Karen Smith

Neurological Rehabilitation Case Manager &
Registered Occupational Therapist

Location: Nottingham

Summary of patient expertise and specialist training:

Prior to working as a Case Manager, Karen has practiced as a highly experienced and senior Occupational Therapist. She graduated from Brunel University in 2014 with a Masters (pre-registration) in Occupational Therapy; Karen also has a bachelor's in Psychology. Karen since worked in the public Social Care sector, mainly working with adults and older adults who have had a range of physical disabilities (neurological/brain/cognitive, musculoskeletal/rheumatological, cardiac, cancer and obesity). Karen has worked at a senior level, training and supervising non-qualified and qualified staff. During independent practice, Karen has worked with multiple spinal cord injury, brain injury and amputee clients working closely with case managers and solicitors preparing reports for litigation.

Karen has extensive adult/older adult basic and complex equipment (including seating and postural management), moving and handling, adaptation, and functional rehabilitation experience. She is particularly skilled in providing advice on a range of equipment needs to adult/older adults with complex physical and neurological disabilities and especially enjoys specifying major adaptation work, to make the home environment meet the clients' and their family's needs. Karen has been working with paediatric cases and supporting Educational Healthcare Plans.

Karen is committed to enhancing her clients' independence and participation in life and is well practised in identifying areas in need of functional improvement and interventions to support said improvement collaboratively with clients', their families, and other services.

Karen maintains a high level of professional development and monthly supervision. Karen keeps up to date with developments in the Occupational Therapy evidence base, completes specialist training courses, attend exhibitions, and study days. This helps Karen to enhance and develop her clinical reasoning and expert advice to clients, carers, and other professionals.

Karen has over seven years' experience working with patients who have:

- Spinal cord injury (both complete and incomplete injures).
- Spinal tumours.
- Brain injuries (both paediatric and adults).
- Amputees.
- Stroke.
- Multiple Sclerosis.
- Parkinson's.
- Respiratory & cardiothoracic.
- Orthopaedic and musculoskeletal issues (both paediatric and adults).
- Diabetes.
- Obesity.

Karen has an unflustered and calm approach, ensuring that her clients and their family feel confident working with her. She quickly develops positive working relationships with her clients and applies her skills and knowledge to overcome challenging circumstances.

Case management skills:

The smooth running of any case is crucial for the comfort and well-being of our clients. Karen's clinical experience enables her to manage her cases in a highly professional and proactive manner to obtain the best possible outcomes for her clients. Her skills include:

- Immediate Needs Assessments.
- Case Management Action Plans and Progress Reports.
- Understanding of the requirements of the litigation process.

- Utilising various recreational activities to benefit her clients.
- Set-up and management of community care packages.
- Safeguarding and Risk Assessment.
- Mental Capacity Act.
- Managing challenging behaviours.

Professional registrations and memberships:

- Health Care Professions Council Registered.
- Royal College of Occupational Therapy.
    - Specialist Sections: Independent Practice, Housing, Neurology, Vocational.
- Member of Multidisciplinary Association of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals.
- Member of Posture & Mobility Group.
- Member of British Association of Brain Injury & Complex Case Management.
- Member of Case Management Society UK.

Qualification and Training:

Qualifications

- BSc Hons Psychology 2:1 (2007).
- Occupational Therapy MSc (pre-registration).

Training:
GDPR, Manual Handling and Basic Life Support renewed annually.

Employment:

COOCI Associates from 2021 – Neurological Rehabilitation Case Manager.

- Manages a caseload of clients, the majority of whom have sustained a spinal cord and brain injury. Supporting clients and their families through the rehabilitation process.
- Sourcing and implementing therapy packages, care packages, equipment and securing appropriate accommodation and any associated adaptations required.
- Supporting clients returning to work or education, ensuring the environment into which they are going is accessible and any additional equipment is obtained.
- Provides in-house training on spinal cord injuries including bladder, bowels, sexuality, therapy input etc.
- Awareness of the benefits of competitive and non-competitive sport and the social integration that participating in sports at any level can bring.

SHA Disability Ltd: 2020 – Date, Associate Occupational Therapist.

- Specialising in moving and handling, housing, adaptations and equipment, functional rehabilitation, and seating and postural management.
- Contracts have been Continuing Healthcare and Local Authority based.

The OT Practice 2020 – Date, Associate Occupational Therapist.

- Specialising in moving and handling, housing, adaptations and equipment, functional rehabilitation, and seating and postural management.
- Assessments completed have included private clients, local authority, case managers and solicitors.

Tripod Partners: 2016 – 2020: Locum Senior/Occupational Therapist
Central Bedfordshire Council: February 2019-February 2020.

- Operationally managed all therapists and clinically supervised Occupational Therapists using informal and formal supervision.
- Provided clinical input when recruiting staff and facilitated regular CPD opportunities to maintain sufficient expertise in the service.
- Proactively maintained sufficient staffing levels across the service using excel spreadsheets.
- Completed timely assessments to determine any necessary equipment provision and appropriate MDT input to facilitate rehabilitation and improve wellbeing.
- Set goals collaboratively with clients to achieve specific, realistic, and timely outcomes in a range of activities of daily living to prevent, reduce and delay needs.

- Assisted with triaging referrals to determine client suitability for service and make appropriate care pathway recommendations.
- Collaborated in new paperwork design and implementation of change, thereof, to collect service performance data to improve service delivery by working in conjunction with MDT.
- All of the below.

Haringey Borough Council: June 2017- January 2019.

- Organised CPD opportunities for the team to maintain HCPC competencies.
- Informally provided case supervision to OT Assistants for team development.
- Completed a paediatric OT assessment with adaptation and equipment outcomes.
- Managed performance of an unqualified staff using coaching, mentoring, motivating and feedback skills.
- All of the below.

Brent Borough Council October 2016-February 2017:

- Completed rehousing reports to assist in housing stock allocation.
- Used professional judgement in regard to equipment provision vs rehabilitation.
- Used key enabling skills to maximise clients physical and social functioning to remain in own home and reduce need for services.
- Where necessary, signposted clients to retail and 3rd sector services to meet client needs.
- All of the below:

Harrow Borough Council March-October 2016:

- Completed Complex Moving and Handling Assessments through observational risk assessments and adhering to ethics and legislation.
- Collaboratively agreed moving and handling interventions & processed DFG Referrals to support major adaptations.
- Raised Safeguarding Alerts and attended Case Conference Reviews.
- Independently managed a case load of 40 by assessing need/risk priority and using time management skills.
- Identified eligible needs/risk by working in a person-centred manner with service users.
- Used informal & formal supervision appropriately to discuss learning experiences, set objectives and refine clinical reasoning.
- All of the below.

Hertfordshire County Council: 2014 - 2016: Occupational Therapist

- Identify potential risk, safeguarding and deprivation of liberty concerns through detailed assessment and observational skills.
- Work within, and apply, a legislative, policy and theoretical framework.
- Ensure equal opportunities, justice and economic wellbeing is promoted through advocacy, use of community resources and empowerment.
- Promote independence and autonomy through assumed capacity, creative service provision, changes to the physical/social environment.
- Work in partnership with other teams and organisations, using communication skills, to promote an effective multi-disciplinary approach.
- Demonstrate financial awareness through management of budgets and cost-effective interventions.
- Demonstrate professionalism through use of supervision, CPD activities, reflection, critical analysis, professional judgement, evidence-based practice and code of ethics.
- Demonstrate leadership through mentoring OT Assistants and newly qualified OT's.

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