

My name is Vic Bullock and I employ a Personal Assistant through Cool2Care. I have been so pleased with the service that I have received from Cool2Care, that I've decided to volunteer with the organisation.

I want to make sure that more people like me in the South West of England have the confidence to employ a Personal Assistant, and that they feel able to approach an organisation like Cool2Care to help them with finding the right person.

Please read on to find out more about my story and about other young adults in a similar position to me.



**Vic Bullock, Volunteer Consultant  
&  
Employer of Cool2Care PA  
E-mail: [vic.bullock@cool2care.net](mailto:vic.bullock@cool2care.net)  
Phone: 077431 26902**

## WHY THE COOL2CARE MODEL WORKS FOR ADULTS - A FEW RECENT EXPERIENCES

Do you need a PA to have a for some fun and friendship? Cool2Care is what you are looking for!  
Please read the following testimonials below of young adults and their Cool2Care carer's  
and their experience.



Hi, my name's Vic and I'm 19 years old, I live in Cheltenham and I am a tetraplegic.

After the summer holidays I needed a Personal Assistant to go out with socially and to help me with my daily needs as I was looking to become more independent. Previously we had advertised through newspaper adverts and to university students within Cheltenham but didn't get any response. This was frustrating, as we were spending money and not getting anything as a result of it. I asked someone from Penderels, our Direct Payments Support Agency whether there were any other options, and they told us about Cool2Care.

I contacted Agy, the local Cool2Care Family Liaison Manager and explained my situation to her. She visited my family and I at home and we chatted in detail about what I wanted from a Personal Assistant. I was keen that the person was quite young, female and shared my interests. Cool2Care created a profile about me, which I had the chance to tweak and we had two great candidates interested within a week. I was given the opportunity to interview the two PAs and then pick the one who best suited my needs.

I chose Naomi as I felt that she had read my profile and she had found out a lot about me before the interview and shared lots of my hobbies. I warmed to her straight away, mainly because I really liked her personality and the approach she took towards me – to support me but not take away the independence that I had gained.

When Naomi comes round we often have a chat about what has been happening on the soaps. We cook meals and cakes together, go shopping, visit friends houses for girlie catch up's and just chat non-stop as we have so much in common.

Naomi has also taken me to job interviews and helped support me through the process by helping me look for different places to work and given me tips and advice.

I find being an employer helpful as I can provide flexibility to the employee and we can schedule when we meet around each other's needs. I feel happy knowing that this is going to be a lasting relationship, unlike the support provided by some agencies where you could get a different worker every week. By being the PA's employer you can bond better with the employee and gain a good relationship with them.

Having a PA means that you can have a laugh together, I have someone who can support me with my personal care needs, but who will also go out with me socially for the evening and have fun with me and my peers.

I would definitely recommend Cool2Care to other young people and friends.

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## **WHY THE COOL2CARE MODEL WORKS FOR ADULTS - A FEW RECENT EXPERIENCES**

Hi! I'm Naomi and I live in Churchdown. I have worked within care settings for the past 14 years. I chose to work for Cool2Care because I wanted a job which gave me more satisfaction and hands on approach to care. I also wanted a job which fitted in with my family life and which was rewarding rather than stressful.

The process of joining Cool2Care was very straightforward and quick. As I was able to demonstrate that I had over 2 years of varied experience with a range of disabilities I was able to attend the 1 day condensed Experienced PA course, which was very informative and also outlined the role of the Personal Assistant. I was fully trained and CRB checked within a week of joining Cool2Care, so there was no delay in starting work with Vic.

Having reviewed the vacancies I submitted my personal profile to Vic as I felt we had a lot in common. Within a fortnight I was interviewed by Vic and her mum. This was more of an informal chat looking at what they wanted from an Assistant and what Vic's needs were. The CRB check was extremely easy to apply for online and arrived back within a week. My references were collected promptly and I was able to start work with Vic within a month.

