

# Employability Learning Network Case Study

## Salus

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## Background

Based within Coatbridge, Salus consists of one of the largest NHS based multi-disciplinary teams in Scotland. Through its various services Salus Case Management Services offer a comprehensive service to clients who are:

- In work and experiencing health problems
- Off sick and requiring help to get back to work
- Seeking work, training or further education and experiencing barriers due to a health problem
- Experiencing barriers due to being involved in the criminal justice system

This document provides a series of client case studies in order to demonstrate the work that Salus undertakes.



## Michael's Story

Michael is currently unemployed and claiming Job Seekers Allowance. Michael experienced bullying for the last 5 months of his previous employment contract. This contract finished 11 months ago. Michael was targeted by 5 individuals with whom he had to work very closely with and was subjected to both physical and verbal daily abuse.

Although Michael now has no contact with his attackers he is finding it very difficult to move on from his experience. He has increased levels of anxiety and has recently been experiencing panic attacks when he finds himself in any kind of crowded place.

Michael has a young son whom he is caring for and is finding it very difficult to stretch his benefit far enough to make ends meet. As a result of this, Michael is only eating once a day and has lost over 2 stones in weight. Michael currently has a portion of his benefit deducted at source to contribute towards a historic council tax debt. He lives in a rural area and is having to give up his car due to his current financial situation.

### What Help did Michael receive along his employability journey?

Salus made an urgent referral to the local authority money advice agency to assist with his budgeting difficulties. Michael failed to attend his initial appointment. He later disclosed that he was too scared to attend and that he felt overwhelmed by his whole situation.

An initial advisory call was then arranged to prepare Michael for his next appointment and through close partnership working between Salus Case Management and the Money Advice team we were able to support Michael sufficiently for him to attend. His debt payment plan was negotiated to a manageable level which resulted in Michael being able to keep his car (which was vital for future employment) and through budgeting support his weekly essential spending became more manageable.

A counselling referral was arranged and Michael received 1:1 tailored support to enable him to explore his thoughts and feelings surrounding his bullying, get a better understanding of how his anxiety was affecting him and learn techniques on how to manage his panic attacks.

Self help materials were utilised for rebuilding confidence and learning relaxation techniques.

Michael was encouraged to re-engage with his employability advisor where he then received assistance with applying for posts and completing the application forms required.

### How valuable was the help?

Michael found himself in a situation where he had multiple difficulties that were gradually making his situation more and more overwhelming.

Following the in-depth nature of our assessment, we were able to clearly identify Michael's goals and aspirations. By breaking his barriers down into defined issues with clear actions, we were able to design and stagger our support and enable Michael to make progress with one thing at a time, therefore making an overwhelming situation into a series of manageable steps.



## Bill's Story

Having applied a problem solving strategy to Michael's situation he later said

*"Although I still have situations in my life I would like to be different, I feel that I now have the confidence to know that I can make things change".*

Michael initially found accepting support to be very difficult which resulted in him missing an appointment both with his money advisor and his counsellor. Through continued support and motivational phone calls we were able to overcome Michael's initial apprehension.

### What has been the outcome for Michael?

Michael successfully secured full time employment with a ground works team 6 months ago. He contacted his Case Manager last month to advise that a foreman position had become available and that he had successfully secured the position.

He is delighted with his new position and is able to acknowledge his achievements.

Bill is a 43 year old man diagnosed with depression and unemployed for 6 months when he was referred to Salus Case Management Services for health and employability support. Bill's Social Worker referred him to the service as he had been suffering from depression due to personal problems and an incident which had led to him being sent to prison.

Bill had high levels of stress due to his lifestyle and was drinking alcohol on a regular basis to cope. He had very little support from family or friends, poor diet and nutrition and took very little exercise. Bill also had debt problems and was overweight.

### What help did Bill receive along his employability journey?

Bill was referred to Counselling for support with guilt, low mood and self esteem issues. He had previously been attending a Psychiatrist who was monitoring his medication so he continued with this. Bill also met with an Employability Adviser who provided support with his job search, CV and application forms. He also gave Bill advice on interview skills and techniques.

The Case Manager discussed dietary support with Bill but he decided instead of seeing the dietician he would like an exercise programme instead. Bill was issued with a 6 months free leisure pass for use at the local leisure centres.

He met with an adviser at Citizens Advice who provided information and support to help him with his debt and Bill could finally see a way forward.



## How valuable was the help?

Bill advises that the support he received was excellent in terms of gaining confidence and opportunities to apply for work. Bill felt he was listened to and directed to the services he needed to improve his health and self esteem. The Case Manager met with him on regular intervals and provided motivational phone calls to ensure his treatments were beneficial and help support him back into work.

