

Participant F16

I: Okay. So the voice recorder is on now. So we just want to start from the very beginning, I guess, with your involvement in the NERS programme. So we're interested in understanding people's experiences of when they were invited onto the programme, and what works well, what could have been improved. So could you talk me through that, so right at the very start of the programme, how you found out about it and then what happened from there?

R: Right, okay. Well, I have partici-...taken part in this type of thing before, over the years. I had a GP referrer, because I had problems with my [joints]. And originally I did [therapy], and that was very good, and I did the complete course. But then after the course, then you're sort of left to your own devices. It was great whilst it was a group session, and I made arrangements for every... To go on a certain and a certain time, and people just didn't turn up. And it just wasn't the same when you did it on your own, and you didn't have the same motivation, because you had no one sort of pushing you, or... And I did that, and then I had a [procedure]. And then I had a [procedure] let me think now, it's 20-... In 2018 I had a [procedure], and then the following year, around the same time I had a [health event].

I: Oh, okay.

R: And I'd done the ten-week rehabilitation course after having the [health event], where everybody talks in the session, and you do a little bit of exercise. And then I was asked whether I wanted to participate again, on the GP referral, in our local sports centre. So I agreed to that. Very dubious, at first, because I was a bit worried after having the [procedure]. By this time, I hadn't had that [health event], I started it prior to that. And it was just in the class, and we went around the various things you have to do, and it was okay. I turned up most weeks, but some weeks that I wasn't well enough to go. Originally, I couldn't even get up on the bike, but after a couple of weeks I had to... Obviously, after the [procedure] it took a while for me to have the confidence to get up on the bike, and do various things. And then I had the [health event], and then, as I said, I did the ten weeks there, and that was in the... Oh, when was that? September '19. And then, of course, I didn't go back and start again. But I think - oh, I can't remember, this was... This would have been a year last January. So I'm trying to think whether I went back. I think I went back for a few classes at the sports centre, at our local sports centre.

And then, of course, there was a while and then it went digitally. So I did join in the Zoom classes, and it was every week. But I was trying to exercise myself, prior to that anyway, like exercising at home and going for walks around the garden. But I don't know, it just wasn't the same digitally as going to a class. I did sort of enjoy it in the beginning, but there was various reasons then that I was... Like I had [health problem], so then I couldn't do it for a couple of weeks. And then I joined back in because he said, well, just do it when you can. But then that was flaring, the [health problem], back up again. And then I had problems with my [joint], so then I couldn't do it again, and it just went on like that until the end, that I kept on missing. And in the end I said, oh look, until I feel a lot, lot better, it's pointless me carrying on. And he said, well, just pick up whenever you can, and I never really picked up.

Now I have problems sort of with my [joint], so doing the weight, the things with the weights had [?become 05:52] progressively more difficult. I couldn't - I've got... I've just been given [aid] by Occupational Therapy, so actually holding things; I drop things all the time, and I decided to kick it into touch in the end, although I did enjoy it.

But I think if it started when this coronavirus is over, if it starts back up again, I'll probably do a [therapy]. It was just easier on my joints, doing [therapy]. But I do have a bit of an allergy, but I [?cope 06:41] with that. I just felt that that was most of it did... To sort of my health problems, but...

I: So... Sorry, continue.

R: So if I could, I'd do that, but then it means travelling 11 miles a few times a week, and because sometimes I have trouble [unclear 07:10] and I don't drive, so it means my husband has to take me. So it involves him as well, but he doesn't really mind as long as he's not... He works part-time, so as long as he's not working, that's fine. Because when I went in there to do the exercise, he went for a walk as well, so it did him good three times a week, because he went for a walk for over an hour, three times a week. But I think it's really good for people to exercise, it's just that when you're not feeling well, just the thought of having to do it, even if it's just an hour, once or twice a week, when you're feeling that way and there are things wrong with you, you're just not up to it.

I: Okay. So it seems like you've had quite a lot of experience over the years with the NERS programme, over multiple different reasons. So the [joint] problems, and then you were referred to the NERS, and you did some [therapy] and then you had the [joint] problem. And, similarly, you went back and had some support from the NERS there. And then when you had your [health event], you were referred to a [secondary care team] and they did a ten-week programme with you there.

R: Yes.

I: Okay. I just wanted to make sure I'd got all of that correct.

R: Yeah. I've actually got to have two [procedures], and two [procedures]. My [joint], I know because I had [health problem]. But I can tell by the pain and the way it is, I can tell by the way my back is that it's getting worse. When I had the last lot of x-rays, within a couple of months of having the [procedure] done, I was told that I was nearly bone-on-bone, and that I would have to have the [procedure] in the next few years. It's not at that point there yet. I've still got an awful lot of pain. I still have pains in my [body part], and my [joint]. But I can't walk far. I can't stand for long. I can't sit for long. So the old familiar sort of things that are coming back. I've got [health problem], so the lower back pain is a constant. And then sometimes when I exercise, I'm buggered for the rest of the day, I'm not right for the rest of the day after I've done it, obviously. But we were doing it on a - I think it was a Monday, on a... I think it was on a Monday. Oh no, I'm trying to think, a Tuesday, I think, and a Thursday.

