

My Experience – Sylvia

My name is Sylvia. I was born in 1948 and contracted Polio in 1950/51. I was living on the Isle of Wight and, I believe, along with my slightly older brother, one of the very first people on the Island to catch polio. I lost the use of one of my legs. After a spell in the isolation hospital, I recovered and certainly within my childhood memory was symptom free.

I went on to be a keen tennis player for over 19 years, playing daily during the Summer and several times weekly on hard courts during the Winter, until at about the age of 42 I noticed that my legs were changing. My right calf was diminishing noticeably, although was still strong enough to support me.

Eventually I could no longer reliably run in all the directions required for tennis and I gave up. I then joined a golf club and played 18 holes regularly, usually three times a week until I no longer had the stamina to walk the course and so five years ago, I gave up golf. I then started playing lawn bowls two or three times a week and short mat bowls during the Winter.

Over the last few years my "weak" leg has felt less reliable and I've been using a walking stick when out and about and this year find I now must use it when playing lawn bowls. Similarly, over the last few years I have felt unsteady with sometimes a loss of balance. I cannot walk far without considerable pain, although I'm not sure whether this is because of the late effects of polio or other problems with my spine for which I take prescribed pain medication.

To sum up, everything from my strength to my eyesight, endurance and energy seem to be reduced. I have recently purchased a mobility scooter with which I can go a bit further afield - in fact have just returned from Austria where I was able to explore, amongst other sights, those of Vienna and Salzburg. Thanks to coach travel company B D for transporting my mobility scooter and making this possible. My brother was a year or two ahead of me in his debilitation and requiring a mobility scooter and stair lift (so far I'm still managing with the banister).

I hope to soon have an appointment with an NHS neurologist, interested in PPS, as I would so love to know what I may attribute to PPS and what the future may be expected perhaps to bring. I wonder if any of my experiences will strike a chord with others.