## What has been the outcome for Bill?

Bill engaged well in all the treatments. He stopped drinking alcohol and felt less depressed. He is still attending the fitness programme and reports that this is helping his health and mood. Bill has made great progress. He returned to work full time as a Labourer and has been working for the past 5 months. Bill is enjoying his new job and is grateful for all the support he received.

## Emma's Story

Emma is a 50 year old woman who was diagnosed with knee and foot pain and depression when she was referred to Salus Case Management Services. Emma was referred by her Employability Adviser at Routes to Work as she was on Jobseekers Allowance and had been unemployed for 18 months. She had lost her previous job due to a mental breakdown brought on by various stressors in her life. Emma lived alone and was a carer for her elderly father. She was actively seeking work but her physical and mental health was holding her back.

## What help did Emma receive along her employability journey?

Emma was initially referred to Counselling but she found this too overwhelming and was unable to engage. She was therefore referred to Bowen Therapy which would help with her knee and foot pain but also help her to relax and ease some of her stress. The Case Manager provided Emma with self help materials using the Cognitive Behavioural Therapy approach. Emma was also given advice on seeking further Carers support for her father and help with applying for courses which would assist her in returning to work. Emma applied for an Individual Learning Account through Learn Direct Scotland and was given information on the European Computer Driving License course.

## How valuable was the help?

Emma reports that the support she was given has significantly improved her life. Emma used the Cognitive Behavioural Therapy booklets to work through her issues and felt more able to control her mood. The Case Manager provided support and direction and kept in contact with Emma on a regular basis. Emma advises that Bowen Therapy not only helped her pain decrease dramatically but also helped her to feel more calm and peaceful.





## Sheila's Story

Sheila experienced the full effect of the economic downturn when her business that catered to the building trade became unviable and she was forced to close down. This left Sheila unemployed, angry, anxious and depressed.

Now with no structure to Sheila's day she was beginning to focus on a previous traumatic event in her life. Her alcohol intake was increasing, her sleep was disturbed, she had no focus or concentration and her levels of motivation were at an all time low.

During Sheila's self employment she had failed to pay one of her stamps which resulted in her not qualifying for job seekers allowance or employment support allowance. She had a small amount of savings which she was living off but they were rapidly reducing, again adding to her levels of anxiety.

Due to her levels of tension, Sheila was experiencing pain across her shoulders and neck and she was having tension headaches at least twice a week. She was becoming increasingly concerned for her physical health which in turn was further increasing her levels of anxiety.

### What help did Sheila receive along her employability journey?

Sheila was referred to Salus via an employability partner and was currently receiving appropriate practical support with CV writing, job applications, interview techniques and preparation.

Being self employed, Sheila had not attended an interview for many years and this was affecting her confidence, and with the recent closure of her business she placed little value on her own skills and abilities.

### What has been the outcome for Emma?

Emma engaged well with the service. Her health has improved and she was granted extra Carers support for her father. Emma completed the European Computer Driving Licence Course and has now secured employment in the Social Care industry. Emma was amazed at how well all the organisations worked together to support and enable her to return to work.



A referral was arranged for counselling to assist with Sheila's understanding of how her anxiety was affecting her, allow her to explore her feelings of anger and consider alternatives to using alcohol to make her feel better.

Salus encouraged Sheila to visit her GP to make him aware of how she was currently feeling and discuss whether short term medication would assist her in this particularly anxious period. She was subsequently prescribed anti-anxiety medication.

In addition, Salus referred Sheila to receive Bowen Therapy with a view to reducing her neck/shoulder pain and alleviate her headaches.

During this time, Salus continued to support Sheila with motivational phone calls ensuring successful engagement in her treatments, and encouraging her continued liaison with her employability advisor.

### How valuable was this help?

Sheila stated "*I was heading to a place I really didn't want to go. Case Management helped me to recognise this and supported me to feel better much quicker than I could have hoped for*".

Sheila has taken control of her situation and has further engaged in utilising self help materials. Post treatment, her levels of anxiety reduced by 78% and her depression had reduced by 64% as measured by the HADS validated assessment tool.

She reported her neck and shoulder pain to be much improved and the intensity of her headaches were much less severe.

Her alcohol intake had returned to within recommended limits and Sheila demonstrated increased energy and self confidence.

### What has been the outcome for Sheila?

Sheila has now sustained full time employment for 8 months and although she found her intense training period to be difficult and stressful she was able to complete this. She is now settled within her department and really enjoying the challenge of her new environment.

The views expressed in case studies are those of participants and are not necessarily shared by their employers or the Scottish Government.

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