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Carer Service Name – Case Study	
Care Group Referral Pathway Carer Cared For	Mental Health SWS Mental Health Tina Dennis
Background	
<p>Tina is the main carer for her partner Dennis who suffers from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) due to bullying when he served in the armed forces. Dennis also has physical health issues- osteoarthritis and pulmonary heart and lung disease. Tina had multiple caring roles when we first met her and cared for her daughter who subsequently passed away from brain cancer. Tina has her own health issues and has survived cancer 3 times but this has taken a toll on her own health and wellbeing and she was not as able to cope with Dennis's regular outburst of aggression, paranoia and depression as she used to be.</p> <p>Dennis exhibits a lot of behaviours that are difficult to manage and he has a great deal of trouble controlling his emotions especially if he feels under attack or hears loud noises. He is very stressed and agitated in social situations and he has a lot of regimented behaviours from his army days that are difficult for Tina to manage. Tina didn't really understand what Dennis was going through as he refused to talk about the extent of the bullying and felt that if she understood it better she would be able to manage her own frustration.</p> <p>When we assessed Tina it was clear the family was at breaking point, they were receiving help from Help for Heroes with their housing issues but had no financial or emotional supports in place. Dennis was in a particularly low period and was lacking motivation to do daily tasks like washing and dressing and Tina was struggling to cope especially as her daughter was terminally ill as well. She was worrying incessantly about her daughter as she could no longer communicate verbally and worried how Dennis would cope with her loss as they were very close. Tina was very socially isolated as her family live in England where she originally grew up which meant she did not have a strong network of support to help her sustain her caring responsibilities which were impacting on her own emotional and mental wellbeing. Tina described her thoughts and feelings as being in a jumble as couldn't concentrate on any one aspect of her life long enough to fix it, she was jumping from one worry to the next and this was affecting her sleep and concentration.</p>	
Output: (can list core service/s here egg Info & Advice, Short Break)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to Combat Stress to help Dennis manage his emotions and behaviours • Carers Privilege Card • Referral to money and debt for benefit maximisation • Advice and information on PTSD, • Support discussing coping strategies and boundaries • Time to Live Application to help Tina attend a family wedding in England • Referral to CALM project for mindfulness training • Computer course to help Tina keep in more regular contact with family via skype • Access to health and wellbeing opportunities and social opportunities to alleviate social isolation and provide peer support for Tina from other mental health carers 	

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- Referral to Lifelink for grief counselling

Outcomes:

Choices in caring, including the limits of caring
Feeling informed and equipped
Satisfaction in caring
Better quality of life for the cared for
Valued and respected
Positive relationships with others
Positive relationship with the cared for
Freedom from financial hardship
Maintaining health and well being
A life of their own
Positive relationship with practioners

Impact

As a result of the referral to Combat Stress Dennis receives further support from Veterans United which has had a positive impact on Dennis being more able to manage his emotions and behaviours and he is less stressed and agitated than previously. Dennis now also receives advocacy help from Help for Heroes as he is currently fighting for a War Pension. The referral to Money and Debt project helped Tina and Dennis maximise their benefits and they were "ecstatic" with the outcome as this was the first time they had received full benefits which relieved some stress on their financial situation. Tina's daughter passed away during the time we were supporting her and it was a emotional and heart-breaking time for the whole family, I encouraged Tina to go for grief counselling as it would let her have an outlet for her grief and emotions whilst she helped Dennis manage his. This helped Tina grieve properly for the loss of her daughter and not bury her emotions.

Tina was awarded money from Time to Live through Support in Mind to attend a family wedding which was a catalyst for Tina to take more control of her relationships with others, she went on to attend a computer course so she could learn how to skype and this has brought her closer to her family and reduced the isolation she was feeling. Tina was referred to the CALM project for therapies and mindfulness, she did not go on to have therapies due to previous cancer but attended the mindfulness training and reported that it was 'one of the best things she had ever done' Tina felt that mindfulness helped her stop her mind racing and let her focus on the present, this further helped with her concentration

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and sleeping habits as she was more able to relax herself.

Tina also attended our Creative Breaks funded health and wellbeing opportunities where she learned how to do seated yoga which she still practices now as she feel this helps her manage her pain more effectively than just with pain killers alone.

Tina received intensive 1-1 support which focussed on building up her capacity to continue caring for Dennis as well as encourage her to put in place some boundaries for his behaviours, this has worked very well and Tina felt that the boundaries actually stopped Dennis spiralling out of control when he was in a dark place. Talking through about how much care and support that Tina wanted to provide to Dennis was a breakthrough in how Tina felt about the situation as previously she had felt burdened by it but now feels empowered, she doesn't feel an obligation to provide care and support for Dennis she does it out of love for him. This has altered their relationship for the better and support has left Tina more informed and equipped to deal with Dennis's more challenging behaviours and emotional outbursts. They have both stated they have a more honest and open relationship now after all of the interventions and support given to them from all agencies.

Reflective learning from the case that could inform service development.

Mindfulness training has had a positive impact on all aspects of Tina's life, she feels more in control, she sleeps better and she can focus and concentrate on what is important to her, this has helped her manage her caring role more effectively and without prospect of the caring relationship breaking down.

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