



News Release

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Recovering coronavirus patient thanks Dorset County Hospital staff

A coronavirus patient is on the road to recovery after spending a week in intensive care at Dorset County Hospital.

Malcolm Cumber, 60, from Dorchester, was admitted to DCH via the Emergency Department at the end of March after suffering from intense fatigue and shortness of breath.

After not responding to initial treatment, Malcolm was transferred to intensive care and had to be put on a ventilator.

Malcolm said: "I had been feeling absolutely rotten, just really tired and short of breath and being an asthmatic I was really worried about catching coronavirus.

"We spoke to our GP who came out to our home and wanted to monitor my oxygen levels for 24 hours. With them not improving we were told to ring 999 for an ambulance the next day.

"I was admitted to a ward and tested positive for coronavirus, but after that it all becomes a bit blurry. I think I went downhill quite fast and then ended up in intensive care on a ventilator for a week.

"I don't remember too much about waking up, I was just so grateful to be alive.

"Fortunately I have slowly but surely been recovering. I was on another ward for about a week after intensive care and then I was discharged in time for the Easter Bank Holiday and could return home to my wife and our dog Crumble.

He added: "All the staff were absolutely fantastic. I can't fault them. They were all just incredibly professional and supportive.

"I've got a long way to go with my recovery. I still feel like someone is sitting on my chest, but I am building my strength back up day by day.

“I would encourage everyone to stay at home. We need to stay safe and help the NHS. I can’t imagine anything worse than what I have been through. This is a deadly virus. I am one of the lucky ones.”

Malcolm’s wife Nicky said she is just glad to have him back. The 54 year old also had coronavirus symptoms but thankfully was able to recover at home.

She said: “I’ve been through so many emotions over the past few weeks. It’s been a horrific experience. I didn’t know if I was going to see Malcolm again and if I would be able to say goodbye. It was awful.

“I felt so helpless but the staff were absolutely wonderful and kept me well informed about what was happening. The communication was brilliant and they were so empathetic about how I was feeling and what I was going through.”

Nicky, who has four children with Malcolm, ordinarily volunteers at DCH with their dog Crumble, a trained therapy dog, and is looking forward to returning once the outbreak has passed.

She added: “We cannot thank the staff at Dorset County Hospital enough for what they have done for us.”

Medical Director at Dorset County Hospital Alastair Hutchison said: “We were absolutely delighted to see Mr Cumber return home to his loved ones and wish him well in his continued recovery.

“Our teams of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals in intensive care and on our wards are working around the clock to ensure that all of our patients get the best possible care and I’m immensely proud of their dedication and bravery.

“Looking after patients who are as unwell as Mr Cumber is a huge team effort involving not just doctors and nurses but also radiographers, therapists, dieticians, porters, procurement, estates and IT teams.

“Mr Cumber’s recovery is not yet complete but he demonstrates that even the most severely affected patients can overcome COVID-19 and walk out of hospital. He exemplifies why we have continued hope for all of those affected by this dangerous virus.”

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PHOTOS:

Malcolm back at home with his dog Crumble

Malcolm back at home with his wife Nicky and dog Crumble

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