

## Paul's story February 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 Paul:** Paul's health problems started 2 years ago. He experienced a severe headache, and his GP told him to go to hospital. **"I was very stressed. My Mum had just died. I was in agony and the headache wouldn't shift. I walked into hospital. I had a CT scan. I remember when it was done saying, 'Can I go home now?' They said, 'You're not going anywhere, you've got a bleed on your brain. I'd had a ruptured aneurysm."** He was admitted to Leeds General Infirmary and had surgery the next day.

**Surgery:** Paul says, **"It was a difficult time, it was still partial lockdown, so no one could be with me. I just rang everyone before I went down to theatre and told them I loved them. I knew I could die or end up in a wheelchair. It was strange when I came around from the anaesthetic – I saw my Mum and Dad sitting on a sofa smiling at me, and my Grandma sitting next to me. She died 20 years ago!"** Paul explains that he had **"weakness down my left side."** He feels **"lucky to be alive."**

**Recovery:** After 11 days, Paul was discharged home. He says he had a lot of support from his sister, who had experienced similar health problems 8 years earlier, so she really understood how he felt. He went to Dewsbury Hospital and had outpatient physiotherapy, **"Nathan was very good."**

**Confidence:** Paul says that although many people are kind and supportive, he has experienced members of the public who have been less patient. **"I was ordering a Coke at a bar and was struggling to get my words out. The bar staff said, 'Come on, I haven't got all day!"** This really knocked his confidence. His right eye often twitched, and he found this embarrassing too. He has also had some people doubt his story because he hasn't got a visible scar on his head. **"People don't realise this sort of thing is done by them going up your groin."** At first, he was reluctant to go outside. **"It was horrible at first. I bumped into a friend, and I didn't recognise them. And then I couldn't remember their name."**

**Making his home safer:** Paul met Hazel, one of the Assistant Practitioners in Locala's Community Rehabilitation Service. She came to his house so she could assess his needs at home. Hazel found that Paul struggled to safely use his shower and getting up from the toilet was difficult. Paul also found the stairs challenging. Hazel was able to provide a frame to go around the toilet and a plastic step to help Paul step into the bath to shower. She also organised grab rails for the bathroom and a shower board which means Paul can sit down to have a shower over the bath. Finally, Hazel requested a second banister rail from the Kirklees Accessible homes team. Paul says, **"It was good to be able to open up to her. She's lovely. From the first moment I met her, we could have a bit of a laugh. She's a really nice person."**