

# Patrick's Story

“My brain rewired itself, actually while being MRI scanned...”



I took part in the FOURIER trial — to control my cholesterol.

I was born in the mid-50s and had no real health problems until November 2011 — I suffered a serious stroke, that during treatment was found to be caused by cholesterol blocking the left artery in my neck. Part of the blockage had broke off and stopped blood flow to the speech part of my brain. Luckily my brain rewired itself, actually while being MRI scanned. I have no apparent damage to speech or anything — and the MRI scan, with my permission, is now used worldwide in training consultants. The medical profession had known of the possibility of this ‘rewiring’ but had no physical proof.

In 2013 I went on a computer course run by Age Concern, and noticed an advert for volunteers to be part of a drug trial to do with cholesterol. I applied as I wanted to assist in stopping someone else going through my stroke scenario, and was directed to The William Harvey Clinical Research Centre,

David Collier and his team at the William Harvey couldn't be more helpful, informative and pleasant. I was given a full medical, and we spoke about my medical history. My father had died of a heart attack in 1973, probably caused by cholesterol — although then the medical profession hadn't known about its existence. A lot of people died of heart attacks in the 60s, 70s and 80s probably due to this...

I started taking the drug prescribed, and went every 12 weeks to the William Harvey to have a check-up and receive more of the trial drug.

It was at one of these sessions that I spoke to David about feelings in my chest. Tests ensued, and David said I needed a triple heart by-pass, as the cholesterol hadn't only blocked my neck artery but veins in my heart . I had the operation in December 2014, very shortly after the diagnoses, thanks to David.

In 2017 the trial finished — it had been a success! The American drug administration and Great Britain's regulators licensed the drug for use, and in part because the drug company, Novartis, were so impressed with David & his team they reduced the cost of the drug to the NHS.



I now volunteer at The William Harvey Clinical Research Centre, assisting where I can. I've met some great people, found out more that I never knew — for example, that drug trials owe their format to codes developed at The Nuremberg Trials of 2nd World War crimes. I try to persuade friends to join trials — especially now with Covid-19 study so important.