

## Polish Family Association

# A Young Ukrainian Doctor on Her Journey to Professional Integration through the Skill Up Programme

### Background

Dariia, a 29-year-old doctor, arrived in the UK from Ukraine seeking safety following the war in her home country. She relocated to Merton, London, where she faced numerous barriers to restarting her professional career. Despite her strong medical background, she encountered language difficulties, unfamiliar UK administrative processes, and complex qualification recognition procedures. These challenges left her feeling isolated and uncertain about how to proceed. With no prior engagement in UK adult education, she needed structured guidance to rebuild her professional pathway and integrate into British society.

### Aims and Objectives

Upon joining the Skill Up Programme, funded by the GLA Skills for Londoners Community Outreach, Dariia outlined the following goals:

- Improve her English proficiency to enhance communication and job prospects.
- Navigate UK administrative systems, including visa processes, Home Office procedures, and GP registration.
- Adapt her CV to UK standards and receive referrals for healthcare job opportunities.
- Gain confidence for interviews and acquire professional attire for job-seeking.
- Understand the pathway to requalify as a doctor and take the necessary steps toward this goal.

## How We Helped

The Skill Up Programme provided tailored support to help Dariia overcome her barriers and set her on a structured path toward professional reintegration:

### 1. English Language Support

- Referred to a local GLA-funded ESOL provider LIBS and Learn English Together in Merton, providers of free language classes.
- Enrolled in an English course.
- Encouraged participation in conversation clubs to practice speaking fluently.

### 2. Administrative Assistance

- One-on-one guidance on visa and Home Office applications.
- Help with GP registration and understanding UK healthcare regulations.
- Information on medical requalification pathways, including GMC requirements.

### 3. CV and Job Application Support

- One-on-one CV workshops to adapt her medical qualifications to UK standards.
- Job referrals to local healthcare providers, offering initial work opportunities.

### 4. Smart Works Referral – Dressing Consultation and Interview Coaching

- Referred to Smart Works, where she received a high-quality interview outfit.
- Attended coaching sessions to refine interview techniques and build confidence.

### 5. Access to Technology

- Received a tablet from the Skill Up Programme, as she previously relied only on her phone.
- Used the tablet for job applications, online learning, and professional networking.

## Outcomes and Results

Through the Skill Up Programme's structured support, Dariia achieved several key milestones:

- **English Language Progress:** Enrolled in ESOL classes and improved fluency, making daily interactions easier.
- **Administrative Success:** Completed visa paperwork, registered with a GP, and gained a clear understanding of UK medical licensing processes.
- **Job Search and Interview Success:** Applied for entry-level healthcare positions and secured multiple interviews.
- **Increased Confidence:** Developed stronger communication skills, allowing her to engage in job interviews with reduced anxiety.
- **Digital Empowerment:** Using her tablet, Dariia is now able to independently access learning materials, apply for jobs, and prepare for requalification.

"The Skill Up Programme has been a lifesaver for me. When I first arrived, I felt lost, not knowing where to begin. With their help, I'm now learning English, applying for jobs, and feeling much more confident about my future. The referral to Smart Works made a huge difference – the new outfit and coaching made me feel strong and ready for interviews. I am so grateful for everything they have done." – Dariia

## Social and Economic Impact

Beyond personal achievements, Dariia's journey has had a broader impact:

- **Community Engagement:** She has connected with fellow professionals.
- **Economic Stability:** As she moves toward securing a paid job, she is becoming financially independent.
- **Long-Term Career Pathway:** Dariia now has a structured plan to be qualified as a doctor, ensuring she can contribute to the NHS in the future.

## Current Situation and Next Steps

Dariia remains committed to progressing her career in the UK. She continues her English studies, attends job interviews, and builds professional connections. Skill Up will support her in accessing further training opportunities, guiding her toward full requalification in the UK healthcare sector.

## Conclusion

Dariia's case highlights the transformative impact of community-led skill development initiatives. Through personalised support, targeted referrals, and practical assistance, Skill Up has empowered her to overcome significant barriers and take concrete steps toward full professional integration in the UK. Her success serves as a testament to the importance of structured guidance and community-based interventions in fostering economic independence and social inclusion.