Nikki Ounsworth

Founding Partner at COOCI Associates LLP,
Neurological Rehabilitation Case Manager &
Registered General Nurse

Location: Buckinghamshire

Summary of client expertise and specialist training:

Nikki is highly experienced in neurological injuries, having specialised in the treatment and management of neurological conditions across her career as a Registered Nurse, which commenced in 1991. In addition to her clinical and managerial experience, Nikki has also undertaken additional specialist education such as completing a Bachelor's Degree in Neurological Rehabilitation and commencing a PhD programme relating to fatigue and Multiple Sclerosis.

Nikki's first-hand knowledge and training encompasses children, young adults and older adults with a range of neurological injuries, including many with significant additional medical complexities.

Nikki is also a highly-trained, experienced and well-respected Case Manager. She is particularly skilled in assisting her clients psychologically, helping them mentally adjust to their injury challenges and supporting their emotional, as well as medical needs. She is experienced in the following areas:

- Acquired Brain Injury including mild, moderate and severe
- Complete and incomplete spinal cord injuries, at differing levels of the spinal column
- Amputation
- Cerebral Palsy
- Sensory impairments including visual and vestibular impairments
- Mental health disorders
- Epilepsy
- Complex orthopaedic trauma

Nikki has an organised approach and remains calm under pressure, ensuring that her clients and their families feel safe in her hands. She has an exceptionally strong work ethic and is highly committed to ensuring her clients are proactively and thoughtfully supported.

Case Management skills:

The smooth running of any case is crucial for the comfort and well-being of our clients. Nikki's experience in proactively managing a case from the outset is second to none. Her skills include:

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

- The Royal College of Nursing
- Cambridge Medico-Legal Forum
- RCN Rehabilitation Nursing Forum

- RCN Continence Care Forum
- Stroke Association
- RCN Management Forum
- Rehabilitation Nurses Network for the UK
- Headway
- Thames Valley Research Network
- RCN Nurses Research Forum
- MS Society

Qualifications and Training:

Qualifications

- Level One Registered General Nurse, Stoke Mandeville Hospital (1988 - 1991)
- Spinal Injuries Certificate, Stoke Mandeville Hospital (1993)
- University of Luton Modular Programme (1997 – 1998)
- Teaching and Assessing in Clinical Practice
- BA in Neurological Rehabilitation, Oxford Brookes University (1999 – 2002)
- UKCC Specialist Practitioner Award in Continence
- Post Graduate Certificate in Neurological Rehabilitation, Oxford Brookes (2003 to 2003)
- Transferred to undertake a PhD in "The Assessment of Asthenia in Multiple Sclerosis utilising the Visual Pathways", Brunel University, (2003 to 2008).

Mandatory Training and Basic Life Support Training

Other training:

- 2018: Confidentiality Awareness
- 2018: Overview of Spinal Cord Injury
- 2018: New General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) compliancy for Independent Therapists and Brain Injury Case Managers.
- 2017: Health and Safety Group Mandatory Training Day
- 2017: Pressure Area Care,
- 2017: Effective Supervision, QiCT
- 2017: Practical Moving and Handling Principles
- 2017: 2nd International Case Management Conference, BABICM, CMSUK & VRA "Together".
- 2017: Epilepsy Awareness and Seizure Management Training, Epilepsy Society
- 2016: Essential First Aid – for all ages.
- 2016: Enteral Feeding
- 2016: Health and Safety Group Mandatory Training Day
- 2015: Case Managers Training Day, "The Brave New World Post Loughlin & Mitchell",
- Stewarts Law (2015)
- 2015: First Aid Training
- 2015: SMART Goal Setting, Recolo and Minster Law Study Day
- 2015: "The Brave New World Post Loughlin and Mitchell".
- 2015: Revalidation study session run by the NMC.
- 2015: The New Fundamental Standards, CQC.
- 2015: Medication Matters
- 2014: Welfare Benefits
- 2014: Mandatory Training

- 2014: Education Issues – New Education and Health Care Plan
- 2013: Exploring Overlooked Issues in Brain Injury
- 2013: Infection Control
- 2013: Health and Safety
- 2013: BABICM: Shared Responsibility or Conflicting Priorities
- 2013: Purchasing and Adapting Properties

Employment:

COOCI Associates - from 2009
Founding Partner and Neurological Rehabilitation Case Manager

- Set up COOCI Associates in partnership with a team of nurses and health care professionals, whilst managing a diverse caseload of complex clients.
- Supported clients and families with a range of issues including major home modifications, setting up and managing community care teams, holiday arrangements, vehicle procurement, benefit applications, educational appeals, and returning to work.
- Worked in situations with complex family dynamics, including child protection.
- Set up numerous community care packages in a range of formats.

