

PE1651/DDDDDDDDDD

Anonymous submission of 24 July 2018

I am a Scottish resident. This is my third submission.

I apologise that this may be upsetting to read but am in such a bad condition three years after adverse reaction to prozac. To recap, the adverse reaction felt like something had fried in my brain, taking with it connections to life past, family, interests, personality .. it feels like my whole sense of self ... and in its place there is this black hell in my head. There are so many mental and physical symptoms that are beyond human endurance. I endure every minute something even worse than the worst suicidal depression I ever had (with hindsight, always in antidepressant withdrawal) and what a struggle that was.

I have already spent 16 years battling antidepressant side effects and withdrawal (misdiagnosed as relapse) and doing what I could to try and manage the condition that the NHS had caused but which very kindly then gave me coping strategies. This condition is from SSRI adverse reaction is way beyond what I experienced as depression or anxiety in SSRI withdrawal.

I am only 35 and I'm hysterical often because I feel pushed to end the only life I was given. People that are ending their lives from SSRI withdrawal or reactions are being pushed to literally jump to escape unimaginable agony. Make no mistake about it, this brain torture could not exist naturally.

I would like to say more about how doctors and other health care professionals have responded to my assurance that the drugs caused this.

A GP got really angry with me and she thinks it is all psychosomatic. It feels like a chemical has burnt and is continuing to burn my brain. This acid burning brain is common in SSRI reactions.

An occupational therapist said "even if it is a brain injury there is research that people who can maintain a positive mental attitude do better". How can I be positive if I have something that is even more intolerable than suicidal depression? So the focus goes back to the patient who is like this because they are not doing enough to "help themselves".

I went to my most recent GP appointment to ask specifically about the protocol on prescribing antidepressants. I asked the Dr if by prescribing an antidepressant, do they think they are correcting an abnormality in the brain. She did not answer me directly just that these drugs are complicated and that is why patients need to be monitored. And that the risks and benefits would be explained. But it is clear from our petition that even if patients are monitored the adverse effects side effects are not being recognised. And I was never told that the condition I am in now could happen.

When I asked if patients were given other options before antidepressants the GP said that talking therapies would always be offered alongside antidepressants. My question is "Why are talking therapies not tried first?" Her exact words were "if a

patient wants an antidepressant then we will give one". Where else in medicine would someone be prescribed a drug because they "want one"? And all the while she was interrupting me to ask "what about psychotherapy"? There is a letter on my file from a psychotherapist saying they did not feel they could help. The doctor also said "even if it is a brain injury people can still live a life". And what about volunteering, keeping busy? I was busy when I was first prescribed an antidepressant. I struggled and struggled for 16 years keeping busy but with the adverse reaction to the second drug there is no way I can do this. I have had to give up the few things I had left in life.

I struggle to see family with the severe distress I'm in and out in public even more so. I don't think there are any more adequate words in the English language to describe what I have. All I can say is it is torture. The NHS definition of depression is "unbearable sadness". Screaming because it feels like something is being drained from the brain causing something so low no human should have to experience I don't think fits the NHS description.

it is very strange that when I tell doctors something has happened in my brain that I absolutely cannot live with that the response is "there are things you can do to help yourself". They know that I'm on the edge of suicide every second of every day and if they could feel it they would absolutely know the drug caused this. I am absolutely certain no anxiety or depression could ever feel like this so this leads me to wonder on what basis are these drugs ever prescribed? If someone is suicidal? I'm severely suicidal from the drug now I'm being told that I can "help myself". If someone as bad as me could deal with their condition naturally then surely these drugs shouldn't have a place at all.

Of all the years I have spent in and out of crisis centres for withdrawal induced depression and anxiety, one nurse said to me "you just have to keep trying things and hope some day you will find the answer". What is so shocking and astounding is that all these years I felt so uncomfortable on the drugs and every time I tried to come off them neither I nor my doctors knew I was suffering from withdrawal effects and so clearly the answer was not going to be found in anything other than the drugs themselves.

Thank you for reading and I hope this drug induced prescribing hell stops soon before many many lives are taken.