I work with Vic 10-12 hours per week and are over 3-4 sessions. During our time together Vic and I have cooked, visited town, I have taken Vic to appointments and assisted with her personal care. I have had the opportunity to meet with her family and friends. Vic and I are now in a routine where I know generally what her capabilities are and when she needs assistance. Jackki (Vic's mum) has provided me with training on manual handling, how to use sliding boards to transfer Vic from her wheelchair to the car or into her bed Vic has also been very helpful with this.

Vic and I have a good relationship - we both enjoy a chat and a joke. It does not feel like the usual feeling of going to work. We both offer flexibility with hours that fits around our needs.

I have learned through Vic the challenges people with physical disabilities face in everyday life as well as what is available to them. Vic has a very positive attitude and she never complains about her disabilities which I find very inspiring.

To date I have found Cool2Care to be very efficient and I believe in their philosophy of wanting to help families with disabled children. This is based upon care and compassion and a real sense of wanting to help.

Vic and I are looking forward to our events we have booked we will be attending We Will Rock You and Peter Pan on Ice in the near future as well as many more sessions now that she has found a Personal Assistant and I have found a job that I enjoy.

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## WHY THE COOL2CARE MODEL WORKS FOR ADULTS - A FEW RECENT EXPERIENCES

### Kate Garrett, Stroud



**Kate is an 18 year-old girl with Downs Syndrome. During the summer before her 18<sup>th</sup> birthday Kate spent time with two cool2care Personal Assistants. The family received 80 hours of support over a period of 8 weeks.**

Kate's mum Clare says -

*"We had 2 PAs during what could have potentially been a tricky time for us over the summer. We had a lot going on at home and the support was an enormous help. Both PAs were really brilliant with Kate. Only one was insured to drive Kate but we got around that.*

*Kate really had a wonderful time with both of them and grew very fond of them. Spending time with them helped to boost her confidence levels. She particularly enjoyed playing games and going bowling with them. They both came to help us at Kate's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday skittle party in one of our village pubs and we really couldn't have managed without them!*

*Cool2Care found us the 2 PAs very promptly and we felt their levels of skills and experience were suitable to meet Kate's needs. We had support with the employment process from Penderels Trust, and whilst there was a lot to take on board during the initial set-up of the direct payment, we got all the help we needed to manage it. Kate is now 18 and since moving into adult services the direct payments have not continued, which is a bit of a shame. I would definitely recommend this kind of arrangement to other young adults with additional needs."*

### Kate with Hanna Stephen, Stroud



Kate's PA says -

*"Working as a PA to Kate over the summer was fantastic. We had so much fun together doing all of Kate's favourite things, including swimming, going to the park, singing along in the car to ABBA and High School Musical, feeding the ducks, and playing UNO. I looked forward to going to work every day, knowing that I would be spending time with one of the most beautiful girls I've ever had the privilege of working with. Kate has an infectious personality, making work utterly enjoyable.*

*Training through Cool2Care allowed me to work with wonderful children who helped me to learn more about the lives of special needs children and their families which I couldn't have learnt through books or study. I absolutely love my job, and every shift brings something different, challenging, and enjoyable."*

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## IN SUMMARY



- ◆ **Cool2Care can offer skilled and trained candidates who offer fun and friendship. Spending time with another young and dynamic person is a fantastic experience - I don't feel like I have a 'carer' but a great friend! But that's not everyone's main requirement, so Cool2care's PAs are of diverse ages and backgrounds - the whole point is that they listen to your needs, whatever they may be and however easy or complex that requirement is.**
- ◆ **Cool2Care PAs can do any number of things. This includes socialising, supporting with independence, helping with personal care, supporting with job hunting or just being someone who you enjoy spending time with and who you do something different with each time.**
- ◆ **You employ the Cool2Care PA yourself. This sounds a lot harder than it is, and if you are using Direct Payments or an Individual Budget, a direct payments support agency can help you with the administrative side. In the end, all you need to do is get out insurance and put the person on a payroll. Simple.....**
- ◆ **..... And as they become your employee, it's up to you to decide together when they will work each week. If needed, you can be really flexible about it.**
- ◆ **Still not sure? Cool2Care can put you in touch with other young adults in your area who have used their services to find a PA. This can be a great way of sounding out any concerns you have.**

