



Priory Hospital Solihull

Robert's story

Robert* had been involved in mental health services for a number of years prior to coming to Priory Hospital Solihull. He'd had admissions into various establishments, including secure services, acute services and rehabilitation and recovery services.

Prior to his first diagnosis, Robert had been an able man working full time in a meaningful job. He had worked for a period of time in national services and then left following an incident. He found it difficult to come to terms with this emotionally, despite being cleared of any wrongdoing. On leaving this employment, Robert got married and had a son. A few years later, he was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis (MS). A number of physical surgical procedures left Robert less able to look after himself physically or enjoy the sports he previously enjoyed. His physical health eventually led to the use of a wheelchair and increased dependence on others.

As Robert tried to adapt to the changes in his life, his marriage broke down following a deterioration in his mental state. He increasingly had depressive episodes and these often led to attempts on his own life. A number of hospital admissions eventually led Robert to Solihull.

Robert continued to have contact with his family but these were irregular due to his own difficulties. He had a desire to move out of hospital but this was often inconsistent with the way in which he presented.

It was extremely important for Robert to be involved in all the decisions made around his care, as he felt he had so little control over anything else in his life. On good days, Robert would engage in conversations and we began to get a sense of the person behind the illness. Opportunities were created for him to gain levels of independence. He was encouraged to use his section 17 leave to purchase his own items as he needed them. During his stay here, he was able to go from being transported everywhere in the car, to using the bus and transporting himself in his wheelchair.

Robert enjoyed cooking and proved to be very able in the kitchen. He was encouraged to use his skills to cook items of his choice. We felt it was important for him to engage in activities that he felt were meaningful to him. Over the course

of his stay, his carrot cake became a favourite of staff and patients, and he would bake one for every occasion on request.

Eighteen months into his stay at the hospital, Robert became an informal patient. He was extremely pleased with this and felt like he finally had some control over his life again.

We spent time working with him to reassure him of his worth and engage him in activities at his pace. For periods of time, he would end up on enhanced observations but these were discussed regularly with him and were eventually reduced carefully by the multidisciplinary team. We wanted to balance his need to feel safe with giving him the responsibility of managing his own safety. Together, we were able to identify the times of the day he found difficult. This meant putting in plans for enhanced observations at high risk times and reducing them at others, to enable him to eventually manage this himself.

During his period of being informal, he was able to think about planning quality time with his son. Robert engaged fully with the risk assessments, how he was going to manage trips away, how he would manage if he became unwell whilst he was away, and the process around returning to Solihull.

A flat that suited his needs became available, so we were able to involve Robert in this move. He was so excited to gain his independence once more and he was involved in planning his own leaving party from Solihull.

Contact us

To contact Priory's central team, please call **0800 090 1356** or to speak to someone at the hospital directly, please call **01676 525 050**.

For the most up to date information on our services, please visit our website.