

## Patient Success Profile

**Name:** Gary Holloway

**Age:** 71

**Program:** Mental Health

**Referred by:** Dr. Boris Boyko,  
Family and Sports Medicine Clinic

**Clinician:** Lisa Clendening, *Mental Health Practitioner*

Except for a brief time in Calgary, Gary has lived in Edmonton all his life. As a retired structural iron worker, he misses “walking the steel” and tries to stay active by walking a three-and-a-half-mile loop in the river valley as often as possible. He believes age is just a number and loves to get out for a round of golf and some dancing, too.



## What led you to the Mental Health program at Edmonton North PCN?

My doctor, Dr. Boyko, recommended the program to help me cope with some anxiety issues. I attended a few group sessions in May 2013, but found they weren't a good fit for me—I wasn't comfortable in the group setting. The clinic was very accommodating and set me up with one-on-one counselling.

## Why was the Mental Health program a good fit for you?

It made me realize a lot of things about myself. I was having a difficult time managing certain issues. I never would have taken the time, or had the know-how to work on them myself. Lisa took my concerns one step at a time and really took the time to see my point of view. She had a calm demeanor and seemed to understand every situation as I explained it to her. I appreciated the action and response approach she took.

## How has the PCN helped you? What progress have you made?

The program helped me tremendously. We started small and worked our way to solving more complex issues. Lisa was able to narrow down some of the situations that were causing me anxiety. Claustrophobia was a big one for me. Through conversation, Lisa uncovered when the fear began and figured out what was contributing to making it a bigger issue in my life. She put together little exposure programs I could work on at home. The idea was to put myself in smaller scenarios and work through them for practice.

Before my work with Lisa, I couldn't ride in an elevator alone; now, I have no issues and only take the stairs for exercise. I used to get angry and overreact in certain situations because of my anxiety, but now, I can stop and think before reacting. I ask myself “How bad can it be? Why are you getting upset? Is this worth getting upset about? I can sit back and take a breath now, and make sure to prepare myself beforehand.”

## What advice would you share with others who are just starting or thinking about joining this program?

Go in with an open mind and be honest; they can't work with you if you're not honest with yourself. The PCN gives you all the time you need to really learn and understand the foundation of your problem; I never felt rushed or pressured. Being proactive and attacking my fears was the best thing I did for my well-being.

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