

**Jeremy's story February 2023**

**Service name:** Podiatry

**Focus on wound care:** Louise, one of Locala's Podiatrists explains, "**Half of our Podiatry team spend all their working day involved in wound care. We spend our time dressing foot wounds plus some leg wounds referred by the district nurses. Our wound care patients are seen in a variety of settings, such as their own home, care and nursing homes, health centres, and the Diabetes Centre. We also see wound care patients on the wards at Dewsbury District Hospital and in clinics at Calderdale Hospital and Huddersfield Royal Infirmary where we work jointly with the clinicians there. We use our knowledge to assess and treat wounds, plus also undertake assessments such as vascular and diabetes assessments, with a view to referring people to other specialist services, for example the Vascular team. We work closely with other specialists, like the Tissue Viability Nurses.**"



**About the person:** Jeremy is in his early 70's and is a retired Orthopaedic Surgeon. A steam railway enthusiast, he was away on a trip with friends last October, enjoying the sights and sounds of the 'Great Western Railway' when he noticed one of his toes had become blackened. "**I thought it was just bruised – I'm on blood thinners – So I got one of my**



**medical colleagues of 45 years who was with me at the time to look at it. I went home immediately and through my GP, was referred to the Acute Specialist Assessment Unit at the Leeds General Infirmary and attended the following day."** Jeremy explains that a blocked artery was stopping the blood flow into his foot, causing gangrene. "**The gangrene was increasing – it would have killed me.**" An operation to take out a vein and re use it as an artery took 7 hours. Jeremy's 5<sup>th</sup> toe was also removed, leaving a cavity he describes as "**a hole the size of a pigeon's egg.**"

**Getting back on track:** Jeremy was discharged home on Friday 4 November, knowing that he would be visited by Locala's Podiatry team the following Monday. His wound was being treated by larvae therapy. This is when sterilised maggots (larvae) clean infected wounds by removing dead tissue and bacteria. The larvae are too young to lay eggs and are not left so long as to turn into flies. Jeremy had to contact the Community nursing team over that first weekend. "**The wound was so painful, I had to take the larvae dressing off. The district nurse came and redressed it. When the Podiatrists came, as planned, the next day, they restarted with the larvae therapy.**"

**Full steam ahead:** Jeremy is very positive about his experience with the Podiatry team. Within days of returning home, he suspected from his wound odour that an infection was starting and asked the Podiatry team to swab his wound. "**They took a swab and had the results within hours. It was brilliant!**" He adds, "**The single point of contact number was re-assuring to have and, in the event, spot on in its use.**" He continues, "**They have been attentive, they've been very, very good. Everything they did, organising the pathology request, restarting the larvae dressings, everything was spot on. Ian, Louise, Bernadette, they were all so lovely. Absolutely fantastic!**" He remembers Louise's reaction as the wound got better, "**She was thrilled!**"

**Healing:** Initially the Podiatry team treated Jeremy three times a week at home, reducing to two visits and then once a week. His wound has now largely healed and so, for the last three weeks, Jeremy has attended a podiatry clinic. Having helped so many patients in his career, Jeremy was asked how it was for him to be the patient! "**I had to behave myself! I had to do as I was told!**"