And, of course, it's either Tuesday - yes, I know it was like just a day in between. Well, of course, I didn't get over doing it for the one day, before we were doing it another day again,

if you get what I mean? So I do it on a Tuesday, and sort of getting over it on the Wednesday and then we were back into it again on the Thursday, so I often only did it once a week because of that reason, because it would flare things up.

I: Okay.

R: So I think if it's somebody, like my neighbour, she had a heart attack and had three stents fitted, so they sort of... What was wrong, they sort of sorted it out for her, but she's got no other problems, no other health problems. She'd never been ill throughout her life, and then she had this heart attack and she was very, very depressed after it, and she couldn't believe that she'd had a heart attack. But she had been a heavy smoker, and she'd got on with it great, and she's going really well at it. And she tried yoga - I tried yoga, and I ended up not being able to walk for a couple of days. So any sort of not the norm with me, sort of flares things up a bit, except for when I was doing the [therapy], because you're supported in the water. But I wanted to give it a go, and I wanted to carry on doing it. I have another neighbour who has a heart attack, and she's also got COPD and she's got polymyalgia. And I've got [health problem], but I haven't got... I've got - I haven't got COPD, but I've got [health problem]. And I've got [health problem]. But she doesn't do exercise at all, she just stays in bed all the time.

That, to me, is wrong, and she hasn't been on any exercise programmes at all, but at least I have tried. I have gone to [therapy]. I have been to pain - to pain clinics over the years, where it's gentle exercise, and they just go into the psyche of pain. But, at the end of the day, pain is pain and it doesn't matter how much exercise you do to support it, sometimes it helps and sometimes it just doesn't. Those things are wrong with you, and it doesn't matter, really, how much exercise you do. It does make you more mobile, but it doesn't sort of make the pain really any better. And, in fact, with me, it flares it up a bit. And...

I: So... Sorry.

R: Go on.

I: So when you were referred to the NERS, what were you expecting to get out of the programme, I guess, when you were initially referred? Was it to do with your pain, or was it another reason?

R: Well, one to get me out of the house, I suppose, because I was getting a little bit reclusive. After the [procedure], I tended not to go out a lot. I lost quite a bit of confidence, and definitely lost a lot of confidence after having the [health event]. And the fact that they don't know what caused the [health event]; it wasn't like a normal [health event]. I had an [procedure], but my [body part] fine, although I was very ill on the table when they did the [procedure]. I thought I'd had a [health event] when I had the [procedure], but they said, no, but I was in agony when I had it done. I didn't have the injection beforehand, because I thought I'd... The sedative, I thought I would be okay without it, but I was in absolute agony when they gave me the [procedure]. And they think that a bubble went up with the camera, and that's what caused the terrible pain in my chest and down my arms, and in my jaw.

And then I had a massive [health event] when they tried to take my blood pressure, so they couldn't find anything. They said my [body part] were tip-top. I didn't need [procedure], I didn't need [procedure]. They still don't know what caused the [health event]. They think it could have been a [health event]. Or it could have been the [health event] - because I've got [health condition], it could have been the [health condition], that was causing the [health event]. It could have been the [drugs] that was causing the [health event]. In other words, they don't know.

I: When you were having all of these issues, and then you went to the GP and got referred to the NERS programme, what would they...? When the GP referred you...

R: Well, I wasn't having those problems then, because it was after I had the [procedure] that they referred me. I had the [procedure], and I never heard from anybody for three weeks, and I should have, apparently. They'd asked me what I'd been doing and she said, you should have been doing those things. And I said, well, nobody told me I shouldn't have. Apparently, the one hospital, never told me at the hospital when I did the ten weeks, that I'd been... But I'd left hospital, and they thought I was still there.

I: Oh. So you were referred after your [procedure], and no one contacted you for three weeks?

R: No, sorry, after the [health event], yeah, nobody contacted me for three weeks.

I: About the NERS programme?

R: No. About doing the ten weeks after the [health event].

I: Okay. And was the ten weeks after the [health event], not the NERS programme then?

R: The programme we're talking about now is the one in the [hospital]?

I: It's the National Exercise Referral Scheme.

R: Right, that's the one in the sports centre, yes.

I: Yes, the sports centre.

R: Right. After I had my [health event], I never heard off anybody for three weeks, okay? And then I had a phone call off a nurse in the [hospital], our local... Well, one of our local hospitals, to ask how I was going, and did I want you to take part in this ten-week rehabilitation at the hospital. And he just asked me, generally, how I was doing and what I was doing, blah-blah-blah. They said I need to see my GP after the [health event], and I said, no, I was just discharged from hospital. I wasn't actually told anything, and I wasn't given a leaflet. I was just discharged, given my medication and that was it. And I said, I never heard from anybody and I felt a bit like a forgotten person. And she said that they had picked it up, because they just double-checked because I'd went... I'd gone into the [hospital] first, and then was transferred after the scan to [hospital] for an angiogram. And she said that I should have seen my doctor after a fortnight, and I shouldn't have been doing this, I shouldn't have been doing that. I'd even driven, and they said that I shouldn't have driven for a month and

my insurance never covered me. So there was a bit of confusion there. But then I started this programme after ten weeks, and then I was asked to join the NERS by [?by then 22:56].

I: By whom, sorry?

R: By the hospital.

I: Okay. And when the - so after your ten-week rehabilitation, you were referred on to the NERS?

