

Michael's Polio Story

I got polio while I was at a Butlins holiday camp (Skegness) in about 1946 (I think from the swimming pool). My parents only hope, so they were told, was a new drug that was being tested at Bart's hospital in London (streptomycin). As the NHS didn't exist then they had to pay for an ambulance to get me to London (maybe they got help from Butlins but I don't know), anyway I ended up surviving but with callipers on both legs. The result was that I missed almost all my early education so my parents paid for me to go to a primary school in Balham. From there I went to a grammar school in Battersea.

I had an interest in motor cars and I got a job at Jack Barclays (the Rolls Royce dealers) from there a friend and I set up our own business repairing Rolls Royce's and Bentley's. Like many partnerships, we parted company, but I continued the business for many years. I sold the business about 12 years ago and in retirement assisted people with problems with their cars until about a year ago when Post Polio Syndrome (PPS) caught up with me.

My GP sent me to our local hospital, St Helier, where I was told that unbeknown to me I'd had 2 mini strokes and was advised to "get a walking stick". I am now in the process of being given advice on how to move forward from the Lane Fox unit at St Thomas' hospital so we wait and see.

The stories I've read about since joining you have made me think that basically you need to do as much as is comfortable with you. I hope my story is of interest to you.