delivered to Compass rehabilitation staff, Dumfries
Head Injury Information Day, Digby Brown Solicitors presentation given on OT Pilot Project, Dumfries |
| 2018 | Leadership Development Training, Kendal
Sinton's seminar "School is Rehab", Newcastle
Development of ACFL OT and Case Management competencies
QOL-Quality of Life program presentation, Penrith
Clos-o-mat product update presentation, Penrith
Bambach seating demonstration, Carlisle
Contributed to In-house Clinical Governance group
Insight clinical documentation Management System training attended
NABIF-Northern Acquired Brain Injury Forum, Penrith |