

HELLO DOC TOR.

Art and poems
created by
people living
with obesity



NUFFIELD DEPARTMENT OF
PRIMARY CARE
HEALTH SCIENCES

Lived experience contributors

Naomi Rettig

Susan Roberts

Tanveer Siyan

Steve More

Debs Smith

Gill

And those who wished to remain anonymous

Researchers

Charlotte Albury

Kayley McPherson

Creatives

Libby Wilcox Pierce, Artist

Ameal Wolf, Artist

Grace Copeland, Poet

In ‘Hello Doctor’ you will find art and poems created by people living with obesity. Focussing on experiences of communication with healthcare professionals, the reality of these encounters - the difficulties, worries, challenges, and hopes – are emotively and creatively shared.

A group of nine people living with obesity took part in a series of creative workshops led by the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Science’s ‘Clinical Communication’ group. Two artists, Libby Wilcox-Pierce and Ameal Wolf, and a poet, Grace Copeland, led the workshops and shared skills and methods to support people taking part to create art and poetry to communicate their stories and experiences. Members of the group also shared more about their experiences of communication with Libby and Ameal, who created their own artwork from these discussions.

How we communicate is important. Whoever you are, we hope ‘Hello Doctor’ provides opportunity to read, learn, listen, reflect, and share.

Dr Charlotte Albury



Libby Wilcox-Pierce

'Consultations'

“People living with obesity tend to feel like they are not being seen or heard, the poems and art work in this document, have given people living with obesity a voice and an opportunity to be seen, which I think is really important. Each piece is so powerful and hopefully provides some insights into what it really feels like to live with obesity, in a way that we have never seen or heard before.”

Sarah Le Brocq

Founder & Director All About Obesity, and someone that lives with obesity

“Through the accessible art materials of paint and pencil, members of the public explored experiences with communication in healthcare settings. It was absolutely brilliant to watch the participants gain confidence and lean into their creative intuition as the workshop progressed, which resulted in poignantly mindful and personal pieces that were woven with their individual experiences of clinical healthcare communications.”

Libby Wilcox Pierce, Artist



Naomi

“This is me curled in a ball feeling shame and isolation while being judged.”

“As a poet, I spend much of my time seeking out new modes of expression and discovering new uses for familiar language. However, bringing poetry to people who may never have tried it before is always an eye-opening, heartwarming experience. I was astounded by the way the participants grew in confidence and craft over the space of the session, teaching me their own way with words. Leading this session taught me a lot about how focussing on the language we use to communicate with one another can help us to better understand and process the interactions we have. This is particularly important in healthcare settings, where we often meditate on the meanings and repercussions of medical terms, but rarely the way they are delivered. The poems that came from the session harness language in deeply personal ways to speak to the power of language itself, its downfalls and disappointments as well as its capacity to comfort and heal”

Grace Copeland, Poet

“I introduced a set of ideas and techniques as tools for participants to pick up, leave, and alter as they saw fit, with their thoughts, feelings, and experiences leading the way. One of my fundamental beliefs is in the uniquely human impulse to create and enjoy art, and in this workshop I found it reaffirmed. Whilst some participants voiced the opinion that they weren’t artists, all of them were inevitably able to do what artists do: express themselves creatively and honestly through art.”