R: Yeah, I think it was Christmas then, and January. Because, of course, I had to go back, I think once or twice after Christmas there, and then I think they waited a little while then, and then they said would I like to take part in the sports centre. I'd actually been and done it with my mother.

I: Oh, I see.

R: Because my mother had had [*health event*].

I: Okay.

R: That would have been 1990.

I: Okay. And had she done the programme?

R: Yes, and I went with her.

I: Oh, I see.

R: You see, she didn't want to go on her own, because she was 70, and she'd had [*health event*]. But she decided that she would do it, and I went with her then and I thought, oh, you know? But then I was fit; I wasn't - I was younger and I was fitter, so I thought it was a good idea for her to do that, and I think half the time I did it with her to encourage her.

I: So when you went this time around in December, January, last year, it would have been 2019, December; 2020, January?

R: Yes.

I: Yes. When you were referred from the hospital, how did they describe the programme to you? What were your expectations of the programme, at that point, so when you were initially going into it? How did that...?

R: Just that it was exercise to help my [*body part*], to make myself fitter. I think, meant to be as well when you exercise, obviously, that helps. And I just thought that it was a good idea if I could do it, to do it. I wanted to get better, and get over the [*health event*].

I: Yeah. And did you speak to any of your friends or family about going onto it, and were they supportive about it?

R: Yes, they were, yes. My husband thought it was a good idea, and my daughter's husband was a fitness trainer, a personal trainer, and he thought it was a good idea to do it. But, as I said, I was a bit tentative in the first... Some people - it was for people who had... I thought it was for all people who simply had [*specific health event*], but there were people in my area where I lived, who had had [*procedures*], or whatever, but none of them were there. So I was like the newbie to the class, if you get what I mean? Some of the people that were going, had been going for a very long time.

I: **How did that make you feel when you were going in, and feeling like you were the new person?**

R: A little bit, I didn't know what I was doing, and some were so good at doing the things, I felt a little bit sort of I wasn't as good as them, and I couldn't keep up with them. If you get what I mean? Because I was out there at a different phase. Do you know what I mean? And some people would go in for other things, other than just [*health event*]. And I'm talking about my neighbour now, and she had a [*health event*] two years before me, so she was going great guns, and nothing seemed a problem to her. Whereas I was having problems even getting on the bike.

I: **And was the exercise professional - how were they? Did you talk to them about how you were feeling? Were they supportive, and tried to help you, or what was the relationship like?**

R: Well, he was - yeah, he was very supportive and he was saying I'm not... That I had just started and not to overtax myself, and it didn't matter that I couldn't go on the bike. And then I sat down on a chair then and did the things, like it was the things on the floor and you put your feet in?

I: **Mm-mm.**

R: So I did that instead. But, of course, because I had started having problems in my hands a bit then, and you had to hold on to these thick ropes, and pulling. I've also got a problem with my [*body part*]. I fell and damaged that, and I tore something in there. I also had a [*health event*]. So all these flipping things that have happened to me, all confident where I think I'm not capable of doing things. But as I was going along, I started feeling a bit better doing the things, but I was doing the easier versions of them, but I was still doing the easier versions; I couldn't go on to the harder versions.

I: **Yeah, and... Oh, sorry.**

R: But he was very, very supportive and he was saying, don't overtax yourself, don't push yourself too much. But some days even doing these just was a bit difficult for me, because I wasn't feeling well.

I: **And when you first met your exercise professional, how was your first meeting with them? Could you talk me through it, so when you had your first consultation, did you**

understand what was going to be happening, and were they supportive then, or were you...? Did you have any concerns, or anything like that?

R: No, no, he was very nice. I went to see him at the sports centre, and we talked through things, and I think I'd done exercise with him before, after my *[procedure]*.

I: **And was it when you initially went to him, did you reach out to him to go to the...? Have the first consultation, or did he reach out to you? How did that work?**

R: I can't remember. I think I was just - because I'd went after my *[procedure]*, and then I went again then after my *[health event]*, and actually I went before I got my *[procedure]*, I was going. And that was a different class again then, and I was in a room on the side of the... I think that was after my *[procedure]*, that I did it before and after my *[procedure]*. It sort of all merges in my head into one. I was going before I had my *[procedure]*, because my consultant wanted me to lose a bit of weight and get healthy, before the *[procedure]*.

I: **Okay.**

R: So I did go then, and I did what I could then, but my *[body]* worsened, and I had to stop going. Because I had a spur in the *[body part]*, and my *[body part]* kept locking and it was in quite a lot of pain. And then I think - I'm trying to think if I did go then after having my *[procedure]*. I think I went back after having my *[procedure]*, for a short while. I don't know, I can't even remember. I think I needed to go back after my *[procedure]*, but that was in a different class.

I: **Yeah, so...**

R: But then I had - then I had the *[health event]*, so I knew him anyway. And then I had the *[health event]*. Hold on, I'm going to have to put you on speaker, because my hand has gone now.

I: **No, don't worry about it.**

R: Two seconds. Hang on. Hang on. Can you hear me now?

