

Stories help describe what services do.

Every-day and ordinary, or life changing and extraordinary?

Marie's story March 2023

Service name: Cardiac Rehabilitation

Main purpose of service: Locala's Cardiac Rehabilitation team works with patients who are recovering from a heart attack or heart surgery. Cardiac Rehabilitation can make it possible for people to return to a full and active life. The team helps people re-gain confidence and the level of fitness they need, to do the everyday activities that matter to them.



About the person: Marie is 51 years old and works as a nurse. She was fit and well and didn't need to take any medications. One Friday night in May 2022 Marie's life was turned upside down when she had a heart attack.

Chest pain: Marie describes what happened, **"I went to bed exhausted. I was really tired. At 5.45 in the morning, I woke up with horrendous pain in my chest. I thought it may be something I'd eaten, and it was indigestion. Nothing cleared it. It got worse. Then I started with arm pain and I felt sick."** Marie rang 111 and was told to immediately go to Accident and Emergency. Tests confirmed that Marie had experienced a heart attack due to a blood clot. **"I was told it was a one-off event, but they did also find a leaky valve, which they are continuing to monitor for now."**

Rehabilitation: Marie was referred to the Cardiac Rehabilitation team and attended their exercise classes at the John Smith stadium in Huddersfield. She remembers how she felt before going to her first session. **"I was nervous, apprehensive. I wondered if I'd be the youngest."** She says that the group was made up of people of different ages. Both the team members and other patients were welcoming and supportive. **"We became like a little family! The group was lovely, we made a bond."** Marie was also impressed with the venue. **"The facilities are brilliant. It's a good environment."**

Cardiac Rehab team: Marie says she cannot speak highly enough of the team and because of their reassurance, she regained her confidence. **"It's their patience, their experience and knowledge."** Angela, one of the Cardiac Rehabilitation nurses made an impact. **"Angela is such an asset. She's like a mother figure! She's got the patience of a saint. I would sometimes say, 'I can't do it', so she would do it with me. She's got the humour to make you feel at ease."**

Thank you: Marie is about to return to work. **"I'm apprehensive but I'm ready. It's only thanks to Cardiac Rehab, they've given me my life back. I was in a rut. I was frightened to do things. I've got confidence to do things now."** Marie would like to send a **"big thank you"** to Angela and Helen. **"They've looked after me. I couldn't have done it without them."**

Marie spoke with Jo Vaughan on 21 March 2023 and gives consent to share her story widely.