

DREDF

HEALTHCARE STORIES

Part Two: Attitudes

Denise Scherer Jacobsen:

I'm Denise Scherer Jacobsen.

Here's the letter that accompanied the lab results that went to my doctor from the specialist of endocrinology and metabolism.

"We saw this unfortunate 57 year old woman in our office on March 10, 2008. My [chuckle] impression is she is far more intelligent than she looks to be."

Elizabeth Grigsby:

So my hospital stay ended up to be five months in the hospital.

They had to transfer me several times because I needed to go to x-ray and stuff, but nobody would listen to me about how you have to hold on to my legs because my legs. They came in just pulled back the covers and started lifting. They were like "we do this every day we know what we're doing". "Oh just relax let us do our job", and when they went up to lift me you heard this loud pop in my knee it's like my knee went one way and the rest of my body spread over onto the gurney. I was in such excruciating pain that again I'm not a cryer usually but all I could do was cry. I felt so like I was being treated less than a human being.

Larry Voss:

So the first surgeon I saw recommended a procedure called a hemipro -- pelvectomy -- hemipelvectomy, which involves removing part of my pelvis and my entire leg, because of the location of the tumor. And when I expressed a lot of concern about this, he expressed his opinion that he didn't see why that would make a big deal to me, since I wasn't walking anyway and was a wheelchair user. And, you know, it just amazed me that he couldn't see all the other aspects of losing a major part of your body might have, even though you couldn't walk.

Francis Deloatch:

At one point when I was in the hospital I noticed that my right leg was hurting. So finally, the resident that was covering that floor, I said to him, my right leg is broken. And he wouldn't believe me. Right away he should have said to me, 'Oh, okay.' He should have said, oh, well, she has OI. She knows what a broken leg feels like. And she's telling us her leg is broken and we should act on that. It made me very, very frustrated.

Fred Nisen

I'm Fred Nisen.

Another problem is that because of my speech disability. They assume they won't understand me so they don't try and some people don't think I'm intelligent enough to communicate with just because of the way I talk.