

## **Terry**

Terry was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, where he went to a school for Deaf children. Following this he worked in a garage. His family did not use British Sign Language. Terry moved to Coventry aged 20, then Rugby where he worked as a builder for 4 years, but health issues caused him to leave this job. Terry has medical problems with his heart, throat, and knee. He has had an endoscopy, an MRI, and blood tests.

Both of Terry's brothers used to help him but have sadly passed away.

Terry funds his own support and tells us that some support is too expensive. He gets help from a Personal Assistant with letters he receives, appointments he needs to make, three-way video calls with services following texts to his PA. He is very surprised that there is no communication support for him to access at his Job Centre.

Terry tells us he is really not sure what he would do in case of an emergency if his PA were not available to help him communicate.

## **GP and hospital care**

Hospitals and GPs have tried contacting Terry by telephone, which he cannot respond to. Terry has given written consent for his PA to speak on his behalf. Neither hospitals nor GPs have asked him what types of communication method he would prefer. Terry's notes say he is Deaf and he would prefer to communicate through texts.

Terry is frustrated that he sees 'a different GP each time', despite asking for the same one, as he feels it would be much better to avoid constant repeating of his problems, he tells us 'they don't know me'.

Lots of the letters Terry receives are for hospital appointment cancellations, this is very frustrating for Terry as it means delays to his treatment but also because he finds it difficult to understand the written communications. He feels that he has poor communication with hospitals, leading to long waits often due to no interpreter, although feels that things are fine when an interpreter attends.

Terry has used Coventry, Rugby and Nuneaton Hospitals and has travelled to appointments by car and now by bus. He feels that hospitals don't care about Deaf people and that waiting for interpreters to be available is a waste of time. Terry is frustrated that patients can be threatened with a fine for not turning up to appointments but doesn't see any consequences when the interpreters don't turn up and feels that hospitals should complain about interpreters not attending appointments when they have been booked.

He tells us of one occasion when he was experiencing chest pain. His GP tested his heart rate, saying 'you're having a heart attack, drive to the hospital.' Terry drove from Rugby to Coventry. When the heart attack was confirmed, a hospital stay of 7 days followed, during which time Terry did not have an interpreter. He was given tablets and injections and didn't understand what the medication was. After being fitted with a stent he was then sent home without communicating through an interpreter. He removed his own bandages 'and bled everywhere.'

Terry has never complained to the NHS about his care as he didn't know how to do it and was concerned that the complaint might affect his care.

### **Assistive technology**

Terry is not aware of any hospital trying to arrange a video interpreter and tells us that the Wi-Fi inside hospitals can be poor, stopping him from being able to use his mobile.

He has experience of using Sign Live to access a GP and his PA texts him about assistive technology, so he has tried a few different ones.

### **Dentist**

To get dental treatment Terry would have previously taken his brother for support (he jokes that he is a little scared of the dentist). In more recent times his PA would book an appointment and attend with him. Terry found his last dentist visit too expensive so probably won't go back and didn't know that he could have an interpreter booked for him there. Terry is not currently on a patient list and doesn't know where to go now for a dentist which he worries about.

### **Optician**

When Terry needed to see an optician, his PA phoned them to book an interpreter, staff at the opticians had never booked an interpreter before, and asked whether Terry or his PA could bring one. They were unaware of their responsibilities for booking the interpreter.

Terry tells us that he does worry about his health. He appreciates that he needs medication but needs help to understand what the medication he is taking is for and what possible side effects there could be.