

Appendix 3

What is a good outcome? Rachel's story

- Rachel has a husband, three children and is addicted to alcohol having grown up with alcoholic parents;
- Following a violent, alcohol-fuelled incident, Rachel's husband obtained a legal undertaking forbidding her access to the family home or her children;
- Rachel was subsequently found unconscious and air-lifted to hospital, where she spent a week in ICU with malnutrition and other alcohol-related conditions;
- Rachel was told she would soon be ready to be discharged, but had nowhere to go: "I didn't know where I'd end up, I was petrified. I'd been so close to dying so many times and couldn't see where my life was going";
- At this point, Rachel was accepted into the OOHC Step Down service:

"It was life-changing. The stress of being homeless had felt like a heavy weight on me. The relief was incredible and lifted me. As soon as I moved in and met the team I felt safe - they were so welcoming and kind.

I never had any self-confidence, it had all been knocked out of me - I'd always felt worthless and on my guard. During my stay I felt that I could talk about anything without being judged. I'd been carrying so much pain and guilt for years – talking about it made sense of things"

- The OOHC team supported Rachel to engage with Turning Point and to link up with Oxfordshire's Lived Experience Advisory Forum;
- They also supported Rachel to talk with a solicitor about potential access to her children: "the team helped me realise that I do have rights and gave me the confidence that I am strong enough to fight these battles";
- After 5 weeks in Step Down Rachel moved into a flat in a women's project;
- Rachel went on to become a Community Champion and Service Evaluator with LEAF and now has regular access to her children:

"I can't believe how much my life has turned around. Staying at the Step Down house saved my life and helped me get to know myself again – I can do this."

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