

LIVING WITH MIGRAINE



It can be difficult to accept when it affects my life so severely

TELL US ABOUT YOU AND YOUR LIFE

I'm Amanda and I'm 36. I live with my partner and children in Aberdeenshire. I am an avid reader, classically trained choral singer and sports enthusiast.

HOW HAS HAVING MIGRAINE IMPACTED YOUR LIFE?

I had become accustomed to living with chronic pain and managing the condition myself.

I have suffered from chronic migraine for the last 6 years.

I can often be absent from work if having a particularly bad migraine attack, and regularly miss out on family activities.

This affects not only me, but also my family members who rely on me for support.

It can often take days to recover from a bad migraine attack, so even though the pain has gone, I am not able to function at 100%.

HOW WAS YOUR CONDITION MANAGED PREVIOUSLY?

- I relied on over-the-counter remedies such as paracetamol and ibuprofen.
- My migraine comes with nausea, sensitivity to noise, light, and smell, as well as tiredness and brain fog, so I often have to sleep to feel better.
- I was prescribed two preventative treatments and an acute treatment. I had to change the acute treatment as it became less effective, with nausea and vomiting having an impact on this.

WHAT HAS CHANGED AND WHY DID THIS CHANGE OCCUR?



- I attended the webinar which provided me with information on treatment options, self-management and accessing support.
- It gave me reassurance that my self-management techniques were appropriate and provided me with medication combinations I could try during an acute attack, as well as when to take my medication.
- I had a medication review with my GP practice following the webinar, and the healthcare professional I'd spoken to had also been in attendance.
- I was advised that I would meet the eligibility criteria for a new acute treatment, and alternative painkiller choices for acute treatment.

HOW HAS THIS CHANGE IMPACTED YOUR LIFE?

- My migraine has reduced to one migraine in 1-2 weeks rather than 2+ every week and significantly improved my quality of life.
- My work has been less affected by my migraine attacks and I am able to enjoy more time headache free with my family.
- I had a recent increase in migraine attacks but having more awareness of preventative treatment options I contacted my GP practice for advice.

“The increased awareness about treatment options and support has made me feel like I don't have to suffer in silence”

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TELL US ABOUT YOU AND YOUR LIFE

I'm 54 years old and work as the practise manager in a large GP surgery. I have a large family and a fairly busy social life and enjoy walking my dogs and sports like tennis.

HOW HAS HAVING MIGRAINE IMPACTED YOUR LIFE?

Migraine has had a big impact on my life. Having to take at least day out of my life to deal with the effect of migraine, often a second day 2 in the after effect continues to affect my day-to-day life.

HOW WAS YOUR CONDITION MANAGED PREVIOUSLY?

Before I took part in the project's focus group in July 2023, my migraine was mainly managed by medication.

WHAT HAS CHANGED AND WHY DID THIS CHANGE OCCUR?

Since attending the focus group, I now have more of an awareness of triggers and signs that a migraine is imminent and them able to deal more effectively with my migraine. Still usually with medication but also changing my lifestyle and working life.

HOW HAS THIS CHANGE IMPACTED YOUR LIFE?

I found it beneficial to talk with others, some with much worse migraine experiences than mine. This helped me to identify triggers to my migraines and just make me much more aware of symptoms to look out for. By talking to others and sharing experiences I noticed that there are signs that I'm getting a migraine they hadn't identified before.



This is positively impacted my life. My migraine do not take as long to get over, therefore not impacting so much in my day-to-day life

A COMMUNITY PHARMACISTS MIGRAINE MANAGEMENT

BEFORE THE ELEARNING AND WORKSHOPS

- Before undergoing the eLearning and workshops, I would have felt uneasy and unconfident in dealing with this situation.
- My primary concern would have been the fear of missing any red flag symptoms, such as the possibility of a more serious underlying condition like a brain tumor or aneurysm.
- Due to this lack of confidence and my limited knowledge, I would have opted to refer the patient directly to her GP rather than attempting to manage the situation myself.



“The patient would have left the pharmacy without any immediate relief, needing to wait for a GP appointment. Although this approach was safe, it didn’t fully utilise the scope of my practice as a pharmacist. It also didn’t provide the patient with the timely support and intervention that could have potentially managed her headache more effectively”

EXPERIENCE ENGAGING WITH RESOURCES

The eLearning modules were instrumental in broadening my understanding of migraine.

They provided:

- comprehensive information on symptoms
- treatment options
- the latest guidelines.

The interactive elements and quizzes helped reinforce my learning, making complex concepts more accessible and understandable.

The workshops were particularly beneficial for hands-on learning.

- They were designed to be interactive and open, which was incredibly beneficial.
- The setting encouraged open dialogue, allowing participants to ask any questions we had, no matter how basic or complex.
- This openness helped to clear up many uncertainties I had about managing migraine, particularly regarding the identification of red flag symptoms.
- Having direct access to clinicians who specialise in migraine was invaluable. They provided detailed explanations of migraine pathophysiology, differential diagnosis, and the latest treatment protocols.

THE POSITIVE IMPACT ON MY PRACTICE HAS MOTIVATED ME TO ADVOCATE FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN MIGRAINE MANAGEMENT AND SHARE MY LEARNINGS WITH COLLEAGUES.