I: **Yeah, perfect.**

R: Yeah, so I knew him anyway, and it was the same person. So, yes, he was very supportive. But, at the end of the day, when we were doing it visually, I think because of Covid as well, I was a bit down, the motivation wasn't the same doing it by Zoom, even though he was great. And things just - as I said, I was aware that at one point, I had *[health problem]* over the Christmas period in the November, December. In fact, I had to sleep downstairs, because I couldn't get up the stairs, and my *[pain]* hasn't really improved since then, since... Well, it has improved, and I am able to walk now and finally get up the stairs, but I had to be very careful when I was doing it with the Zoom. Because if I overextended at any point with something, it flared my *[health problems]* up again. But, as I've said, we did it on a Tuesday and a Thursday, I often didn't do it the two days, because I'd do it on the Tuesday, and it

would take me a day or two to get over doing that, even though I was only doing the milder version.

I: So when you were doing the live sessions, what kind of - and it switched from face-to-face to virtual, what made you decide to continue with the programme, and do it virtually? And when you were doing it from home, you mentioned a little bit about it there, were there any...? Did you find any benefits from doing it on Zoom?

R: Originally, yes, and I was - I sort of enjoyed it, because I'd had this [*health problem*] thing. Oh God! I was very tentative about doing it, but I did do it. But prior to that, me and my husband were doing exercises, and I'm walking around the house, because it was like March that Covid hit, wasn't it?

I: Yeah.

R: And then I was told by [*name of*] Health Authority, not by the government, that I should shield, so I obviously wasn't going out. We'd go for little walks when it - as and when it improved, we'd go for little walks. But, of course, when I had the [*health event*], I was told not to go out in very cold weather, and not to go out in very hot weather. But then I had a letter from [*health authority*] then saying, because of the various health problems, and the recent [*health event*], that I needed to shield. But absolutely no support with that, with anybody. So because I had to shield, my husband had to shield, really, because if he went out and about and got coronavirus, he could fetch it back to me. So he decided that he'd stop part-time work, so he did. And I decided to start doing the Zoom programme, but it got then that as things were relaxed, I was going out and walking, and trying to walk, although I can't walk far, I'd walk, sit down, walk, sit down.

I: And was this - so how many weeks did you do approximately face-to-face, before you started doing your virtual, the Zoom classes?

R: It wasn't very long.

I: Around about how many weeks, around about?

R: Well, I think I started at the end of January, was it '20?

I: Yeah.

R: So I had the [*health event*] in the September, October '19. And then I did the ten weeks, which took - with the hospital, which took me up until Christmas. And then I think we had one more class after Christmas, and then one more one-to-one. And then they said that I could do this GP referral one, but [unclear 38:20] that I would try doing it. There was no problems with my [*health*] or anything, doing the mild exercises that they were doing. So I would imagine I would have started the end of the January, and then it was stopping then. And then, of course, the end of March, they stopped, didn't they, doing it? It was only a couple of weeks, and I finished. Because coronavirus was getting worse, and other countries had locked down, I think about two weeks before the class actually closed, because of coronavirus, I stopped myself.

I: Okay.

R: Because I remember my neighbour saying to me, oh, you're making a fuss about nothing. You should carry on coming, and I said, no, no, I [unclear 39:20], I'm not putting myself in that position. But had somebody in the class, in a closed room might pick up coronavirus, because we never knew a lot about it then, and I stopped a fortnight before everybody else.

I: Oh, I see. So you decided to stop by yourself, and then you were offered the Zoom classes later on?

R: Yes. Yeah, a while after, yes. Yes, I think it took a while, didn't it, before the Zoom classes started?

I: And did you have anything in between that time?

R: No.

I: No, nothing?

R: No.

I: And so between the time where you stopped yourself, and the Zoom classes happened then, was there any contact from the NERS programme to let you know what was happening, or anything like that?

R: I think just emails and things, or texts, just saying that they were hoping to sort something out. But all the time, I think they were hoping that we'd start back up again, but that never happened. And I don't think - and it still hasn't happened, has it?

I: Yeah. So we know that you've had both experiences of face-to-face and remote, what were you...? Would you have a preference? I know you mentioned earlier that you said the motivation wasn't there when you were doing it virtually, but do you have a preference of which one you would do, or did you enjoy them equally?

R: Face-to-face, I think.

I: Yeah. What would be the reasons why you'd want to do it face-to-face over virtual?

R: I think, because it was more social. I think, because it got you out of the house. You physically moved from one thing to another. The other thing that used to play on my nerves. I'm a weird person. But when the instructor was doing the exercises, the noise of his feet on the floor.

I: Is this virtual or face-to-face?

R: Virtual.

I: Oh, okay.

R: That got on my nerves.

I: Oh, okay.

R: It was just - yeah, you could just hear these feet noises all the time.

I: Yeah.

R: Because we had our mics turned off, it wasn't anybody participating, so that sometimes got on my nerves, do you know what I mean? And if I wasn't keeping up as fast, I was aware that I could hear the feet moving faster, and mine weren't moving as fast, if you get what I mean?

I: Mm.

R: So, again, sort of, oh, God, I can't keep up, that type of thing. Even though I was told, do the easier one, do you know what I mean? Do the easier part, because I hadn't done it for weeks, for a good couple of weeks. And I don't know, somebody would then ring the bloody doorbell, and I'd have to go and answer the doorbell. Or my phone would ring, and it would be an urgent call, and it was just, it just wasn't the same.

