

PE1651/RR

Toni Harris submission of 31 December 2017

I'm writing this email as I suffered a very bad reaction to antidepressants that made me so ill that I lost 15 months from work . I took an ssri antidepressant for the first time in my life aged 40 after I was experiencing some mild anxiety for a few weeks. I went to see my gp who gave me sertraline. I took it that morning & by 5pm I had started to vomit and had the first panic attack that I had ever experienced in my life. By evening I had started to feel not only depressed but started to have strange thoughts about committing suicide by hanging myself. I did not realise that these medication's could cause all this and thought I had suddenly gone mentally ill in a few hours. I went back and saw another gp , crying very distressed as the sertraline had given me insomnia too. The gp gave me a new antidepressant to try (fluxotine) and diazepam to help me sleep. Within a few days I had become much worse. I could not sit still, sleep, vomiting constantly. I began to hear voices and asked my husband to take me to hospital as I felt extremely suicidal. Went to hospital who told me it was lack of sleep causing my symptoms and was to continue with the fluxotine and diazepam and was given some zopiclone sleeping pills and the crisis team began making home visits. After another week I continued to get worse the crisis team doctor agreed with me that I was having a rare reaction to ssri antidepressants after I refused to take it anymore. I was put onto a new sleeping pill called trazodone to help me sleep. I did not realise that this was also an antidepressant. This was in march 2016. My gp increased the dosage without asking me I could not tolerate the higher dosage so tried to come off the antidepressant and ended up in A&e again with electric sensations. Crisis team were called again and the dr thought the dosage changes had increased my anxiety & he lowered the dosage & added another pill pregabalin for my anxiety on top of the trazodone & diazepam. I became so ill my gp sent me to a mental health centre (secondary mental health services). They added another antidepressant Duloxetine to all the medication's that I was taking. By this time the crisis team had a cpn nurse visiting me also. A few days into taking these medication's I was seen by the crisis team who wanted me to go into hospital as they thought I had the strangest case of post natal psychosis they had ever seen as it does not usually come & go. I now know that I am sensitive to not only taking these medication's but also to starting & stopping them & dosage changes. I was in hospital for six weeks. I felt even worse when I got out but had got used to feeling suicidal. My doctor kept me on the trazodone after I refused to carry on with the other medication's apart from diazepam. He added another pill called buspar. I began to get problems with my neck & face muscles and Feb 2017 was pulled off the medication cold turkey. 10 months later I'm able to work again but still have a problem with my neck muscle's and electric sensations. These medication's caused me to lose 2 years of my life but am hoping to fully recover. I have now been signed off from mental health services. Thank you for reading.

