

Presentation re benefit to adults recovering from illness or injury

I represent the people who, with access to warm water following illness or injury, would be able to continue their recovery to health and fitness and re-establish independence and quality of life with minimal ongoing treatment, and hopefully needing much less support, also saving enormous amounts of money to the NHS and Social services .

My spinal operation nearly 20 yrs ago for a condition caused through polio as a child, cost the NHS £50,000. The pioneering surgeons were limited as to how much they could do except offer a second operation. However, I chose to go down the route of physiotherapy and self help. I was given a short course of hydrotherapy and then I was on my own. I have been successfully able to graduate from having to use wheelchair or crutches, spinal & neck brace and barely being able to pick up a cup to drink to only needing limited use of a walking stick. I can do all sorts of exercise in the water that I used to do on dry land including swimming. The second operation at £50,000 is still an option but as long as I go swimming 3 times a week I am able to maintain my fitness & independence and don't need to consider it.

Along the way to recovery, I was lucky enough to be able to access to warm water but these were in private clubs and hotels, and on the continent when I was visiting family. Normal swimming pool temperature made my condition worse and I couldn't move quickly enough to keep warm. Eventually I reached a stage where I could use normal swimming pools, but it would certainly not have been possible to go from a hydrotherapy temperature of 34°C to swimming pool temperature at 28/29°C. A warm bath at home just doesn't do it – it's too small to exercise and swimming is out of the question!

This is my story but there are many more people like me including injured servicemen who would also benefit in their struggle to recover and return to some semblance of normality and independence

Can we rely on you to support the inclusion of warm water pools at 32°C with fully accessible changing facilities in the leisure contract currently being negotiated, starting with the Keynsham Leisure Centre?

Susan Charles

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