

PE1627/T

Amiee Folan submission of 7 February 2018

My experience with anti depressants.

When I was 11 years old I was diagnosed with a number of mental health problems, bi polar, schizophrenia, split personality disorder, anxiety and depression, I was given medication for all of the above but as I tried to overdose on them at the age of 13 I was taken off them as it was clear they weren't helping me anymore as problems at home worsened. I was left to deal with this alone with no offer of counselling or any other form of help. By the time I was 16 I decided it was time I finally did something about it so I took myself to the local gp and asked for help (counselling, therapy just anything that would help me cope as I was severely self harming at this stage) Instead of acknowledging my request for help I was handed a prescription for sertaline anti depressants and was sent on my way (I was in the gps for all of 10 minutes, not nearly long enough to be prescribed anti depressants, it was also my first visit to that particular gp as I was moved to a childrens unit in Scotstounhill) I decided that maybe the doctors prescription was the best option and decided to take them, the first two days were okay, I wasn't experiencing anything different so I continued to take them as prescribed (one tablet a day) but by day three and four I was hearing voices and seeing people who weren't really there, I was having terrible night terrors and self harmed basically non stop during those days by the time day six came I felt so distraught about everything that I was experiencing that I attempted to end my life, I emptied all of my tablets out of the packaging and onto a table and started to take them all. I was so lucky that my partner at the time arrived home and stopped me before I could do any serious harm to myself. I started to explain what I was going through and they basically gave me what I really needed all along, someone to listen, someone who would actually help me with my issues and stop me from blocking it all in to the point I was physically harming myself. They were able to tell me that I didnt need medication, they reassured me I would be okay without them and I allowed them to take the medication and dispose of it all.

If GP's keep handing out anti depressants instead of offering help so many more people are going to go through the same experience as myself, even some will experience worse, some people may not be as lucky as myself and may go through with committing suicide without anyone there to stop or help them. I was too young to go through something like this myself to begin with even worse that a legal guardian wasn't informed that I was prescribed a high dosage medication. Its terrible how easily accessible medications, with side effects like these are. I would hate for someone younger or even a little older than me to go through something like this and not be offered every other bit of help before hand. Anto depressants should be a last resort after every other avenue has been pursued.

Thank you for taking the time out to read about my experience.