-Ameal Wolf, Artist

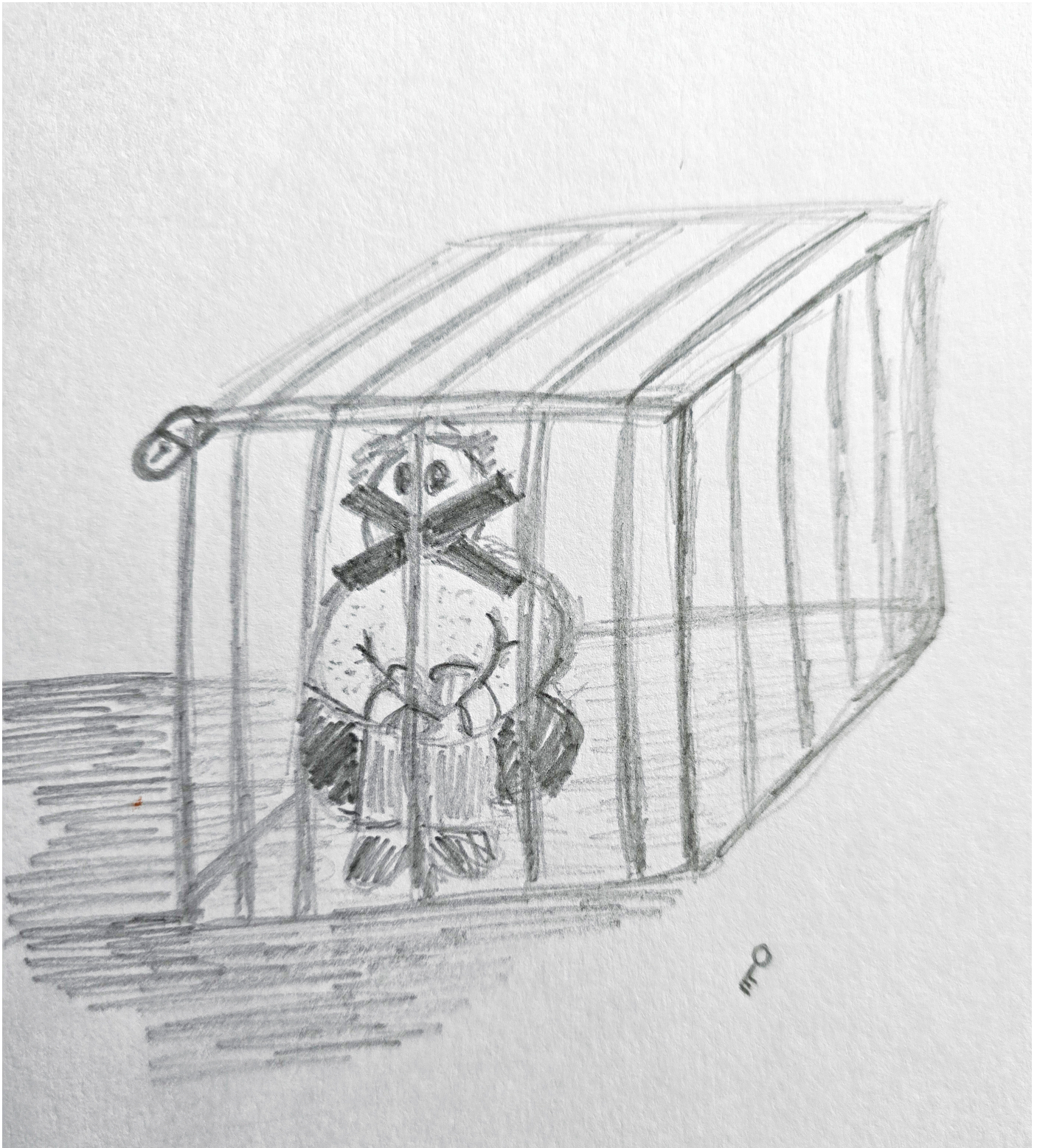
Hello Doctor

As I enter the waiting room with a smile, my feelings become overwhelmed. I gaze at the magnolia walls, feeling suffocated or hated. I manage to grin and then smile again, but inside my tummy, feeling still.

Could this be me, the medication taking its effect? I'm lacking energy.

I need to exercise, get active, be myself. "Slow down," I tell myself, Maybe take a holistic approach to my health. "Wake up, sleepy head, dreaming again." "Doctor, Hello, please come in." Good to see you again Gillian... I catch my breath. Hello Doctor

Gill



Naomi

“This is me feeling locked in a box with no voice and unable to reach the key.”

Big piercing beak hammers with judgement, creased face

“Ca CawCa Caw...”

