



May 2020



My name is David and I am a full time carer for my disabled wife. We live in a Bolton at Home flat in a relatively small and quiet part of an estate made up mainly of elderly and disabled residents in the Chorley Old Road area.

As a carer for the last eight years I have learnt and come to appreciate that small periods of respite for both my wife and myself are a very important factor in maintaining a healthy relationship. As such, prior to the outbreak of

the Covid-19 pandemic, I was an active volunteer with both Bolton CVS and Bolton Carers Support, the latter of which I am eternally grateful for their encouragement and support to engage with other organisations to help me through some rough dark days.

These volunteering roles give me such an enormous lift and contributed massively to my mental and physical wellbeing far more than any medication or therapy ever has. When the outbreak started and the lockdown kicked in I just wanted to help in whatever way I could. In fact, I felt it was my duty to do so. Therefore, I answered the call for the emergency response volunteers issued by Bolton CVS.

I have contributed just under 12 hours in four weeks, the majority of which have been shopping trips for the elderly and vulnerable for essential groceries. I even had a mercy dash for one of the service users when their toilet broke! They couldn't leave the house so I had to do an emergency trip to a local plumbers merchant to source the parts.

Like everyone else, I do this volunteering readily. I do have the same anxieties and fears when I'm standing in the long queues at the supermarket or traversing round the store with unfamiliar grocery requests and sometimes more than one list! It is heartening and reassuring to see that many people are taking responsibility and contributing to keeping everyone safe.

The response by people in Bolton to unselfishly give up their time and resources during the pandemic has been nothing short of biblical. I find volunteering an amazingly rewarding and satisfying experience! Stay safe and help others.