I: Yeah. And did you have any difficulty getting online, or anything like that? Were you - or were you quite comfortable using Zoom?

R: Yeah, it wasn't too bad. Yeah, it lasted 40 minutes. I Zoom to my children.

I: Yeah. Okay. And with your - what would you say your level of attendance was at the sessions? Were they the same virtually or face-to-face, or was it...? Were you able to attend more sessions because it was virtual, or less sessions, or what was it like?

R: Well, as I said, because we did ours sort of - I think it was a Tuesday and a Thursday, because I'd got these things wrong with me, I'd do the one, and then it would really take a couple of days for me to get over it to, to do the next one. So, no, it was helping me, it shouldn't be making me worse. So I'd do it on a Tuesday, then perhaps I wouldn't do it on the Thursday. Or I'd do it on the Thursday - I'd do it on the Thursday, and then do it the following Tuesday, but then I couldn't then follow-up with the next Thursday, if you get what I mean?

I: Yeah. Okay.

R: So it was, like, I think if it had been like a Monday and a Thursday, at least you'd have two days in between to recover. I know some people go to the gym every day, and I could never do that. But when I was doing the [therapy], I had a day in between and I'd go like a Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

I: Yeah, well, this...

R: But - or I'd go a Tuesday and a... I'd go a Monday and a Thursday. I've mostly done it twice a week, and then it was two days in between to recover. But, of course, because it was in the water, it never had so much of an impact on me, on my joints.

I: Okay.

R: But, of course, you do so many sessions, and then after that, then you could join that particular class, but you had to ring at seven o'clock in the morning, to see whether they could fit you in. Because you could only do that particular class, if that class wasn't full. But if that class was full, you couldn't join it because you were done, you were 16 weeks, or whatever it was, or 12 weeks of your GP referral. So you could go yourself, but you had to go when it was open for the hydrogym, when it was open to members of the public. And some members of the public stayed on the machines, each machine for 20 minutes.

I: **Okay.**

R: So I could go on one machine, and then I couldn't go on the next one then, because somebody was hogging it. And then I could go on the next one, and then perhaps I couldn't go on the next one, because somebody was hogging it. And if they can do 20 minutes in the hydrogym, why don't they just do the normal gym? There were people there that would go to the normal gym for a half an hour or two-quarters of an hour, or whatever. But then they'd come and use the hydrogym, which is they're quite entitled to. But then people who were lesser able, went to the hydrogym, because they couldn't go to the normal gym, if you get what I mean?

I: **Yeah, I get what you mean. So going back to the difference between virtual and standard, do you think there's anything that could have helped that? Because I know you said that you got to a point when you said your body wasn't really allowing you to do it anymore, and it was a bit much. Do you think there's anything that could have kept you more motivated, or kept you attending a bit more, or especially because it went virtually?**

R: I don't know, really. I had lots of different appointments. And, as I said, I had two bouts where I thought it was my *[health problem]*, and I ended up in the surgery. Then I had problems with my *[health problem]*, and I think my head wasn't... I think I was depressed as well, because of coronavirus. I hadn't seen my grandchildren for a year, because they live in London. Like I saw them in the December, after I'd had the *[health event]*. But I wasn't well enough for them all to come here and stay, so I'd had the *[health event]* in September, October, so we met in the *[place]* for three days. And then they jetted off to *[place]* to his parents for Christmas with the two children, because they haven't seen them for a while. And then, of course, they came back from *[place]*, then I was ill. I think I might have had coronavirus, because I was ill for over a week, and my husband thinks he had it as well, because he was ill for a week. Then my daughter actually had coronavirus in London. The two children were ill first, and then she was in bed for three days, and she had coronavirus.

And then we had lockdown, so we never actually saw them until after October. So my grandson's first 15 months of life, I saw him twice. So think I was a bit down as well, and I think there just... There were various things wrong with me, with my *[body part]*. It was my *[body part]* one minute, then it was my *[body part]*, then it was my *[body part]* swelling, then it was this *[health problem]* thing. So I was getting worried then that I might have been having another *[health event]*, but they were checking things out, and everything seemed to be okay. So I think I just lost momentum, and if I'd gone in on the Thursday, I could do it on the Tuesday. But, as I said to you, doing it on the Thursday again, it was just too much. If I

could have done it like a Monday and a Thursday, at least I had, I would have had two days in between the Monday and the Thursday.

I: And...

R: But I think [?they were doing it 50:14] a Tuesday and a Thursday.

I: And you mentioned a little bit there about feeling down over coronavirus, and all the things that kind of contributed towards that. I wondered if, from changing from virtual to face-to-face, from face-to-face to virtual, sorry, because you said that face-to-face was a bit more social, and you could have a bit of a chat with people. Did you notice any impact on maybe friendships you might have made, or any impacts or feelings of...? Feeling a little bit more isolated, having to do it virtually, or anything around that, or were you still able to have that communication virtually?

R: Right. You couldn't do it virtually at all, it was just as if... It was, although you could see people doing it on the side of the screen, it just wasn't the same. Do you know what I mean? It just wasn't - you didn't sort of feel part of it, and it was just different, it just wasn't the same. I could have just put a video, really, in the television and done it like that. It just - it didn't have the same impact on me. I preferred it when I went to the classes, even though often I only went to the classes once or twice a week, but then it was okay, but it wasn't the same.

