

ADDITIONAL FILE 2 Themes, Subthemes and Example Codes

Theme	Subtheme/s	Example codes
Soldiering on	Juggling hierarchy of health and social needs	No choice Medication side effects Prioritising Multiple health conditions Own health / others health
The challenge of navigating the health system		Frustration Repeated visits Ignored Conflicting opinions Lack of clarity Anger Multiple investigations
I am the expert in my own knee	Being a 'good' patient	I know my body Trust in surgeon Balance of power Protecting the NHS Others vs self 'Not one to make a fuss'
Shift in what I expected from surgery	It could have been much worse	Primary surgery hopes Pain relief 'Some relief' Reflection Gratitude for any improvement
I am not the person I used to be	Me and my identity My external identity	Disappointment in own body Changed life expectations Comparison to others Relationship strain Social exclusion
Lingering uncertainty		Shaken confidence Ongoing 'threat' No escape Want to 'move on' Unable to 'move on' Reluctant acceptance