



RECRUITMENT CASE STUDY

Illy Raloka ...

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Supporting opportunity, choice and success

Illy Raloka

Team Co-ordinator, Ophir Road

Illy had spent the last eight years working as a carer in nursing homes and within domiciliary care, however when she moved to Bournemouth and needed to find a new job, she decided to take the opportunity to explore her options. When she saw the role of support worker at Ophir Road, she told her husband this was the role she wanted and she was going to go for it.

Having sent in her application and been invited in for a face to face interview, she was delighted to be given the role. Here she shares her story of her journey into supporting adults with learning disabilities and autism and working for Consensus.

“When I began looking for a new role and saw the job advertisement for a support worker role at Ophir Road, I immediately knew that I wanted to go for it. I really liked the idea of working in a smaller care environment, where I could really get to know the supported individuals on a one to one basis and to be a part of their development, supporting them to work towards their goals and achieve their dreams.

After applying for the role, I followed up with a phone call to Manager Claudia who said she would be pleased to invite me in for a face to face interview. Shortly after the interview I was

delighted to be informed that I had got the job!

Immediately, I really enjoyed the role – it was so different to working in a large nursing home with up to 100 residents. Here, it was supporting four young adults within their home. From the start I had the opportunity to be really hands on and plan activities according to their likes, interests and what was important to them. Supporting younger adults meant that I could be a part of their journey of discovering new things they enjoyed and supporting them to lead happy, meaningful and fulfilled lives. In an elderly care home, activities tend to be based in the home whereas at Ophir Road, we are really focused on ensuring individuals get out and become an active part of the community.

As the service was a small home environment, it meant I could really get to know each of the individuals and their personalities, how individuals liked to be supported and to build up my own relationship and rapport with them which made my role very rewarding.

As a team, we are also very close, my Manager, Claudia has been very supportive from the start, ensuring I had all the right training and taking an interest in how I wanted to be



developed. I also have a very close and happy team of colleagues. We all look out for each other and support one another.

From very early on, I had the opportunity to have new experiences not only within the service but within the wider organisation. In November 2019, I supported one of the individuals to attend ‘Party in the Park’, a company wide initiative whereby individuals within each of Consensus’ 90 plus services were invited to attend a three-day event at Golden Sands holiday park in Mablethorpe, Lincolnshire as an opportunity to live our values of providing opportunity, choice and success to the individuals we support and enabling them to meet, socialise and make new friends, try new activities and for many - like Kaylem - have their first ‘holiday’ experience.

I was actively involved in planning all aspects of his support over the

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three days, from ensuring the six hour journey went smoothly to staying in a caravan with Kaylem and another support worker, supporting him with activities and to get involved with the evening entertainment.

It was fantastic to have the opportunity to meet and share experiences with support workers from other services and we were delighted that Ophir Road won a Divisional Recognition Award for how well the service is run, presented to us at the Gala Dinner on day 2 of the event.

I am so glad that I decided to go for the role at support worker within a learning disability service. There is so much variety in the role, every day is different.

It also enabled me to develop my relationship with Kaylem. We got to know each other very well over the three years and I have developed a very close bond with him as a result.

Now in the service, if Kaylem becomes agitated or is refusing his medication the other support workers know to call me for support because he trusts me; I can read him and the situation well and intuitively know how to bring him round. Like a mother, I know how to approach him to get through to him and to calm him down.

Following the Coronavirus, we have really pulled together as a team to make sure we keep the individuals we support and each other safe. It has meant adapting to a different way of working and working in set teams on set days to minimise the risk of infection. It has also meant that I have had the opportunity to take on additional responsibilities equivalent to the role of a team

coordinator, including taking charge of the rota and making it work for everybody as well as supporting my manager with a number of administrative tasks to ensure the service is run well.

Having the opportunity to develop my skills and knowledge has also created the opportunity to develop my career further – recently, the position of Team Leader became available at the service and my manager encouraged me to apply. I went for the interview and I was delighted to be offered the role. I'm really looking forward to starting my NVQ which my manager has already enrolled me on and taking the next step in my career.

I am so glad that I decided to go for the role of support worker within a learning disability service. There is so much variety in the role, every day is different. Everyone is really positive and open to new ideas and keen to discover and embrace new experiences that the guys will enjoy. For instance, we recently started to take the guys cycling and they are loving it! Being a part of their journey, supporting them to learn new things, gently encouraging them and then seeing their excitement and happiness when they can do it – that is just so rewarding.

I have a really supportive manager and a wonderful team and I really look forward to coming to work every day. I go to work feeling happy and I go home at the end of the day feeling happy because I have made a positive contribution."