I: And if you're reflecting on these decisions, kind of deciding to go with the virtual, do you think that now you should have postponed until face-to-face started up, or were you happy that you took up some virtual sessions?

R: Happy that I took up some virtual sessions, but, of course, because of health... It was because of health problems as well, that again makes you depressed, when you're worried about things. I think it was good to do it initially, but then when different things were happening, and then I had different appointments on the days that it was, we were doing the Zoom sessions. Because the [health professional] were shut, and I had a problem with my [body part], I had to go privately to the [health professional], so often we had to wait like two and a half months before we saw this... My husband had problems, so the both of us went privately to a different [health professional], and I ended up having [treatment] and he ended up having... He went to have a [unclear 53:26] replaced, actually, but then we found out when he had a scan, that he had [health problem]...

I: Oh goodness!

R: So he had to have [procedure], first of all, before they could start any treatment. So that was a bit worrying as well. So we were back and forth to the [health professional] as well, and because... And we'd waited a long time from the initial appointment to then [unclear 53:57] to do the treatment for him, and myself, it took about seven months. And we just had to go when they offered us the first appointment, so sometimes then that was the days that I was able to do my Zoom. It's just that life got in the way then as well, of that.

- I: Yeah. And how was your ERP with supporting you? When all of this was happening, how was your - did you talk to your exercise professional about this, and were they support...**
- R: Yes, I did. I did. Yeah, and he was great. He was very understanding, and told me to join back in when I could. And I think the momentum just went then.
- I: Yeah. And do you think that your exercise professional was important to keep you engaged in the programme?**
- R: Yes. Yes. Yeah, and he did as much as he could. It was me, really. I'd sort of lost interest then, if you get what I mean?
- I: Yeah.**
- R: And things always seemed to happen on a Tuesday. I don't know why, but different things would come up and it would be a Tuesday. It just worked out that way. I'd have to make an appointment to go to the surgery, and often it would be at the time, on the day that I was supposed to have been doing my virtual exercise. It would be when - it would affect one day or the other, or whatever, so it was just... And it was so difficult to get appointments anywhere throughout lockdown, and I've never picked it back up again.
- I: Okay. So moving on to the overall reflections of the programme, through the programme did you feel like you developed a bit of an en-...more of an enjoyment for exercise?**
- R: No.
- I: No. Why is that?**
- R: I don't know, I've never - when I was younger, my exercise was horse riding. Before I had children, I played badminton or table tennis every day with my friend in the sports centre. I also swam, because I had [*health problem*]. But then because [*problem*], I had to kick that into touch. But I did enjoy horse riding, but when you get married and you have children, that seemed to go by the wayside. But before I did have my [*procedure*], my husband and I did go every day for a walk, even if it was only for ten minutes. And I should start doing that again, but the last couple of days, the weather has been so bad I'm not even going... I'm hardly going out in the garden, because it's so hot. Because the weather is so, so hot, I'm quite breathless with this hot weather. In fact, I've got two fans with me now, at the moment, and I'm still hot.
- I: Yeah. And... Sorry. And do you think that the programme - do you think you've found it to benefit your wellbeing or mental health? I know you said during lockdown you were quite, feeling quite down. Did the virtual sessions perhaps help with that, or did...?**
- R: I think, initially, yes. Yeah. But then when I kept missing for various reasons, the momentum seemed to go with me. Do you know what I mean?
- I: Yeah.**

- R: But if I wasn't well and they said not to exercise, try and take it easy for a little while, and then I'd start back up again, and then I'd feel unwell again. And I think you just lose, like everything, you just lose momentum, if you're not doing it regularly. It doesn't become the norm.
- I: **Yeah. And do you think - oh sorry, continue.**
- R: Yeah, go on. Go on, yeah.
- I: **Do you think that you'll try and continue, or try to get exercise, try to do some more exercise now, or continue in the future?**
- R: Once we're over this phase of really hot weather, I do want to try and start exercising again. Yes, definitely. Like I walk - we go on dog walks and things. Like we went out last night, and met my daughter and future son-in-law in [place], and we went... But there was an awful lot of people about, and we went for a walk along the front. And they took us out for a meal, and I tried to have something, so we didn't have dessert or starters. And I had a Buddha bowl, because I don't eat meat. So it was like falafels and a salad, and whatever. So it was quite a walk from where we parked the car, to where we were having food. And then we walked from there then, up to the seafront, and had a walk along the front. And then we went to go to a quieter beach, but it was absolutely choc-a-block there. So we didn't stay any longer then, and we came home. But we did start going to our local park, but it was still quite busy there as well. And we did it a few times, and I don't know, I just lost the [unclear 1:00:59] now. I just lose my momentum, and I'm all sort of guns blazing in the beginning and then I just lose momentum. I [unclear 1:01:11] that's me.
- I: **Do you think there's anything that could help you with your momentum, from if any more support from an exercise professional, or different...?**
- R: I think if we go back to face-to-face, I think I'd be more sort of inclined to do it.
- I: **Yeah. Okay. And then so in terms of looking for the future of the NERS programme, is there any sort of particular things that you'd like to see, or ways that you'd like to see the NERS programme delivered?**
- R: Well, I think the way it is at the moment with this new variant, and cases [unclear 1:02:02] are rising every day. And there's another variant, apparently, coming into the country. They've said there's another one now from somewhere else coming into the country, because there's the Alpha and the Delta variant, I think it's going to be a while before it's going to be back face-to-face. I don't know when it will be, but I would imagine that the people going would obviously have to have their two vaccinations. Mind you, they can still pass on coronavirus, even if they've had the two. So when they'd introduced lateral flow tests, I don't know, it would be very stupid just to go to an exercise class. So I really don't know when that would start back up again, because they're still doing the... They're still doing it virtually, aren't they?
- I: **Yeah. I think parts of them are virtual.**

