

Shaukat Sultan, Roshni

“I am a development outreach worker for Roshni, an organisation based in Glasgow that seeks to raise awareness about issues relating to domestic violence and children amongst black and ethnic minority communities. I develop relationships with religious groups and visit churches, gurdwaras, mosques and temples to give information relating to domestic violence and children. I also advise them on how to ensure proper Disclosure Scotland compliance processes are fulfilled.

“I also meet with community groups to raise awareness. The most important thing is building good relationships, and to be approachable so you can help in a sensitive, confidential way.”



Shaukat moved to Scotland from Australia three years ago, where he worked in the hospitality trade. Two years ago his sight started to seriously deteriorate and he was diagnosed with glaucoma. He has had operations but his sight is now at 10 per cent, and he has no peripheral vision at all.

“When I lost most of my sight I was really rocked,” he says. “The main issue for me was feeling that I now had lots of free time to spend. Like anyone else, I really wanted to be part of the community and make my contribution to it – and losing my sight gave me concern that I could not make a full contribution.

“However, I offered to help volunteering with Roshni, and they gave me the chance. They also were very sympathetic to my needs and accommodated me. This gave me confidence and made me feel valued.”

After almost a year volunteering, Shaukat secured employment with Roshni. When he began, he contacted the Access to Work scheme through RNIB Scotland. This provided him with a range of equipment to support him in his work.

“Both RNIB Scotland and Access to Work were enormously sympathetic and helpful. I got ZoomText and a big screen to help me use the computer.

“I can do pretty much anything now, and I am grateful to Roshni for giving me the chance. That is all I needed – a chance, and Roshni deserve a lot of credit for providing that. I hope to pay them back with dedication and hard work.

“Employers should really take a deep breath and give people a chance – they will be richly rewarded through the loyalty and determination any blind or partially sighted person will bring, but also have the knowledge that they have done a really good, and brave thing.”

Ali Khan is chairman of the Roshni charity, and employed Shaukat after being impressed with his work as a volunteer.

“Shaukat started volunteering at the beginning of last year, and it was clear to me and others that he was a real asset to the organisation,” he says. “So when he applied for a full time job and was successful there was really no hesitation about Shaukat being in post.

“I did have reservations in terms of what this would mean cost-wise for the charity, and also what it might mean in terms of any regulatory impact on our operations. However, after I had made myself more knowledgeable about the implications and the support available through government and others, all concerns washed away.

“I now have a hard working and determined member of staff out there implementing the aims of Roshni.”

