

Stories help describe what services do.

Every-day and ordinary, or life changing and extraordinary?

Nazia's story: November 2021

Service name: The Whitehouse Centre at the Princess Royal Health Centre.

Main purpose of service: Providing primary care services to patients in Huddersfield who might otherwise have difficulty accessing services.

About the person: Nazia moved to Huddersfield to start afresh following toxic relationships and a particularly traumatic experience. She is now a student studying Psychology and plans to forge a career helping others who are living with the emotional impact of trauma.



Being misunderstood: Nazia explains, “Prior to being a patient at the Whitehouse Centre, I didn’t often have good healthcare experiences. I found that healthcare professionals could be narrow minded and didn’t really listen to me. When I was 18, I was experiencing days when I was OK and other days when I was breaking down and anxious. I was told I was bi-polar and put on anti-depressants but when I raised concerns that the tablets were part of the problem, they just increased the dose.” Nazia continues, “One day I rang my doctor emotionally distressed and used a metaphor that I felt like I was surrounded by robots and sheep. The doctor wanted to section me. Luckily Mum was there and was able to explain that I didn’t mean this literally, I was just explaining how I felt!” Nazia was referred to a Psychiatrist who *did* listen and provided support over 2 years. “He saw that neglect and trauma was the problem.”

Losing faith: Nazia believes that how people are treated following trauma is paramount and feels that poor ‘patient experience’ can easily lead to a loss of faith in health services. A violent event before she moved to Huddersfield was hugely significant. “I was beaten up in broad daylight and my previous GP didn’t understand how the trauma affected me. They dismissed my feelings. I felt broken and disabled.” She continues, “Labels were thrown at me that didn’t make sense. People need to pay the right attention. No one seems to have time to really listen and to try to look further.”

Safe space: Nazia explains how being a patient at the Whitehouse Centre feels different. “Dr Miller has helped me more than anyone ever has. She listened to me as a human being and recognised that I am intelligent, but that I sometimes struggle to communicate how I am feeling. She tailors the treatment to me. She’s paid attention to what I am going through. She doesn’t skirt over the details. She makes you feel she has time for you even when you know she doesn’t really have much time. I trust her advice. She helps me understand. She guides me. She tells me about books to read. She understands that people are suffering due to previous trauma. I feel comfortable and welcome enough with Dr Miller to ask questions. She understands that I can try to tell you how I feel but I can’t always tell you what I need.” Nazia adds, “I am able to go forward because of Dr Miller. She knocked a few walls down. I just needed those walls knocking down to give me a hole to get through!”