



BUSH & CO

CASE MANAGEMENT & REHAB

Nichola Stokes

Case Manager | OT



In the face of immense challenges, Nichola has shown unwavering dedication in transforming the life of a young client who experienced spinal cord and traumatic brain injuries following a car accident in 2020. The accident involved the child's three older siblings and mother, and each has suffered physical and psychological trauma following the accident.

Since taking on this complex case in August 2022, Nichola's expertise and compassion have been pivotal in providing comprehensive support to her young client, who now requires long-term respiratory ventilation and nutrition delivery, as well as intermittent catheterisation due to bladder and bowel dysfunction caused by her injuries.

From the outset of her involvement, Nichola recognised the immense challenges faced by the young client and her family and understood the need for a holistic approach that addresses the physical, emotional, and practical aspects of care. The child's respiratory condition sometimes requires emergency admission to the hospital and reliance on ventilators 24 hours a day, but Nichola continues to work to increase the time she has on her dry circuits.

The right team in place

Nichola's knowledge and expertise in the healthcare system have enabled her to coordinate an exceptional care team comprising several public and private medical specialists, therapists, and support personnel. She has ensured the young client receives the best possible care and has devised a personalised rehabilitation program tailored to her unique needs and goals, including respite care and access to a school with sufficient support. To help with integration at school, she has also facilitated CBIT training for teaching staff to raise awareness of the child's needs and help optimise her educational experience.

Nichola demonstrated her deep commitment to accurately assessing the needs of her client and her family by successfully challenging the initial assessment's failure to identify them as Children in Need under Section 47 of the Children's Act. Again, when the Integrated Care Board (ICB) suddenly reduced the care hours from 156 to 90, Nichola refused to accept this decision and fought to increase the care hours to 106.

Recognising the significant impact of this reduction on her client's quality of life and that of her family, Nichola has subsequently assisted the parents in finding a new ICB-funded care provider and has initiated an assessment to secure a vehicle that will enable the family to travel together and continues to oversee adaptations to the family home.

Supporting the family as a whole

Nichola's case management expertise has extended beyond her initial work with the young client, the youngest child, to encompass overseeing the care of all four children, who range in age from 4 to 11. With varying needs that span from round-the-clock care to counselling, Nichola provides invaluable stability and continuity for the entire family, and her warm and professional approach ensures that each child receives the personalised support they require.

The next youngest daughter is currently undergoing rehabilitation following surgery for physical injuries, and Nichola is supporting the older sister in receiving counselling to address the mental trauma she experienced from witnessing the injuries sustained by her family. Nichola's compassionate and professional approach is instrumental in providing the necessary care and guidance to both daughters, fostering an environment of support as they navigate their individual paths to recovery.

Additionally, Nichola is looking to secure an Education, Health, and Care (EHC) plan for the brother, who is in Year 5 and lost sight in one eye and suffered brain and spinal injuries in the accident. This comprehensive plan will encompass essential provisions such as speech and language



therapy and one-to-one learning support tailored to his specific needs to ensure he receives the necessary resources to support his academic and personal development, underscoring her commitment to the holistic well-being of each child under her care.

In addition to her care for the children, Nichola has also extended her compassion to the mother, who faces her own physical and mental challenges following the accident. Nichola has successfully secured funding for after-school care in the family's home, providing invaluable non-clinical support for the entire family. A further complication has been that English is a second language for the father, but Nichola has ensured the availability of additional resources to guarantee clear communication and understanding for everyone.

A journey of healing, adaptation, resilience and strength

Throughout her time supporting the family, Nichola has facilitated access to a range of support and resources, thereby creating a safe and supportive environment for the family to express themselves openly. Beyond medical and emotional support, she serves as a trusted advocate, providing guidance on intricate financial aspects and ensuring access to appropriate resources and services. Through Nichola's exceptional case management, the family has embarked on a transformative journey of healing and adaptation, empowered to navigate challenges with resilience and strength.

About Nichola

Nichola is an Occupational Therapist with 19 years' post qualification experience working with both children and adults with a variety of diagnoses and needs. Her breadth of experience enables the ability to assess, plan, implement and review the needs of both the clients and their families.

She has an extremely complex caseload working with children with a range of catastrophic injuries including Traumatic Brain Injuries, Spinal Cord Injuries, Birth Injuries and life limiting conditions.

Nichola is extremely organised focussing on smart goals but also taking into account the particular circumstances and needs of the families she works with.

Nichola gets consistently good feedback from both instructing parties and the families she works with. Families comment on her knowledge and professionalism and admire her approach.



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