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Carol and Richard Patching

She wasn't diagnosed until she was 17 or 18 years old, and there's there's two reasons, well there’s, there's a very good reason why she was not diagnosed and that is that her doctor, a GP, wasn't a real doctor. He was a fake and it wasn't until after we were married that we got passed the news from friends in Bradford, we’d left by then, to say that her old GP had been successfully prosecuted and found guilty. He was found guilty of fraud, of defrauding the National Heal Service. Carol was diagnosed when she caught TB, when she was at work. Cos she started work straight from school when she was 16. She worked in, it was a catalogue clothing place, there were loads and loads of people worked there at the time, in like an old mill in Bradford. And she caught TB and so she had to go to hospital and that’s where she was told that she had sickle cell. But that’s what they did, they just told her she had sickle cell and sent her back to her GP who wasn’t a GP, so she didn’t get any care, didn’t get any anything.

She always worked all the time never, never didn't work. But, but those, that first job, there she was getting hauled in for disciplinary proceedings against her, because she'd had time off for sickle cell, you know, it's ridiculous. It's just ridiculous, but -- and the people who should have supported her, like her immediate supervisors and union reps and all that, the way they'd organized the company, they were just -- it just didn't work. Far from helping her out, they were the ones who were having a go at her. It was crazy.​

She'd tell people that she had it, but she didn't make a deal out of it. She was, Carol's all through, she's always just wanted to live her life regardless, you know, so I remember people suggesting to her all through the years, why is she still working? Why didn't she consider giving up? Why didn't she think, attempt, to claim something, some kind of disability allowance or something. She didn't want to do it. ​

She's never been bitter ever. I can imagine people might in her situation might think why me? Why have I got three brothers and a sister who aren't affected at all, and a mum and dad who aren't affected at all? Why me? But she's never been like that.