Sharp anger SHOUTS “HIT>>>HATE>>>PUNCH”

Cold people, judge negatively

Loud and broken, I fall

BIG

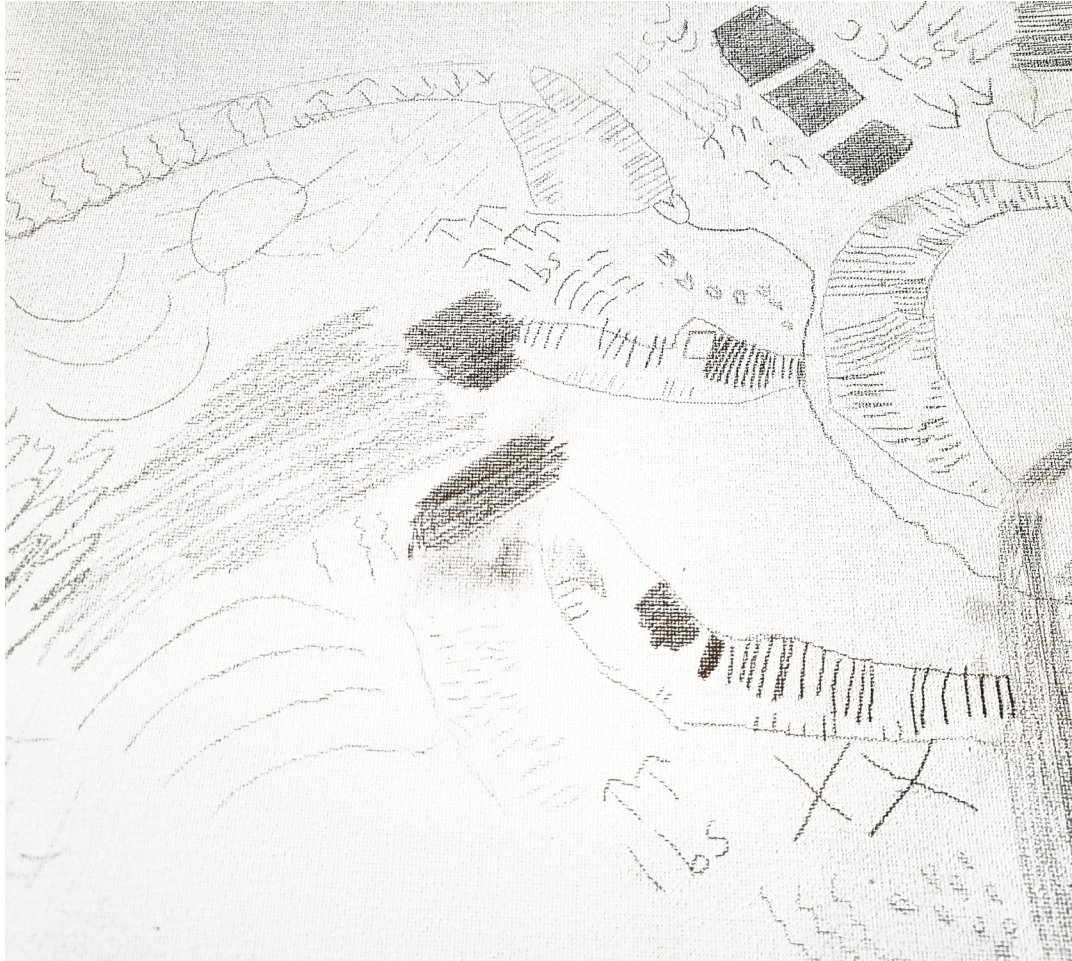
Tanveer

“This is how I felt when I saw the nurse 20 years ago when discussing the diabetes and my weight.”



Libby Wilcox-Pierce

'Talk to me'



Debs



Beverly

“My primary healthcare experience was like a bed of roses - clear communication between myself and medical practitioners, appointments available, successful treatments.

An abrupt disruption to this happened in the last couple of years. Experiencing terrible back pain it took 9 months from seeing my doctor to being contacted by physiotherapists via email and messages. A few questions asked, exercises given and then silence! Another five months have passed and still no change in the pain. What now?”

