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DATE

September 4, 2021

DURATION

5m 6s

2 SPEAKERS

Interviewer

D

START OF TRANSCRIPT

[00:00:02] Interviewer

Including during the time when your partner were- was fighting against HIV, have you had much contact with the Health Service? That you find- how do you find the Health Service in general?

[00:00:15] D

The Health Service were very, very good, yeah, they helped me tremendously, you know, I can't praise them enough, I got very vigorous support from the medics, from the consultant, from social services, from the district nurses. Yeah, the support was very, very good. I was amazed. Yeah.

[00:00:41] Interviewer

Even back then.

[00:00:41] D

That helped me to pull through, yeah, it helped me out tremendously. Yeah, that was my support. They were my main support. Yeah. Yeah.

[00:01:00] Interviewer

But compared to then, which is about over 20 years ago, do you see different parts of this - not just the Health Service - different parts of service providers improved in any way?

[00:01:19] D

I don't think it has, not really. I don't think- if that happened to me- what happened to me today would have had the same support as we got 20 years ago. We got very, very good support, you know. Now- I mean the consultant used to visit my partner at home, I don't think they do that now. We got the district nurses used to come in to look after him. That would be very difficult now, I think, you know. In fact I was just talking to one of the nurses who looked after him the other day and she happened to say "you wouldn't get this now, it wouldn't happen".

[00:02:11] Interviewer

Why is that?

[00:02:13] D

I think why it wouldn't happen is because of the budget, of course. It's all to do with budget now, isn't it? Cut backs. Yeah.

[00:02:28] Interviewer

But when you were running the support groups during that time, so that's up until about 2000, isn't it-

[00:02:35] D

That's right. Yeah, we did get a grant from the government then, from the local council. I don't think that would happen now. The grants were all cut back. I think that was one reason why the group folded in was I think the grant, from what I remember, the grant was discontinued. And in all fairness the need wasn't the same, you know.

[00:03:02] Interviewer

What do you mean 'the need wasn't the same'?

[00:03:05] D

Well, the people with HIV didn't have the same- didn't meet the same needs. At the time, it all changed, they got medication, they were living longer, they were able to go to work, and live quite a normal life, really. Yeah.

[00:03:28] Interviewer

So, if someone is diagnosed with HIV today in Cumbria, if they want to go to a support group, where would they go?

[00:03:40] D

Well there's not- there's nowhere locally that I'm aware of, probably get in touch with the Terrence Higgins Trust. They're a national concern, aren't they. They would probably help them. Not that I'm aware of, there's no local support, not now. So it could be the support group did a good thing of its time, we had as many as, we had our 12 volunteers at one time. We still had about 15 to 20 clients on our books who we were supporting at that time, you know, and people were dying then [clock chime] we were quite involved, not only with the ones that were were dying but with the families as well, which is equally as important.

[00:04:36] Interviewer

And you'd do that continued support after the person died as well?

[00:04:41] D

That's right. Yeah. Yeah, I still do see people who are infected- were infected 20 years ago, who were part of- who were clients in the support group, and I still see them just as friends, visit them.

END OF TRANSCRIPT



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