- R: Yeah. And there was talk that those who had had coronavirus, and were recovering, I think were going to join the class. And...
- I: **And... Oh, sorry.**
- R: When I was going to the face-to-face, there was talk then that perhaps people who had had coronavirus, and have got long Covid, were possibly going to start in the class as well. But I thought that was good, for them to... Then, of course, we had lockdown, and we've had several lockdowns since then. And because they haven't started the classes yet, up in the sports centre, have they?
- I: **I'm not too sure with your area. So, from what you've just said, once they start face-to-face, you'll go back, but at the moment you don't really have interest, or you're going to find it difficult to do the virtual at home, at the moment?**
- R: Well, when the weather is as hot as this, yes, it's difficult. Between I'm so breathless with the hay fever season, and the weather, I just don't feel up to it at the moment. And just I'm - I just haven't got the motivation to do it. Some days I can just get through - I feel I can just get through the day, if you get what I mean? I do the simplest of things, and I'm in a bath of sweat. My hair is soaken, and I have to put my hair up. And I could never at the moment, with my hay fever, and which, of course, it worsens the *[health problem]*. And, of course, the weather, your *[body]* is working that much harder. I know that because I'm having a little bit of pain. Because it's so hot, I just feel like at this particular moment in time, it would be pointless starting back and messing somebody about, and doing it on one day and then not being able to do it three weeks.
- I: **Okay.**
- R: But perhaps when more cooler weather comes in, and I start feeling a bit better, then I can get back to it.
- I: **Yeah. Okay.**
- R: That's the other thing, when the weather is not too hot, but a bit nicer you'll be able to go outside and exercise. If you get what I mean?
- I: **Yeah. Okay. That's great. Thank you. We want to understand as well a little bit about any costs that the service, that you as the user of the NERS programme may pay to participate in the NERS programme. So, approximately, how many weeks of the NERS sessions have you had in total? So this can be approximate.**
- R: Oh, God, do you know what? I have no idea.
- I: **So if we were to say from your referral for your heart attack, how many weeks do you think you've had for the NERS programme?**
- R: How many weeks, or how many sessions?

- I: How many weeks of sessions? So, say, you went once a week or something like that, because you said a little bit about going once a week.**
- R: Yeah, a lot of the time I was only doing it once a week, yeah. Well, I would have only have gone sort of [unclear 1:07:26] in the beginning of March, so that would have been about six weeks, I would imagine. And I really can't remember when we started up, when we started going virtual. Do you know?
- I: It would have been probably around April - April, March, April, May time, I think.**
- R: Yeah, April, May. I was stopping and starting all the time, you see?
- I: Yeah. It can be very, very rough, so whatever you think is closest, it doesn't have to be super specific.**
- R: So altogether, probably about - I don't know, I must have done about five or six weeks up at the sports centre. Probably - oh, I've no idea.
- I: Shall we go for six weeks that you know you've had, and...?**
- R: Yeah.
- I: And I'll say that the six weeks were all face-to-face, and we'll just do it off that, because that's what you know.**
- R: Well, I'm probably about six, eight weeks virtual.
- I: Okay. So that...**
- R: Because I kept missing it all the time, and then I had to keep apologising to my... The person taking the classes, I'm sorry, I can't do it again. And that's all it was all the time, sorry, I can't do it Tuesday, and then I'd do it on the Thursday. And then if something else would happen, I could perhaps do it the following Tuesday, and then I couldn't do it the Thursday. So I just felt as if I was messing people about all the time. I wasn't enjoying it as much as I was anyway, face-to-face.
- I: Yeah.**
- R: I never had the impetus - because I was missing, I never had the impetus I had when I was going for the classes every week. But then I'd miss some of them as well, because of various medical appointments, or certain things happening, life itself.
- I: Yeah, of course. So of those - the weeks... Of those weeks that you had virtually, how many sessions would you say you probably attended?**
- R: Probably about six or eight - six, eight, ten, something like that.
- I: Okay. And when you had - and were these... Were you doing these virtual sessions once a week again, like you did face-to-face, trying to get them once a week, when you did them?**

R: Well, some - occasionally, as I said to you, I'd do it on the Thursday, then I'd do it on the Tuesday, but then it was too much to do it on Thursday.

I: **Okay, that makes sense. Thank you. And when you were doing it face-to-face, did you pay for any of the sessions?**

R: Yeah, I think I paid up front, didn't I?

I: **Yeah, and how much did you pay, do you know?**

R: I think it was - I think I did, anyway. I think it was £36, or £32, something like that.

I: **And that was for the whole time you did face-to-face?**

R: Face-to-face, and when I did the ones online, yeah.

