

FAQ's about Plexus Healthcare

We are always happy to answer any questions you have about Plexus Healthcare, so please give us a call. Below are some of the most frequently asked questions we receive – we hope these are helpful.

- 1. *Are you in any way connected to Plexus Law?*** No, the owners had not heard of Plexus Law when they named the company and have no connection with them whatsoever. We are privately owned and established in 2013 by Mark Willis (social worker) and Rob Warren (occupational therapist - OT). Helen Merfield who has worked in the industry since 1997 came on board in April 2016 as a consultant and took over as MD in January 2017. Plexus Healthcare was named after the plexus in the body, brachial, solar and femoral, it is the junction box if you like where nerves meet.
- 2. *Why refer to Plexus?*** We believe the client is the expert in their own recovery. Our mission is to empower the individual to fully understand the rehabilitation process. In this way they are enabled to take control and maximize their future well-being.
- 3. *Tell me a bit about Plexus?*** Plexus Healthcare was originally set up to provide private OT services to the NHS, employers and private clients, both locally in Essex as well as nationally for some services. We have been contracted by Headway Essex, Papworth Trust, SSAFA (The Armed Forces Charity) and Essex Cares Ltd, to name a few. We have a network of highly skilled OT's with a wide variety of backgrounds and skills.
- 4. *What experience has Plexus got in case management?*** Due to our presence on the College of OT website, our skills were being sort after by case managers to provide hands on OT and functional rehabilitation for their clients. We were also being asked to do a number of INA's when other companies lacked capacity or expertise. Our OT's really enjoyed this work but had not had experience until now of working in the legal/insurance sector. In 2016 Plexus made the decision to actively expand into this area, this is why Helen Merfield joined us in 2016 to look into this market for us.
- 5. *What is an OT? What do they do?*** OTs are state registered health care professionals who focus on returning people to independent living. Their focus is on what matters **to** the person, not what's the matter **with** the person. They uniquely use the person's interests and personal values to tailor make specific activity-based treatment programs to rehabilitate complex multiple-faceted disorders. With the person's interests at the centre of all interactions, client motivations, engagements and outcomes are always impressive. Our OT's are known as Specialist Rehabilitation Occupational Therapists (SROT's).
- 6. *Where are you based and what areas do you cover?*** Our head office is in Colchester in Essex, we are proud to be located in the 'Knowledge Gateway' at Essex University. The Gateway is an initiative by Essex University to combine academia and business in a business park on the university campus. Rob Warren our clinical director has been a long-standing guest lecturer on the universities therapy programmes (degree and master level) and this move means we will be working closely with the university on their research and development of occupational therapy intervention in practice.

We now have SROT's across the whole of the UK and have an ongoing recruitment strategy to increase the number and locations of our therapist's. We will match your client with an SROT who is local and has the right skills and experience for them and their injury and circumstances, and a chance to meet the therapist first is requested.

- 7. What experience do your SROT's have in the NHS and private sector?** All our SROT's have a minimum of 7 years within the NHS/social services (most have over 10 yrs), the majority reached a band 7 and 80% of our case managers still work part-time in the NHS/social services thus giving them current and up to date knowledge of services in the area. Those working on a purely private basis liaise closely with their colleagues who are currently practicing in the NHS if they need specialist info on current policy. Our extended CV's give a clear indication of where and how our OT's gained their experience in specific areas of practice e.g. brain & spinal injury, amputations, palliative care, chronic pain etc. and therefore what qualifies them to act as a specialist.
- 8. What's is your stance on the use of the NHS in cases?** At Plexus we believe in getting our client the right support and treatment at the right time. If the NHS is providing an excellent service, we would not want to interfere with this. It is important to keep clients aligned with NHS services, especially if liability has not been agreed, just in case they need to rely on these services in the future. However, where there is inadequate, poor or no service/treatment, then we would make this clear and give sound clinical reasons for our client to receive private treatment/services.
- 9. Do you work with case managers?** Yes, we work closely with a number of case managers (CM) and case management companies (see our "Info for Case Managers" sheet), as we provide hands on OT in the client's home. We recommend a rehabilitation programme and work hand in hand with the case manager to deliver it. In some cases we are instructed directly by the claimant solicitor or the insurer, in these cases we would take on the role of the case manager alongside the client, using some activities as therapeutic tools to empower the client and help them regain independence. But we are **NOT** case managers so if a case requires more than 20% case management v 80% hands on OT we will always request a CM to work alongside us, our SROT's don't want to nor enjoy doing the case management role.
- 10. Do you take single instructions?** We prefer to take joint instruction, as we find the collaborative process works really well, however if this is not possible for whatever reason we will take single instructions on cases. We do however require funding to be in place via an interim payment or other means prior to accepting a referral, as we are not able to offer a credit facility.

We hope this has answered your questions but if you have further questions or would like to talk to us about a case please call Helen on 07971-798462 or e mail helen@plexushealthcare.co.uk

