Listening makes sense: understanding the experiences of older people and relatives using urgent care services in England

Adapted discovery interview transcript for Anna Brown

My name is Anna Brown and I am 92. I live on my own at home and since my stroke have a home help and meals-on-wheel. Five weeks ago, I tripped at home and hurt my wrist. The doctor visited and said I’d broken it and needed to go to the hospital. He arranged for a taxi to take me there.

The taxi driver helped me out of the taxi and walked me into the hospital. I walk so slowly without my frame and that was at home

You will have to excuse me, since my stroke it’s affected my speech you see

Oh I was lost without my frame really but er I ………he sat me down. Then I think they came and took me along then to the receptionist. She asked me some questions, I can not remember everything, there was lots of noise. I could not hear the lady very well. I don’t think she understood me very well either, but she was in a rush...I think you can understand me because I can take my time. If I get flustered it seems worse.

I waited and waited. and then I was taken in my chair into another department.

Eventually the nurse came and took me into the room. She looked at my wrist and asked me questions. I had taken the list of my tablets that the doctor prepared for me… I gave the paper to the nurse she said she was pleased I had taken it. Oh…..I was tired but she was kind and she wanted me to have some pain tablets but I said no, they make me feel unwell and I did not want to have nausea. She said I had to have an X-ray.

The young lady…..she pushed me in the chair and I had to wait and wait again. Then I went in for the test and then they told me I would have to wait again…then have another X-ray. I was taken back to the first department or was it the second? She looked at my tests and said, it was broken and I had to go back to the first place, so I was pushed back there and I was waiting and waiting…again.

The problem was I did not know what was going to happen…it was the noise…lots of rushing about and people talking… lots of people everywhere….I can’t explain it somehow…

1 All names have been changed
Just before they came to get me, I heard a voice behind me say ‘What are you doing here?’ and it was the man from next door. He was told I was there you see. He was going to visit his cousin in the hospital, so he came to find me. He stayed with me and brought me home in the afternoon.

I was so pleased. I was feeling very anxious and so very frustrated not knowing what was happening…I had been there for hours. Straight away it was better. He stayed with me for a long time……we waited and waited. After some time I was seen again and a doctor looked at the test…he said I had a clean break…. across here…… and that I would have to have a plaster on my wrist, he said I had to go to another department for that.

They told my neighbour where to go….he had to push me up a long corridor in the wheelchair…..ohh it was a long, long, long way and up a hill too. Then we had to stay by some green chairs to have the plaster put on…we had to wait and wait again.

At the time I just wanted to go home, I was so tired and thirsty…I had not had anything all day. I hurt my wrist early in the morning and the doctor came after half past twelve you see.

I didn’t think about how much more difficult it would be to manage at home at the time, to use my frame and pick things up, and turn the tap on and things like that, I am right handed you see…. and you do not think how much you use this hand….even when I can not do an awful lot anyway.

Anyway…finally I had my plaster put on. The lady was nice. She smiled at me. It was nice, made me feel better.

By then, I was worried about my neighbour because he had been with me for such a long time …and he had to go back to his family. I was tired. I needed to go to the toilet. I didn’t want to be a nuisance, everyone was rushing about and I could not ask my neighbour. So I tried to hold on until I came home. It was alright. When we got home my neighbour looked after me. He made me a sandwich then and a cup of tea.

After he left, I managed to get to the toilet. I didn’t use my frame I held onto what ever I could. I had a sling around my neck you see. The doctor said I had to keep it on for a few days. I had a slight accident, but I managed with this hand and the home help came in the morning and was able to do the laundry.

More information on this research study can be found on: www.city.ac.uk/listeningmakessense