

Valerie's story: Complex needs



- ◆ Valerie is a 61 year old Mancunian who has spent the majority of her adult life writing and teaching English Literature at the University of Cumbria. Until recently, she lived alone in her one bedroom flat on the University's campus. Valerie has struggled with her weight since her youth, and in recent years she has become clinically obese.
- ◆ Valerie noticed her memory wasn't up to scratch 3 years ago. She firstly found herself forgetting small details about her own characters in her new book; then she began forgetting her content during lectures. Worried, she visited her GP who tested her for a multitude of problems; Valerie there learnt that she had Type 2 diabetes (most likely a result of her obesity) and vascular dementia.
- ◆ Valerie was dealing well with her ailments until she began to lose her sight, which has meant she had to give up the love of her life, teaching and writing. She has recently found solace in being given a guide dog, Alfie, who has become her most loyal companion.
- ◆ Having suffered a small stroke, it was decided that Valerie should move to a care home, where she has now settled. Unfortunately, last week she suffered another stroke and is due to be discharged from the stroke unit at Cumberland Infirmary tomorrow.