

July Trust Board – Mrs A’s Story

July’s Trust Board patient story was told by Kathryn Bond, Highly Specialist Speech and Language Therapist in Dysfluency.

It was about Mrs A’s experience of using the Speech and Language Therapy Dysfluency service.

Mrs A was experiencing low self-esteem, a lack of confidence and self-belief due to the effects the stammer was having on her life. Mrs A believes that the therapy she received has changed her way of thinking about stammering and the way in which she perceives herself.

Prior to being discharged from the service, the speech and language therapist compared Mrs A’s final assessment with her first one. This revealed how much positive progress had been made during the therapy sessions.

Patient A said: “I have changed drastically in my way of thinking and how I perceive myself. I am now certain I will be able to cope and move on forward with my life with confidence, knowing exactly who I am, where I belong and what career path to take and if I ever struggle or need guidance I know exactly where to go and who to see.

“I feel I am a better woman because of my incredible therapist. I finally believe in myself and I believe I am able to do anything I want to and I will no longer let my stammer control my life. Thanks to my amazing therapist I have come to accept that my stammer is part of me, part of my own identity”.

The following key points were highlighted during the Board discussion:

- Stammering has a primarily neurological cause (there are other factors) and is a result of timing differences in messaging between different parts of the brain that are needed to make speech. There is a genetic link in some families. The Trust is planning to find out whether any neurological studies are being undertaken which we can participate in.
- A key aim of the therapy is to reduce the negative impact that stammering has on people’s lives by challenging their negative thoughts and unhelpful behaviours (usually avoidance of talking). For some people this indirectly has a positive impact on their stammer. The therapist said she had received psychological training to enable her to do this effectively;
- The service works alongside interpreters to support those people who do not speak English. It has also established a parent group which aims to reassure anxious parents, to help them understand and accept their child’s stammer and to provide helpful advice.

- The Speech and Language team also works with people of all ages who have difficulty with swallowing.

Find out more about [the Care Trust's Speech and Language Therapy service.](#)