

## Inspire 2 Work East Wales - Case Study 1

Client A lives with a health condition called Ehlers-Danlos syndromes.

Ehlers-Danlos syndromes are a group of rare inherited conditions that affect connective tissue. Connective tissues provide support in skin, tendons, ligaments, blood vessels, internal organs and bones.

Client A has been receiving support from I2W for a little while. As well as ensuring the customer got a full service tailored to their interests and futures hopes, as all customers receive; considerations had to be made where we took this condition into account. This is to ensure the sustainability of finding the right employment where Client A could flourish and begin a long term career.

Client A has now found full time employment in the exact career of her dreams.

Please see case study below. It has been written by a Client A J

I signed up to Inspire 2 Work in October last year having spent quite a lot of time out of work or education due to an ongoing illness and not being very confident in leaving the house due to Covid.

Tom carried out all of our sessions over the phone which made me feel at ease and helped with my anxiety.

He helped me narrow down what I wanted to get into and decided Youth Work was the most attractive proposition for me.

Tom alerted me to some trainee positions that were available with Cardiff Council, so supported me in writing my application, drafting a CV as well as interview preparation. This was extremely beneficial for me as I have struggled in the past with confidence and interviews.

The position I applied for also included home working whilst Covid is still an issue, so this really put my anxiety at ease knowing I could train and start the position without putting myself at risk.

I would recommend this service to anyone else who is struggling to get into work as it benefitted me massively. Here is my story.

## **Transitioning from a Council Client to a Project Worker**

At the very beginning I needed a lot of help in how to look for work. It all started in December 2019 where I met the Into Work team in Job Club at the Central Library. They updated my CV and I was told that with my information I was put in touch with volunteering.

My Volunteer Mentor contacted me in January 2020, where we identified my barriers to work and began volunteering within the HUB.

I soon signed up to I2W for additional support. Here my Mentor introduced me to so many employment opportunities that suit my skills and strengths. I was told more about what the service and project offered such as funding, courses, training opportunities and links with other organisations. I mentioned my interest in working with young people but also liked admin work. I was introduced to CardiffWorks temporary admin and clerical roles and had help to complete the application form. The 1:1 mentoring was intensive and I was given a lot of guidance and advice on job search and completing applications. My mentor also prepared me for my interviews which improved my overall confidence. In addition to job searching, I received a lot of emotional support and encouragement. At times when I didn't pass the interview stage I was reminded that there were more opportunities to come and that every interview was a learning experience.

After several engagements with my mentor and previous voluntary/work experiences, I mentioned my interest to work with the youth. I was told about the many youth work vacancies advertised by Cardiff Council and have had a lot of help with the application process. My mentor was really keen to put me forward for the Community Employment Mentor role which was a 3 month placement through CardiffWorks. My mentor saw qualities in me that would suit the role and gave me a lot of support beforehand to prepare me for the interview.

I was really happy to get the Youth Employment Mentor role and felt the transition to a project worker was very smooth because I already felt like I was part of the team. My manager was excellent in explaining the job role and what to expect during the induction. I felt as if I was looked after but also free to really spread my wings and use my own initiative. I was provided with all the equipment and received my DBS through CardiffWorks. I learnt a lot during my 3-week shadowing period where I got to spend the day with different mentors in different hubs. Every mentor offered valuable information and advice and were very happy to answer all of my questions. I learnt a lot about the different projects like Bright Futures, MILES and Butetown. I loved getting to know the team and learning their different approaches to mentoring their clients.

I eventually started getting my own caseloads and accepted referrals who were transferred over from other mentors. It was daunting at first but case after case I became more confident in my mentoring techniques. If I had any questions I was always free to ask other mentors for their advice regarding training providers, funding, training dates and courses. Throughout my placement I have been able to help Council clients overcome their barriers to employment which is very rewarding because it was something I personally struggled with. The transition from a customer to a project

worker has been an exciting journey and I am extremely grateful to achieve this opportunity thanks to I2W. I couldn't have asked for a better opportunity.