

50+ WORKS

Case study 3: identifying transferable skills

New Challenge

After 44 years' service as a midwife in the NHS, Miriam decided that the time was right to retire and she took a well-deserved extended break to visit family and friends in her native West Indies.

Four years slipped by and Miriam came to thinking about what to do next with her life. She'd reached her 66th birthday and although returning to her previous occupation was out of the question, Miriam felt she still had something to contribute to society and was considering returning to a less stressful job.

A few weeks before Christmas 2010 Miriam was browsing her local Harrow People magazine when the *Experience Counts 50+* advertisement jumped out at her. A project funded by the London Councils and European Social Fund, it was the description of the personalised support on offer to older people that caught her eye.

Miriam duly booked a one-to-one appointment with a careers adviser in New Challenge. During this first exploratory meeting it became apparent the wide range of skills and experience that Miriam could offer. Miriam realised that being 66 and in good health, she might still have many years ahead and wanted to commit to something serious. Together with her adviser they looked at the possible opportunities open to her and drew up an action plan needed to achieve her goal.

Given Miriam's extensive experience in healthcare, her adviser suggested that the health and social care sector could make good use of her skills. A short time later Miriam came across an advertisement from the Harrow Shared Lives Scheme, looking for a long-term carer. Those who want to participate in the Shared Lives scheme as carers open their home to a vulnerable adult, someone who is able to live independently with support but who would otherwise have to live in a residential care setting.

Miriam felt that her long career with the NHS had equipped her with the right balance of skills. She had enough room in her home to share with one other person and could offer a safe and comfortable environment. And it would be companionship for both ...

Once committed, Miriam proceeded with the comprehensive screening needed by the Council to enrol in the scheme, including a Criminal Records Bureau check to ensure she was a suitable host for a vulnerable adult.

The combined support provided by New Challenge and the Head of Adult and Community Care in Harrow Council helped Miriam to compile a successful application to the Harrow Shared Lives Scheme, which opened the doors to a new later life 'career' as a long-term carer.

January 2012

Key learning points

- Consider transferable skills
- Look at all possible opportunities to use transferable skills
- Consider suitable openings to meet both financial needs and social needs

.

.