



Emergency treatment

When she needs urgent help, Moana calls Crisis Assessment and Treatment, *"Many times they sort of saved me, if you like, from going into hospital."* CAT would refer her on to a respite home if they were unable to help. Hospitalisation is the last resort.

Transition from crisis to normalcy

If she is hospitalised, a nurse will make followup home visits to aid her transition into normal life. She also has an iwi support person who acts as an advocate when meeting with Work and Income and occasionally the psychiatrist. The support person also helps her with normal daily tasks to help her maintain her confidence and independence.

Moana felt that the support person was the most useful form of assistance, *"I'm a bit of a stubborn old poo and don't like being treated like a little kid so I'm very independent and like not to be treated like a mental patient; sometimes I need support. Sometimes, I'll find I'll get anxious or I might be overwhelmed by a situation... You sort of lose your confidence, you get knocked around a bit, so it's like simple things like just going shopping is really hard, so it's just nice... to come with you and you know you've got someone there for support, just to get that confidence back up again."*

Moana is bothered by the lack of control and input into her treatment.

"I'd be shot-up with a lot of drugs to bring me down, that's kind of out of my hands and that really pisses me off that I've got no control over that."

For instance, she felt that the attitudes of older nurses toward patients, occasionally brought in to fill staffing shortages, differ from younger nurses with different training.

Moana thought the older attitudes had gone with the institutions, *"the 30-40 year olds are on to it, so compared to days gone by, they're excellent... Their personalities are so much different... you can't even compare it."*

To her, the difference lies in being treated like *"a person, and not just sort of as a crazy person."*

Housing

She has made an appointment to see Work and Income about the prospect of getting some part-time work. Work and Income provided her with the loan for bond, furniture and whiteware, *"without their help I wouldn't have been able to do it otherwise."* But loan repayments are a little hard.

She has a Work and Income caseworker who deals with her all the time, and helps handle her paperwork, *"It gets a rapport through and they get to know you... nice to go in and you know that person sort of thing, it's cool."*

"Work and Income are excellent and it's just so on to it... The manner of the people has changed, they used to be very controlling and make you feel terrible if you went in there asking for money. The whole system at Work and Income has changed as far as staff goes... Whoever changed the system there well bless her little cotton socks because, I remember the days when you used to go into Work and Income and had to spend all day waiting. With this new system of the appointments you just go and see the person and it's all over and done with it's just lovely... [in the past] You just sat there and waited and, yes you could have been there for three or four hours."

Waiting for a house was a little stressful and Moana didn't get one in the end, but Housing New Zealand's empathy won her over, *"I saw this chap and just told him what my situation was. He was lovely, the chap. He was very helpful and he was very understanding of the situation. I'm sure if there was a house available he would have put me in it but it was out of his hands... He took it all into account..."*

Community

The local mental health support centre serves as a drop-in centre and support group - providing advice, services such as Work and Income visits and social activities. Moana had also volunteered there, *"They have various courses... glass painting and plants and sewing and, just a good space to come to, a safe space. It's sort of like family... everyone supports each other whether you're sick or unwell... It's just that added extra support to be with other people who have been through the same thing."*

Long-term coping strategies

Moana wants continuity of treatment, relatively drug-free coping strategies that could allow her to manage her illness, but she has never seen the same psychiatrist more than once at the hospital, *"I go every three months for my medication and I've never had the same psychiatrist... and they say, 'Tell me all about you' and it's like I got so pissed off in the end I said 'Look, just read my file.'"*

"I am really totally anti-psychiatric system... had a very good counsellor can't afford it now, and her way of working is getting in touch with your feelings, getting in touch with your past, getting in touch with your job and... getting it out. The psychiatric system treats your symptoms not the cause... where they're pumping up drugs into you...so it's conflicting ways of treating a person..."