I: **Okay.**

R: I think it was £36.

I: **It can be approximate, it doesn't have to be specific. Did you pay anything for the vir-... Oh, so the virtual sessions, or just the £36 for the whole thing?**

R: Thirty-six for the whole thing, I think.

I: **Okay. What was your main sort of travel to the face-to-face? You mentioned car beforehand. Sorry.**

R: Yeah, I just - well, my neighbour took her car one session, and I took mine the next.

I: **Yeah. And how many miles away did you have to drive?**

R: It's only about a mile and a half.

I: **Okay.**

R: Which, in my younger days, I would have walked.

I: **Okay. Did you have to pay anything for parking when you were there?**

R: No, it's free car park.

I: **Okay. And what about buying any extra sort of clothing, or gym clothing for the NERS sessions?**

R: Yeah, I just bought a few pairs of tracksuit bottoms. I already had trainers.

I: **And approximately, how much would you have spent on this? I know these are quite a lot of questions, but it's all just to get an idea of how much everything sort of costs with the programme.**

R: Yeah. Probably for the tracksuit bottoms, about £30 for two pairs.

I: Okay, brilliant. You didn't buy any footwear. Did you buy any - have to buy any equipment when you were doing the virtual sessions at home?

R: No, I already had little weights. I have small weights here, and I have the bands from when I... When I'd done the [unclear 1:13:42] course, they gave us the bands.

I: Oh, okay.

R: So I already had those here.

I: Yeah. And did... Oh, sorry, continue.

R: Yeah, I had the bands here. Obviously, I already had a laptop, and I had little weights here that my daughter had left here, when she moved out from, and when she returned from London. So I had the weights, and I had the bands. I already had the trainers and the tracksuit bottoms, which are more comfortable than jeans or anything. And I just used to wear a T-shirt top, or whatever.

I: Yeah. And what was your main way of connecting to the virtual session, is this by home broadband?

R: Yes.

I: Okay. And how much a month approximately was that?

R: Oh, I pay something like £93, and that's for my phone line, which I don't use, Sky and broadband.

I: Okay. Brilliant.

R: I don't know what the - I don't know what each one is, what the phone is and what the... I would imagine 20-odd pound, about £23, £25 for the broadband. It's because of the extra, the faster one.

I: Yeah. Okay. Brilliant. Those are all the questions for that. Thank you for answering those. And just to conclude for everything, those are all my questions I have for you today. Is there anything that you think that you were expecting me to ask, or anything else you'd like to add, or anything I might have missed?

R: I think we've covered most of it, really. I do think sometimes that there should be more help with motivation, because that's what I lack.

I: Yeah, okay.

R: To keep telling - saying that the reasons for exercise, that it's good for you, it's good for your [body], it's good for you. It helps with depression, and it - and it did help, and I did get more confident. Because, of course, I was still more or less getting over the bloody [procedure], when I had the [health event], and sort of one thing hits you, and then personal things had happened as well. My daughter lost a baby last August at 21 weeks.

I: **Oh, gosh, I'm so sorry to hear that.**

R: Yeah. And she's 21 weeks next Monday, so this is a bit of a fractious time for all of us. She did have a scan on Wednesday, and everything seems fine. But because she lost the baby at 21 weeks last time, we were all sort of a little bit on tenterhooks.

I: **Yeah.**

R: So that - it's not just turning up and doing the class, other things go on in your life as well in between all this. And my other daughter had a little baby girl, and she's [?had a son 1:17:34] since. And she got operations in [unclear 1:17:40] [hospital] in London.

I: **Gosh!**

R: Because she was born with various things; it's called [health condition], and she was born without a [body part].

I: **Gosh! I was going to say, is there a way that the NERS programme, or the exercise professional could help with motivation, from your experience? Do you think there's anything they could have done in the times where you were finding it a bit...? When life was a bit difficult, to help in that any way?**

R: Yeah. I don't know how they could have helped, really. It's very difficult, isn't it? Because every individual has got personal, physical and mental problems. Everybody, and I don't care who you are. You have got things that are going on in your life that impacts on your wellbeing, whether that be physical or mental. But I did prefer the face-to-face, and, as I said, before I had my [procedure], until the [body part] got so bad that I couldn't even walk, I quite enjoyed doing that as well, and I wanted to get back to that, really. And I was going back in the September, October, a year after I'd had the [procedure], and then I had the [health event]. Do you know what I mean? So that sort of hit my momentum on everything. Whereas I was - I felt, as he said, the consultant said, every year that my [body part] wouldn't get any better or worse after a year. So with my various health problems, it took me two years before I felt better, really.

I: **Yeah. Okay.**

R: Yeah, I don't really know what you could do on the NERS programme to promote anything. I don't know. I don't know, it's difficult, isn't it?

I: **Well, it's good to know that that would be something that you'd probably want in the future, so it's good that you've mentioned that to me. Thank you. And is there anything that we could do to improve this interview today?**

R: No.

I: **No. Okay. Brilliant. So going forward, we will be in touch with you shortly, because as a thank you for participating in this interview, we'll give you a voucher for your time. But we need to organise these [?happen 1:21:53] at the moment, the way that our finances... The**

way that all of our finances work at the university... Oh, I'll just stop the recording now, actually, two seconds.

End of Transcription