



# JUDITH'S APPROACH

## Meet Judith

Judith Binney is the team lead in the community physiotherapy department for the Moray Health and Social Care Partnership.

Judith has worked in acute head injuries and stroke units and with frail older people. Most of her work has been with people with more long term difficulties, rather than short term injuries.



## What does self management mean for Judith?

Judith became interested in self management about a decade ago when she saw the change that took place when she altered the way that she ran part of the service she was working in. She adopted more behaviour change and change management elements into her approach to care, working with people from the perspective of what they wanted to achieve. While it was not always possible to help them achieve everything, people became more confident that their needs were being filled and encouraged by the fact that they were more actively involved.

Judith helped by making suggestions or helping people to view things from a slightly different angle. They were more in control of their own conditions.

**“Instead of coming in every week to be treated by me, they would ring me up occasionally if they needed a hand with something or if they thought I might be able to help them.”**

**Top Tip:** Recognise that you, as a professional, are having to learn to do things differently too.

When speaking to people, Judith found that they had often made major advances without much input from her. They sought Judith's help appropriately, as and when needed.

**“They were doing what they wanted to do in the way they wanted to do it and getting there far quicker than if they'd just been nagged by me. They were so much happier and more confident.”**

Judith has seen her role turned into one of facilitating, encouraging people to use their understanding of their condition to inform how best they can manage it.

**“Most people have already got good ideas, they are just scared that we [professionals] laugh and “poo-poo” their ideas. I’ve seen this happen sometimes, and it means they’re being progressively de-skilled which is really sad.”**

### **Adopting a self management approach**

When Judith started using self management she had to try and work things out for herself. Now there is a growing body of evidence to draw on. Judith has found supporting self management becoming easier as she has put into practice what she has learned from the evidence. She is now able to break self management down into strands such as self efficacy training and education. A topic like self efficacy can then be further broken down into steps like peer group support.

A lot of Judith’s work is very functionally based. If somebody wants to be able to get dressed one morning, she works with them to set small goals that they think are going to be achievable within a week. **“If they set the goals and they think they might be able to achieve them, they’ll have a try.”**

Judith sees her role as encouraging people to persevere even if they don’t succeed at first. Although goal-setting may not be what most people think of as a hands-on physiotherapy treatment, Judith thinks **“it is very effective and has a much longer impact than any hands-on treatment; giving someone the mindset that if they keep trying they might succeed can have a lifetime’s effect”.**

An important part of Judith’s job is to train people to progress with their own self management and have confidence in their own ability to progress themselves without continual reference back to some ‘higher font of knowledge’ like the physiotherapist.

**“I’m not living their lives. They’re the ones who know what they can and can’t do.”**

### **How does self management help Judith and her colleagues?**

As self management means people are more in control of their conditions, they need fewer appointments with her.

**“I used to set appointment dates, but now I say ‘When do you think you might need to come in?’. 90% put a much longer time on it than I would have in the past.”**

**Top Tip:** Trust the person you’re supporting. Professionals need to recognise that self management is about shifting the balance of power in favour of the person living with long term conditions. This takes a lot of trust in each other.

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