

Annual Public Health Report 2020

Time to Change: Working Towards Better Health For All in Suffolk

Transcript: Stephanie (73), Carlton Colville, nr Lowestoft. Retired. Lived in Suffolk for 42 years

Q: How has COVID-19 affected your life?

Stephanie: The first lockdown, I was alright for the first couple of weeks. And then as it went on, you then get to the stage... where you think... 'Oh god I've got to go out, even though I don't want to go out'. I had to go to the doctors every ten weeks for a B12 injection. And it happened to fall, about four weeks into the lockdown. So I phoned the surgery thinking they would say... 'Oh someone will come out' or whatever. And they said 'Oh no, come to the surgery as normal' and they'll give you your injection. Well I have to say Chris... I got up there, and waiting, masked up... I'm waiting to see the nurse and it was all beautifully arranged, I was the only one in the waiting room. And I wasn't there two seconds when she called me in. And I had the injection and I came out... [inaudible] -and I just sat and shook. And I thought 'Oh my god' you know I've been out. Am I now going to get coronavirus, and I got myself in a real panic. I came home and I phoned my youngest daughter and she said... 'Mum it's perfectly normal you've had a bit of a panic attack, don't worry about it'. But I think it was the fact that, I'd been indoors, and the only place I went was out into the garden. Like if I saw anybody walking up the pathway along the side of my house, I'd come in. Because I was absolutely petrified. And it's... because you live on your own it's worse because you've got no one to say that to. Because they've got each other I don't think they felt it quite so strongly. Very, very isolated, and I'm sure you probably feel the same. I don't know what the answer to that one is. We've got to get our confidence back somehow but... quite how I'm not sure.

Q: Can you describe whether you have experienced good or poor health and what has contributed to this?

Stephanie: We're better actually here than my sister down in Kent. They don't have a very good hospital down there but, at the moment they seem to be looking after my 90-odd year old aunt. So who am I to say they're in the wrong or not. And I think up here, we're pretty fortunate with our hospitals.

Q: What would help you improve your health in the years to come?

Stephanie: You know I try to have a balanced diet, I try to exercise and things. With the doctors you have to ring up. You have to tell you symptoms to the receptionist as to why you want to see the doctor. Then the doctor has to decide whether you can have a phone appointment. Or you come into the surgery. And I don't think that's very



satisfactory to be honest. [inaudible] -a lot of old people, especially if they live on their own, Chris. How do they order these prescriptions? Because if they've got a landline, and they've got to phone this pod... and they've got to sit there 78 call before it gets to them, I don't know how they manage. And not all old people have got the use of a computer, I've only got a laptop. Since corona because Sarah had a spare one, and brought up for me and showed me how to use. So there must be a lot of old people around, who feel like this. And that must affect your health in time, mustn't it?

