

Laura Smith (pseudonym) - Initial Assessment by Telephone

H Academy Trust

Date of birth: 01/01/1990

Referral received: 25/09/2023

Assessment: 27/09/2023

Report sent: 28/09/2023

From: Referrer Name

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Organisation: H Academy

Report recipients

This report contains confidential information. The recipients named below have a responsibility to process, secure and store this information in accordance with data protection law.

Name	Organisation	Email
Referrer Name	H Academy Trust	email@email.com
Status: Consent given		

Dear Referrer,

Thank you for referring Laura.

I can offer an opinion on this case based on my assessment of the individual and the information provided, and I have their consent to release this report to the agreed report recipients.

Reason for referral

Laura has Functional Neurological Disorder (FND), whilst the academy has been supporting Laura with her day to day activities with adjustments Laura reports an increase in her symptoms. She has requested an occupational health review to discuss any potential adjustments or any other recommendations that would eliminate any further impairment to her physical and mental health.

Health background

Laura has been assessed by Smart Clinic twice previously in October 2022 and again in December 2022 by an occupational health physician. I did have access to the previous information today, and went through her history and ongoing health issues with her, and I will provide an update on her current health. Please read the previous reports in conjunction with this for any further background information.

Functional neurological disorder (FND) is a disorder where there is an issue with how the brain sends and receives information to the rest of the body. It can impact on the individual by causing limb weakness, paralysis and sensory issues. Laura reports reduced sensation from her nose down to her toes on her left hand side of her body which causes difficulty with mobilising. She has required the use of an electric wheelchair to mobilise since November 2022 and has purchased an automatic car.

Laura has referenced how her condition makes her very sensitive to loud and high pitch noises which in turn causes a flare up of her symptoms including tics which occur when she is stressed. Laura reports that over the past two weeks she has suffered with increased weakness in her left arm, she feels that this is due to the stress of the lack of adaptations around the school and was also triggered by an episode where someone entered the classroom on 19th September and spoke to her in a high pitch voice which she reports made her jump as she was unaware that she had entered the room.

In addition, Laura struggles with her memory; more short term than long term, and manages this by writing everything down. She reports this is well managed in the workplace as she has been teaching her lessons for a long time and therefore lessons are similar, so she does not have difficulty with lesson planning and teaching content. She can struggle with overload when too many things happen at once.

Laura has support at home with adaptations around her home and she is waiting for a walk in shower to be installed.

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She is currently on a waiting list to be reviewed by at a specialist centre at the QE hospital due to her ongoing symptoms. At home Laura can undertake small amounts of walking as long as she is supported by a family member, she has been informed she is at increased risk of falls due to her left sided weakness.

Laura is also undergoing investigations into her right hip pain, she has had a recent MRI scan on her hip (24.9.2023) and is waiting a date for review of these results with her orthopaedic team. Laura is currently taking strong pain medication to help manage her hip pain, she has recently suffered with restless leg syndrome which had been keeping her awake at night. She has been prescribed medication to manage this which she reports is effective; however, she is now experiencing tinnitus (ringing in the ears) which is one of the side effects of the medication.

Impact on work

Laura reports that she is able to park in a disabled parking bay at reception but has difficulty accessing her classroom as she has to navigate several doors which are not automatic and although the heaviness of the doors has been reduced, she still has to physically push these open or wait for assistance from someone passing by.

She has reduced her work days to three days per week which she finds helpful due to her symptoms of tiredness. As Laura's symptoms can be triggered by high pitch and loud noises she reports that the children are aware to keep their volumes low and that she is able to work with children playing the piano in her classroom.

Laura informed me she had contacted access to work who had agreed funding for adjustments to enable better access and egress for her around the school. She reports that she has difficulty accessing certain areas as the pathways have not been raised and are not level with the access to some of the school building she visits. She has explained that to her knowledge the school has not contacted access to work to discuss these adaptations, and therefore, these adjustments are still waiting to be undertaken. At present she is unable to push any doors with her left arm due to the reported weakness she states she is experiencing. Laura has to access the disabled toilet facilities in another block several times per day and reports she struggles with pushing the doors open when accessing this part of the school.

Laura voiced concerns about the reduction to one teaching assistant working with her when she is teaching a special education needs class, she has been working with a teaching assistant that she is not familiar with and this caused her concern.

I appreciate these comments reflect Laura's view of the situation and that management may well take a different view, but it seemed important to set out her concerns so that you are aware of them.

Recommendations and responses to questions raised

How can we further support you?

Following my discussion with Laura today I would advise that a conversation is undertaken with her to ensure that her concerns regarding access and egress to areas she needs to visit around the school grounds are addressed.

In addition, Laura's symptoms of FND are exacerbated by stress and therefore to reduce the risk of further episodes of any flare ups in relation to these you may wish to utilise the HSE Management Standards for Work Related Stress as a framework to identify underlying work issues and factors which may have impacted on her work role and her ability to feel able to perform her role. <http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/index.htm>.

Due to Laura's current low mood in relation to her ongoing symptoms I have discussed the benefit of support from the Access to work Mental Health Support Service who are able to offer 9 months of free support to employees in the workplace. They have no waiting list and can be contacted by the employee by calling their confidential helpline on: 0300 456 8114 or emailing a2wmhss@remploy.co.uk. This is a sister support programme to Access to Work and I

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feel that Laura may benefit from the support they may be able to offer her for her mental wellbeing.

Laura is aware that she has easy access to counselling and stress coaching via Smart Clinic, and we discussed this today.

Review

I have not arranged any further review with Laura, but would be happy to do so if Laura or work have any concerns regarding her health and wellbeing in relation to work in the future.

I hope you find this report helpful. We are open office hours Monday to Friday and we can be contacted on 0800 862 0142 if you require any further assistance.

Clinician Name

Occupational Health Nurse

Smart Clinic by APL Health

9 Brunel Court, Northwich, CW9 7LP

Email: hello@smartclinic.com

Tel: 0800 862 0142