

Story Title: My Short Career as an (IV) Pole Dancer

Date Submitted

August 2019

Story Summary

Who: S, female living with chronic conditions in Powell River

What: Travel to Vancouver due to sudden change in health

When: July/August 2019

Where: Powell River General Hospital & St. Paul's Hospital

Why: S had to be hospitalized (sent to Vancouver from Powell River) due to ketoacidosis

Tags

Ketoacidosis, diabetes, Crohn's disease, St. Paul's Hospital, Powell River General Hospital, rural and remote

Background Information

Age: 60s

Language(s) Spoken at Home: English

Gender: Female

This story was written by a:

Patient

Family Member/Caregiver

VCH Staff (with permission from patient/caregiver)

Other

This story is about a: Patient Family Member/Caregiver Other

Story

I had been feeling unwell for about a week; not in pain, but tired and weak and had vomited a few times. A friend came over to help me take care of my garden, but I ended up collapsing in the middle of the bean row. My friend hauled me down to the ER at Powell River Hospital. For the record, I am diabetic and have had Crohn's Disease for many years, which has recently led to the formation of fistulas.

I was extremely anxious at first because I hadn't been aware of how serious my condition was. After I was sent to St. Paul's, I also felt quite isolated, as I have no family or close friends in Vancouver, and was concerned about how I was going to get back home. I'm an active, outdoorsy kind of person so, after a few days when I was feeling better, I found the enforced idleness hard to take. I was been observed and treated by teams from several departments. I

really could have used a print-out of who I was being treated by and all the medications I was on, as it was impossible for me to keep track of it all.

Best and Worst Aspects of the Experience

The best was the excellent care I received from everyone involved. The worst was the suddenness of it all and the stress of being away from home and my family.

Experience after Receiving Care

I've learned that I should see a doctor when I'm not feeling well, instead of just assuming it's going to go away on its own. I am still facing long-term treatment with several medications, as well as surgery for my Crohn's Disease. It was a very stressful experience for my immediate, as well as my extended family. My husband and son were not able to be with me in Vancouver, due to work and the cost of travel.

Take Home Message(s)

The only thing I can really recommend is, as I mentioned before, that a print-out of the doctors involved in my treatment and of the medications I was receiving would have been really helpful. There was also a bit of miscommunication which resulted in my having to stay a day longer than I would have otherwise.