

Case Study: June 2023

The Lived Experience of Larissa Bennett



The Lived Experience of Larissa Bennett

Larissa has a diagnosis of ADHD and shared with Healthwatch Stockton-on-Tees her experiences and positive changes that could be made to help others experiencing the same challenges in the community.

Currently there is approximately a five-year waiting list for an assessment, with secondary support such as counselling offered during this period this. Larissa feels that this is adding to the already stretched capacity within Mental Health Services

While waiting for diagnosis Larissa looked online for support and found that information was confusing and written in a format that was difficult for a person with ADHD to gain information easily. Currently there are no leaflets available for advice either before or after diagnosis and Larissa feels this would have been enormously helpful for both her, friends, family, and carers.

“The symptoms of ADHD can often lead to isolation as its quite often a struggle to maintain relationships. Therefore, mental health issues can develop through lack of support during a crucial time.”

Larissa strongly feels that if the right support had been available at the beginning, her mental health issues may have not developed at all.

Medication is often prescribed following confirmation of diagnosis but is not always suitable for everyone. Although medication may help with symptom's, isolation remains a major factor. For those who medication would be beneficial there is the five-year wait until diagnosis with the delay having a negative effect on people's wellbeing and mental health.

Larissa feels that ADHD testing completed in schools would have made a big difference to her life and thinks that this could be a positive change for the future.

“No diagnosis can leave you feeling that there is something wrong with you and not able to ‘fit in’.”

Larissa feels early diagnosis would allow for the right support to be put in to place at the appropriate stages. This in turn may prevent mental health problems and possibly reduce crime with a lot of people remaining undiagnosed.

Larissa is passionate about making positive changes including developing a support group so people can share their experiences and gain information with or without an official diagnosis. Aiming to reduce isolation and create a more supported ADHD community.

Have you had similar experiences; would you like to join Larissa and share your experiences?

Please get in touch with your name and contact details. We look forward to hearing from you.

[Contact Us](#)