



Introducing our new Peer Champion, Patricia!

“Meeting up with you was the first thing I did to get out and about...”

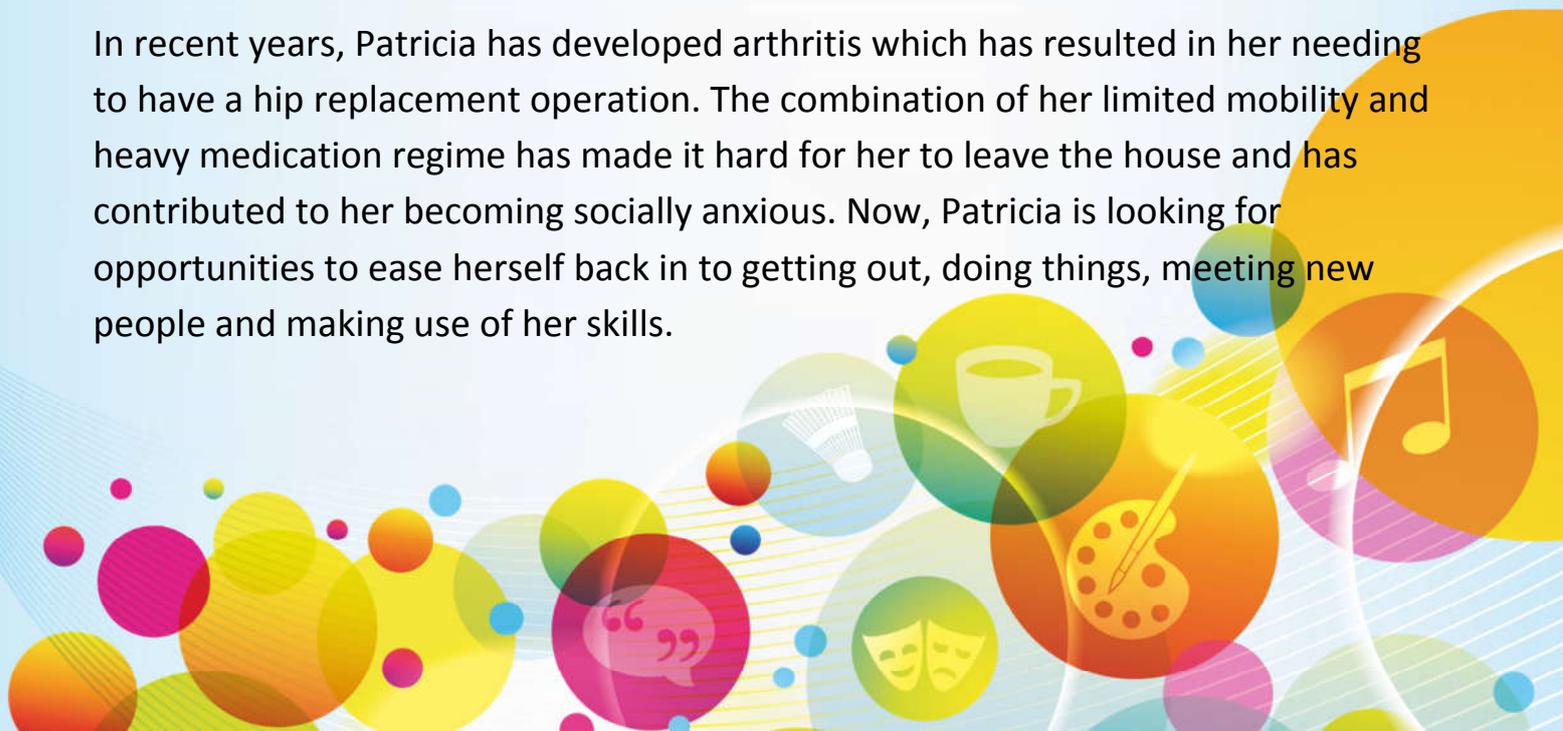


“In the past, other groups made me feel like I was a patient. You made me feel like I was worthy of doing something!”

A bit of background...

Patricia is a former secondary school teacher and head of year. She has a massive range of skills and experience after teaching Art & Design Technology, Art, Textiles, Religious Education and Personal, Social and Health Education. She has been successful in writing fundraising applications for school projects and would like to apply these skills in an effort to help local homeless charities in the future. Patricia loves painting and crafts and reads lots of books in her spare time.

In recent years, Patricia has developed arthritis which has resulted in her needing to have a hip replacement operation. The combination of her limited mobility and heavy medication regime has made it hard for her to leave the house and has contributed to her becoming socially anxious. Now, Patricia is looking for opportunities to ease herself back in to getting out, doing things, meeting new people and making use of her skills.



Getting involved with BIK...

Patricia was referred to Better in Kirklees through her GP, to help her improve her wellbeing by getting out of the house more and meeting new people. Patricia was supported by Nazia, one of the BIK Wellbeing Workers, and when she expressed an interest in doing some volunteering Nazia told her all about our Peer Champion programme. Patricia was interested in sharing her skills and lived experiences of health conditions to help others.

The benefits...

Patricia is building her confidence all the time and is now helping out with minute taking at the Better in Kirklees community network meetings.

What next?

Through Better in Kirklees, Patricia heard about an opportunity to become a Community Arthritis Champion with Arthritis Care UK. She plans to run drop-in sessions across Kirklees to offer support and advice and share her experiences of living with arthritis.



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