

Laughter and the Love of Life

By Sue Gurden

A few weeks ago I had a conversation with a colleague about a patient of hers who I had met in the hydrotherapy pool. This patient had presented in the department suffering from long-term musculoskeletal disease and chronic pain. She was morose and lacking in motivation both with exercise and socially, in fact she rarely left the house. Following initial assessment and treatment she was referred for a course of hydrotherapy.

This lady struck up a friendship with a fellow patient attending the same treatment session as they travelled together on the same hospital transport. This pair soon became the life and soul of the sessions, encouraging other patients and creating havoc and amusement in equal measure. On review, her physiotherapist was amazed at the change in this lady, her posture and physicality had improved dramatically along with her sense of well being and her ability to manage her chronic condition. She is continuing to socialise and exercise with her new friend.

What had brought about this dramatic change? The magic warm water and exercise, skilfully taught by her physiotherapist? Or, the power of friendship, interacting, sharing, offloading and laughing with another human being?



Sue