

# Just a trip down the stairs is all it took.

## The Virginia Mallick Story



I was just walking down the stairs and I fell, it was as easy as that.

I was in a coma for six weeks. When I eventually came round I discovered that I had hit my head and suffered a brain injury.

I have been left paralysed down one side. It is getting a little better but my right arm and right leg have been affected. Sometimes I can walk with the help of an aid, but other times I use a wheelchair.

At Headway I go ten pin bowling with the group, which is great as I would not undertake this activity on my own. It seems safer somehow when everyone is in the same boat and there are people on hand to help me if I need it.

The thing I find most frustrating is that while my short-term and my long-term memory have not been affected, my speech has and this has had a big impact on my life. My speech has improved a lot since coming to Headway. I often work one to

one with a member of staff or a volunteer and this helps me tremendously with my communication. We often do some sort of project work, for instance I have written many short stories which has been great for self expression and increasing my confidence. I had never tried any creative writing before and have received much pleasure from it and from showing my work to family and friends. It would be a dream to get them published one day, you never know!

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I have been helped enormously by the Headway Computer Training Room. I have learned many new skills like accounts and emailing. I can now type up all my completed short stories. Initially I could only use my left hand, but as time goes by I have been encouraged to introduce my right hand, because I have been paralysed down this side it is difficult, but I will persevere.

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I really look forward to going to Headway where I can have a change of environment and meet up with other people in a similar position to myself. I have made lots of new friends. My attendance at Headway also gives my husband a break from caring for me, so he too can go out and about.

In the summer months we have been on different excursions as a group. These are to places that I wouldn't normally visit so it has been really enjoyable. When you use a wheelchair it can be quite difficult to get around sometimes.

At Headway I feel at home, they are such friendly people and have really helped me through a very difficult time.

Virginia Mallick