

Toby's story December 2023



Name of service: Adult Community Therapy Service

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 Toby: Toby met Joanne from Locala's Engagement team to talk about his experience with Jo, one of the physiotherapists from the Community Rehabilitation team. Toby is 20 years old and has cerebral palsy, is autistic and has learning disabilities. His passion is 1980's music and in particular music from the year 1986. He lives with his family and goes to college three days a week. Toby was referred to the service because of falls and his ankle splints (AFO's or Ankle Foot Orthoses) had become uncomfortable. Toby wears orthotics at night to prevent his ankles and feet from becoming stiff because of excessive tension in his muscles caused by Cerebral Palsy.

To find out more about Cerebral Palsy <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/cerebral-palsy/>

Mobility: Toby explains how Jo helped him. **"Jo is knowledgeable but relaxed at the same time."** She assessed Toby's mobility and recommended a 'U Step' walker. The design has an integral seat and is narrow at the back, so less likely to tip. Jo visited Toby both at home and at college to fully understand his needs. Toby says, **"I can fall over if stressed, so college can be a challenge."** The new walker stays at college and Toby has a different walker at home and sticks too.

Orthotics: Toby has a physiotherapy programme of exercises and stretches to do each day. Jo organised new orthotics that Toby wears outside his shoes and clothes and Toby says these are more comfortable.

Making connections: As well as working with Toby on his mobility and orthotic needs, Toby feels Jo helped him in other ways too. **"She's given a lot of variety over the last year. She's supported me mentally."** Jo told Toby all about 'Community Plus', a local organisation that aims to help people's wellbeing, including helping people connect with local groups and clubs. Toby says, **"I now go to Andy's Man's Club and Holmfirth Man's Club."** He feels more relaxed and less anxious. **"We have a laugh and can talk about mental health. It gives people a chance to talk about their mental health."** Toby explains that he **"has a lot of trust issues."** He appreciates that Jo understood this and took her time, so they could get to know each other better before she suggested 'Community Plus.' Toby says, **"I had to give it a go!"** To find out more about 'Community Plus.' <https://kirkleescommunityplus.co.uk/about-us/>

Future thoughts: When asked what Toby would like to be doing in five years' time, he says either an '80's music DJ' or an 'emotional support worker'. He is currently enjoying a college work placement at a Youth Club. **"I mentor and check how the kids are doing."** Thinking about Jo the physiotherapist, Toby finishes by saying, **"I appreciate her help – thank you from all of us. If I need to, I can get back in touch."**

Toby talked with Joanne Vaughan on 18.12.23. Toby and his Dad give consent for his story to be shared widely.