

Louis's Story - February 2024

Name of service: Locala's Community Nursing Network Team for End of Life care and The Kirkwood.

Main purpose of service: Locala Community Nurses work closely with GPs, The Kirkwood's Palliative Care Nurses and home carers to deliver individualised end of life care at the patients home. Including:

- Wound care
- Pressure area care
- Administering medicines to manage symptoms
- Bladder/ bowel management
- Co-ordinating the dying person's care
- Completing a social care referral for help with personal care

The Kirkwood offer assessments and specialist advice for individuals with complex end of life needs. This includes emotional support and advice with symptom management.



About Louis:

Louis is from Mirfield and is living with Lung Cancer and Leukaemia. Louis was diagnosed with Lung Cancer in 2021, and later diagnosed with Leukaemia in 2023. One of Louis' favourite places to visit is Greenhead Park in Huddersfield with his wife Debbie and two dogs. Louis enjoys taking in the scenery at his own pace on his motorised scooter (photo above).

How Locala cares for Louis:

Being independent is extremely important to Louis and is something that Sam Elsworth (Locala's Clinical Lead for End of Life care) keeps at the forefront of her mind when providing care for Louis.

Sam first visited Louis in December 2023 to discuss how he could maintain his independence within his home and reduce feelings of pain and discomfort. Sam ordered Louis a hospital bed, air mattress, table for the bedroom, and a pressure cushion to protect his pressure areas from deteriorating.

Louis said, **"When I first spoke to Sam on the phone, I told her I preferred face-to-face visits and now Sam always visits me in-person at home. When Sam visited me, I just felt at ease, she was reassuring and gave me all the information I needed."**

Sam arranged for me to get a hospital bed with an air mattress to help with the pain I have during the night.”

Louis spoke to Sam about his struggles with organising his medication, therefore Sam immediately arranged for Louis to be provided with his medication in a Dossett box.

Mental Health support:

During his initial visit, Louis shared details about his mental health, anxieties and difficulties with sleeping. Sam spoke to Louis about how The Kirkwood could support him, especially through their counselling and complimentary therapy teams. Although a little apprehensive after hearing ‘Kirkwood’, Louis agreed to this. Louis said **“The referral was very smooth and quick, I was expecting to wait a long time to hear from Kirkwood but it was very quick.”**

“Kirkwood is not just a place where you go to die”:

Louis was initially apprehensive when The Kirkwood was mentioned to him. Louis said, **“I thought Kirkwood was a place to die, I have had two friends who died there. I would now say Kirkwood is dignity. The staff there explain everything and are honest, they call a spade a spade. Kirkwood is not just a place where you go to die, it’s more than that.”**

Louis spoke about how the counselling sessions have helped him so far, **“My counsellor Sara is very nice. When I am there, I can talk about whatever I want. It is also a place I can talk about my son Mick who died four years ago; Being able to talk about him means a lot to me.”**