

Andrew's chronic fatigue story

Group Income Protection

In November 2021, Andrew started experiencing different health concerns, including extreme fatigue, dizziness, word finding difficulties and brain fog. These symptoms had been around for a few months, and he'd tried to remain at work whilst juggling his symptoms alongside his work duties. Several months on he collapsed. He was rushed to hospital where investigations took place, but specialists were unable to reach a diagnosis. Then another month on, Andrew collapsed again. After further investigations he was diagnosed with chronic fatigue syndrome.

Andrew's work was very important to him. He wanted to get back to work for his own mental wellbeing, but he knew he needed help to achieve this. He asked his employers to make a referral to Aviva for support.

Within three days he received a call from an Aviva Case Manager who gathered information about his situation and discussed how they could support him to get back to work.

He told the case manager how he was continuing to experience fatigue, disorientation, poor focus and concentration, poor sleep, and weakness in his joints. He also explained how he'd been trying to return to his full-time role but was frustrated at the slow progress of his recovery. His Occupational Health team had recommended a reduction in his hours as they could see he was finding it hard to cope with a full-time role.

To help Andrew, Aviva offered a referral to their rehabilitation partner, Kate Meads Associates, which Andrew accepted. Andrew was offered support which focussed on pacing himself, fatigue management, emotional and physical resilience techniques and return to work guidance.

He received regular support from the occupational therapist who gave him techniques on how to manage his symptoms, not only at work but in all areas of his life. The Aviva case manager completed a medical assessment, and a proportionate benefit claim was accepted to ensure that Andrew was supported financially during this challenging time.

With the care provided, Andrew was able to increase his hours to four working days, which he continues working to this day.

"As soon as Aviva got involved this was the changing point for me. My case manager was able to put everything into place for me and really took care of getting me the help I needed. I was sceptical of the support initially, but I was willing to give anything a try and I'm glad I did as Kate Meads Associates were amazing. They really validated me at a time when I didn't think anyone believed me. I thought they were solely going to focus on getting me back to work, but this couldn't be further from the truth. They supported me in all areas of functionality, and it reassured me to feel supported after being ill for so long. I felt the Aviva case manager was interested in trying to support me, none of our calls felt transactional, they all felt genuine. The process was easy because if I needed any help Aviva got the answer for me. I'm still not 100% but I am still able to use the tools and techniques to this day. It helped me get back to work and have a life after struggling with an illness for a long time. I would recommend this service to anyone."

Andrew, Associate Director, age 39 at time of claim

Early intervention and rehabilitation support is available to employees insured under Aviva Group Income Protection. Rehabilitation services are non-contractual benefits which Aviva can change or withdraw at any time.