

5th May 2020

NHS WORKER HELPED BY COMMUNITY HUB URGES OTHERS TO GET IN TOUCH

A NHS worker shielding from the coronavirus outbreak has hailed the help of the Pembrokeshire Community Hub and urged anyone needing assistance to get in touch.

The Community Hub, set up by Pembrokeshire County Council and partners, is a one stop shop for support during the pandemic and has already helped thousands of County residents.

Among them is Sarah Thorne of Milford Haven.

When Covid-19 arrived in the UK, Sarah and her NHS colleagues prepared to roll up their sleeves and do what they do best - look after people.

But Sarah, aged 42, has a long-term health condition requiring medication that leaves her immune compromised.

"When the government's 'shielding' letter landed on my doorstep, my heart sank," said Sarah.

"I was fully prepared to help everyone that needed me, but suddenly I was faced with seeking help from others just to be able to undertake mundane aspects of daily living. I found it embarrassing to ask."

Sarah reluctantly called the Pembrokeshire Community Hub, preparing herself to be told she didn't qualify.

"I don't look ill, or very old, or appear to be the 'typical' person you would expect to need help.

"But I was wrong. Within minutes, with no judgement whatsoever, my details were taken and my specific needs noted. I was encouraged to call again, anytime, just for a chat if I wanted because we all need to reach out.

"A few hours later and I had a fabulous and reliable dog walker in place, and my dog loves him so much I think she's going to move in with him!

"Volunteers called to offer assistance with things like shopping and prescriptions, and just to check I was doing okay. The sense of relief was overwhelming.

Several mornings later a van pulled up outside Sarah's home, delivering a large and unexpected box.

Inside was a huge selection of essentials including fresh and non-perishable food, toiletries and toilet roll.

“The items may not have been what I would pick myself when out shopping, but as I sat down to eat, I realised this box is a hug.

“A hug from my friends and local community when I cannot see anyone.”

Sarah is now urging anyone who needs assistance to contact the Community Hub.

“I’m not elderly, frail, a single parent or visibly have any difficulties but I still need help.

“It’s not about whether you deserve it, or if you can wait, or eek out your resources, or you feel just fine right now.

“This is about your community coming together to support you because they want to and because you’re worth it.

“No one is more or less eligible, we’re in this together. So call the Hub, let them help you too, you won’t regret it.”

Tessa Hodgson, Pembrokeshire County Council Cabinet Member for Social Services, said: “I am delighted the hard work of the Community Hub is continuing to be recognised.

“This lovely story also goes to show that there are people out there who still might not be sure if the Hub is for them or can help them.

“Please help spread the word of the work of the Hub and the message is clear – please, if you need assistance, get in touch and we will do everything we can to help.”

The Community Hub can be contacted via email on communitycovid19@pembrokeshire.gov.uk or by calling 01437 776301.

More details on the Hub are at:

<https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19-community-information/community-hub>