NHS
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Patient Case Study: Cardiac Rehabilitation Team

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ABOUT OUR PATIENT

Ray lives in Ilkley with his wife Winifred. They have been married for 30 years and have 7 children between them, 22 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren. Ray was diagnosed with vascular dementia in 2015 and recently suffered a heart attack.

Ray's heart attack was treated with medication rather than surgery and when the cardiac nurse visited him at home, he was invited to join the cardiac rehabilitation programme at Airedale Hospital, an 8 week course of 16 sessions which includes circuit training to build fitness and confidence.

WHAT OUR PATIENT AND HIS WIFE SAY

Winifred says: "Not only have I noticed a great improvement in his strength and physical fitness, but also in his whole well-being and he looked so happy taking part in the class, I was allowed to follow him around the circuit to fill his form in for him as he gets very confused so that was a great help to him and helped me to see what he was capable of.

We really miss the class and this is all down to the staff and the way that everyone is treated individually. Also there is always someone to help and give advice if you have a question.

For myself, going to the class and talking to the nurses and physiotherapist has made me feel less anxious and worried that another attack is imminent so I am now allowing him to do some of his usual jobs around the house and garden, while keeping an eye on him and how he is feeling."

Ray says: "I enjoyed it, although I didn't want to go at first. I wasn't sure what to expect. But when I went I was happy and enjoyed it."

WHAT WE DO

The exercise class is just one of the many services we provide for patients as part of our cardiac rehabilitation service. The classes are held either in the hospital, at Keighley Leisure Centre or in Skipton, depending on where the patient lives. We do a clinical assessment and they start the 8 week course of 16 sessions. It includes circuit training with 10 different exercise stations. They start off at the first level which is 1 minute on each exercise leading up to level 4 which is 2 minutes, so that doesn't sound a lot but it builds up to 20 minutes of cardio exercise.

Our patients have a sheet they fill in with an exertion score. We aim for patients to work to an intensity that they feel a little bit puffed. It's also a guide to us of how they are feeling. There is also a target heart rate that the physiotherapist calculates, that's an individual thing so they can take that away with them. The physio takes into account a patient's resting heart rate, their age and their medication. So if someone is on a beta blocker for example, which would slow the heart rate down, they need to take that into account when they calculate the intensity scores. It is all individualised for each patient.

The aim of the cardiac rehabilitation exercise programme is ultimately to improve heart fitness, however what we do find is many patients improve their wellbeing in general. Alongside the rest of our service carers are included to help the patients take control of their own health and build in confidence with our support.