



Amanda's story – March 2024

Name of service: Community Rehabilitation Services

Main purpose of service: A multidisciplinary team which provides treatment, rehabilitation, advice and support to people living in Kirklees. The purpose of the team is to help people achieve goals in relation to daily living and quality of life. The service includes physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy and dietetics.

Introducing Amanda: Amanda describes herself as a 'stroke survivor'. She had a stroke in October 2022 and was in hospital for 6 weeks where she had to learn how to walk again and had almost no movement in her left hand. When she came home, Amanda was referred to Locala's Community Rehabilitation Service and has now been discharged.

Rehabilitation: Amanda explains the support she needed. **"I had no confidence walking outside. I live on a steep hill and it was scary walking downhill. I was nervous about getting on a bus, and worried in case the driver set off before I had sat down."** Amanda's speech had been affected too. **"I was slurred, and my tongue would get tripped up."**

Holistic: Hazel, one of the Rehabilitation Assistant Practitioners (Senior Assistant) worked with Amanda to practice different elements of physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech and language therapy. Amanda says, **"Hazel was wonderful! She was very good at making things relevant and functional, so to exercise my hand she got me chopping onions. And we played dominoes. After many games, I think it was a draw! Hazel was brilliant. Helen, the physio was very encouraging too."** She continues, **"I had lost a lot of weight, so Hazel referred me to the team's dietitian Kate, who was very supportive. Hazel was lovely, you feel that you are very good hands – she was able to do a bit of everything. I'm very grateful for the input and was a bit gutted to be discharged, but I'd improved."**

Recovery: Amanda reflects on her recovery journey. **"I was 62 and felt young and healthy. Having a stroke makes you feel older overnight. I had no personal experience of stroke, it's been a real learning curve. I'm heartened by what I learned. Everyone's recovery is unique but with certain things in common."** Amanda has become a 'Here for You' volunteer for the Stroke Association. She explains the role, **"You ring someone for a 30-minute call once a week for 8 weeks. I had this myself, I benefitted from this."** Working around the post stroke 'brain fog' she can experience, she has built up confidence to go back to employment as a tutor. She has also joined a gym and goes with an ARNI instructor – a specialised fitness instructor from the charity 'Action for Rehabilitation from Neurological Injuries'. **"My arm is stronger, and we work on my balance and core strength."**

More information:

Locala's Community Rehabilitation Services <https://www.locala.org.uk/services/community-rehabilitation-service>

Stroke Association 'Here for You' calls <https://www.stroke.org.uk/finding-support/here-for-you>

Action for Rehabilitation from Neurological Injuries <https://arni.uk.com/>

Amanda talked with Joanne Vaughan, Engagement Team on 26.2.24 and gives consent for her story to be shared widely