Example of client goal achievement: *Anecdotal evidence and the literature identifies that Brain Injured clients self-report significantly higher sleep-related impairment, poorer nightly sleep quality and more frequently met criteria for clinical insomnia. This has a huge bearing on the overall functioning of the brain injured individual and may impact on their ability to progress to their potential.*

Working in the community we provide care for brain injured individuals with complex health and social care needs at home, the majority of whom present with significant sleep disruption and/or fatigue. This can be one of their most disabling problems which impacts negatively on their overall wellbeing and level of engagement in life and living.

One of my clients presented with a disrupted sleep awake cycle and had a range of other complex needs, compromised further by unstable epilepsy. A Sleep Actigraphy assessment was carried out to determine sleep patterns and circadian rhythms for a designated period of time to map sleep and activity over a 24/7 period. The data was used to help the multidisciplinary team to put a sleep management programme in place that avoided the use of medication.

This was appealing as it also enabled an objective assessment to be carried out that did not rely solely on carer diaries, as well as relying on the client to recall how many times they woke or how long they slept for during the night. There was also an added benefit of analysing other clinical data such as seizure activity which often has a negative impact on sleep and fatigue during the day. An added benefit was that it could be carried out in the comfort and privacy of the client's own home enabling sleep data to be more realistic than that of a hospital environment.

Over time the multidisciplinary team we able to implement a behavioural programme which established a more effective sleep awake cycle which was scaffolded by the carers as the client was unable to initiate this himself. It increased his periods of wakefulness and interaction with an increasing body of evidence to support his ongoing emergence from a minimally conscious state. The implementation of an effective schedule enabled positive gains in other aspects of his care including pain, seizure activity, mood and grabbing behaviours.

Bush and Company – Brain Injury Case Manager and Expert Witness - April 2006 to July 2009

- Facilitated for the health and social needs of clients who had sustained catastrophic injuries
- Completed Care and Case Management Expert Witness Reports

Brunel University – Honorary Research Student. 2006 to 2008
Research Faculty.

Royal Buckinghamshire Hospital, The International Spinal Injuries and Neurological Rehabilitation Centre – Nurse Consultant in Neurological Rehabilitation – April 2005 to April 2006

- Brought in on a consultancy basis to review and re-shape the managerial and clinical strategies of the neurorehabilitation service, which included project managing the first phase of change to introduce evidence-based rehabilitation standards

The Royal Free Hospital – Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Nurse Specialist – July 2003 to March 2005

- Set-up and developed the regional MS Service
- Taught on the preceptorship programme at Middlesex University
- Worked across boundaries in partnership with a multidisciplinary team, community services, social services, external agencies, patients, families and carers
- Case managed over 200 patients at all stages of a diverse disease trajectory

Milton Keynes Primary Care Trust – Brain Injury Clinical Specialist – April 2002 to August 2003

- Holistic assessment of health and psycho-social needs of people who had experienced or acquired a non-progressive brain injury, working as part of a wider team
- Provided education, monitoring and onward service referrals to clients and their key supports with the overall aim of ensuring a seamless transfer between acute, rehabilitation and community settings

Rayners Hedge Rehabilitation Unit, Aylesbury Vale Community Healthcare Trust –Rehabilitation Nurse Specialist / Inpatient Team Leader – July 2000 to April 2002

- Staff management
- Advised on issues effecting clinical effectiveness, whilst also participating in strategic business planning

Rayners Hedge Rehabilitation Unit, Aylesbury Vale Community Healthcare Trust – Primary Nurse – September 1999 to July 2000

Rayners Hedge Neuro-Rehabilitation Unit – Associate Nurse – September 1997 to January 1999

- Inpatient and outpatient rehabilitation services to patients with a range of neurological disorders, such as Stroke, Acquired Brain Injury, Multiple Sclerosis, ME / Chronic Fatigue, Chronic Pain, Huntington's Disease, Cerebral Palsy, and Motor Neurone Disease
- Facilitated comprehensive community discharge packages
- Managed a team of nurses and led the inpatient professional team toward an interdisciplinary model of practice
- Promoted from Staff Nurse to Senior Staff Nurse

Stoke Mandeville Hospital – Staff Nurse – December 1992 to August 1997

- Worked across Orthopaedics, the National Spinal Injuries Centre and the Trauma Unit

Stoke Mandeville Hospital – Staff Nurse – October 1991 to December 1992

- Worked on the Trauma and Orthopaedic Unit and Emergency Surgery

© COOCI Associates Ltd
Not to be reproduced without permission