

This is a story told by a Bolton patient called Derek who suffered financial, physical and emotional abuse from his neighbour in early 2014 and received help and support from various NHS services and Shared Lives.

He would like to share his story –

“Back in 2001, I was the main carer for my mum until she went into a residential home. I was working at this time and decided to move out and get my own flat in a different part of Bolton.

Then in May 2014 I was taken to A&E by my nephew as I was having some problems with constipation. I was also having problems with my neighbour which was upsetting me a great deal, but didn't feel able to tell anyone about it. My family were really worried about me and knew something was wrong but didn't know what. The doctor in A&E noticed I had a bruised eye and started questioning me and I finally revealed that my neighbour was financially, physically and emotionally abusing me. As a result, A&E contacted Social Services and I started staying with my nephew and his beautiful family.

After a couple of weeks, I became really unwell and suffered a nervous breakdown. My family were really struggling and couldn't cope, so I was admitted to Hollands Care Home. I continued to not feel well and completely `shut down`. I wouldn't talk to anyone, wouldn't eat or drink, or maintain any eye contact with anyone. I then unfortunately became aggressive, so I was admitted to K2 ward at Royal Bolton Hospital.

Then in July that year, I started to feel better and was discharged back to Hollands Care Home. In November 2014, my social worker decided I should be referred to Shared Lives for a long term placement, as I was starting to get better but I wasn't ready to live on my own. I was introduced to a family in Farnworth and started to live with them for about six months. This really helped me but that placement had to end in December 2015.

I was then introduced to the family I still live with and I'm very happy and settled there. Being part of the family life has been so crucial to my recovery and I feel so much more confident, happy, and outgoing. I don't have to take as much medication any more, and I get to spend plenty of time with my family, going on caravan holidays and going out. My life is so much happier and more active now. I'm not quite ready to live on my own yet, but I'm getting better every day and will be able to one day soon.

I want to thank everyone who has helped me! From the doctor in A&E who spotted that I was in desperate need of help, to the great staff at Shared Lives.”

Note:

Shared Lives at Bolton is a registered adult placement scheme offering –

- long term placements
- short term breaks
- placements to enable people to move into independent living

Shared Lives at Bolton delivers a range of services across Bolton through a network of assessed and approved adult placement carers. The service promotes the strengths and abilities of each individual and enables them to share in family and community life. They offer services to vulnerable people over the age of 18 who may have a learning disability, a mental health problem or a physical disability, and to older people. Some young people leaving care are also eligible to receive a service.

This service is registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC).