

Living with

Medical Technology



Susan Kirk

During 2005 and 2006 I talked to young people about what life was like when you need medical equipment to keep well. This is what they told me.

Many young people looked after their own equipment or helped their parents with it.

Some young people told their friends about the equipment but others liked to keep it private.

The medical equipment was both a good and bad thing in their lives.

It was good because it helped young people to feel better and keep well. But at the same time it could get in the way of going out to places and take-up a lot of time in the day.

Some young people could be woken up by the alarms, the noise of the equipment and leaking feeds.



Young people liked doing lots of different social activities and their friends were very important to them.

If they had missed school young people liked it when teachers gave them some extra help to catch-up.

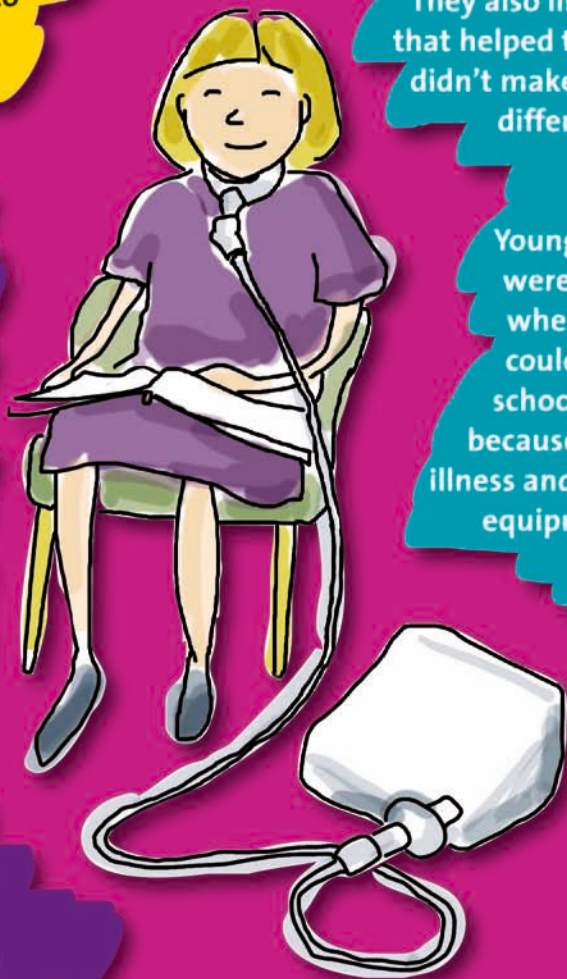
They also liked schools that helped them but didn't make them feel different.

Young people were unhappy when they couldn't go on school trips because of their illness and the equipment they needed.

Some young people felt that nurses and doctors did not give them enough information that they could understand about their illness and the equipment.

Some young people also felt that nurses and doctors talked to their parents and not enough to them.

They liked it when they were helped by nurses, doctors and support workers that they knew.



What happens next?

I have written a report based on what young people told me. This will be sent to people such as nurses, doctors, therapists, social workers and teachers. It will also be sent to people who plan services for young people who use medical equipment.

I hope it will help them to understand what life is like when you need medical equipment and how to support young people in the best way.



Contact:

Sue Kirk,
School of Nursing,
Midwifery and Social Work,
The University of Manchester. M13 9PL.
email: sue.kirk@manchester.ac.uk