

**Alicja Lewko is studying for a BSc in Social Work at the University of Huddersfield. She is coming to the end of her 100 day placement in the Community Older People's Central team in Adult Services and Wellbeing at Calderdale Council.**

During my placement in a community social work team for adults over the age of 65, I have had the opportunity to work with individuals at risk of self-neglect, complete care act assessments, complete referrals to different teams and agencies such as Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy as well as undertake the duty role which often means working with individuals in crisis. A lot of the work that I have completed is working within the eligibility criteria of the Care Act 2014 and the Mental Capacity Act 2005, including completing capacity assessment and making best interest decisions.

The things that I've enjoyed the most about my placement has been the fantastic opportunities to attend a variety of training which has allowed me to get a better understanding of the different agencies that I have worked with or referred service users to. I've loved working with older adults and being able to take time to listen to the different life experiences that people have and being able to understand how these experiences shape the people they are today.

At first I found it challenging to enter service users' homes as it felt very personal and I was used to working in a hospital setting, however after a while I got used to it and now enjoy working with service users in their homes as for most of the people that I have worked with their homes are their safe places. Having my first placement in a hospital discharge team followed by my final placement in the community has allowed me to see the drastic difference between the medical versus the social setting. My first placement was very much focused on challenging medical professionals, working within short time scales, discharge dates and too often not having enough time to build relationship with service users and their families. In comparison, in the community I've had the opportunity to work with service users on a longer term basis and not have the outside pressures of timely discharges. My final placement has allowed me to reflect upon my own values and how much I value building good relationships with service users, finding time to listen to their life stories and the things that they enjoy talking about.