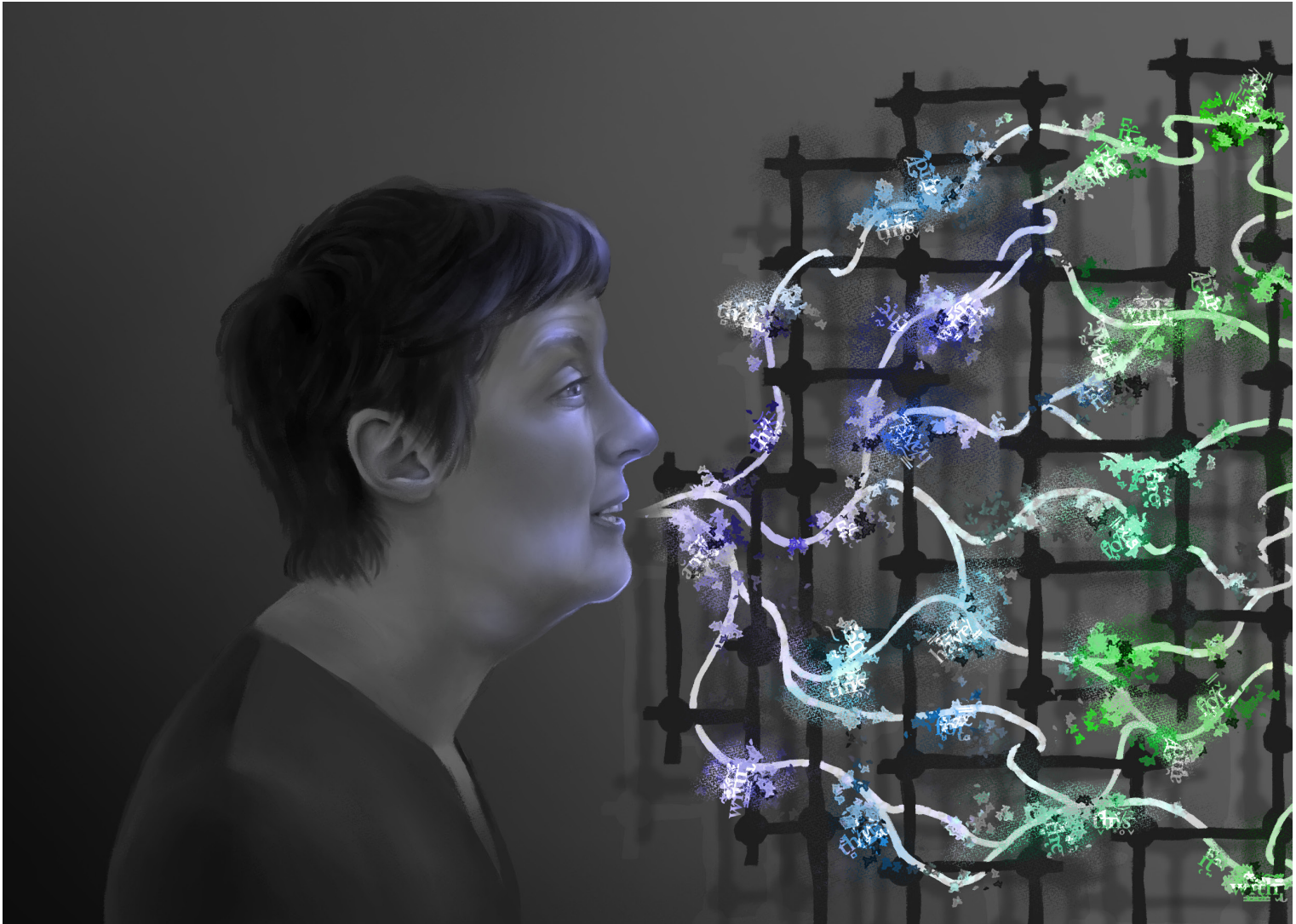
The longing for freedom and breakthrough
is the answer I knew existed beyond the blue
steel door.

Beyond the clinical setting, the pursuit of
trust and care, the appointment, test and
freedom results were the answers I achieved
the other side of that red door.

Caring, bearing and warning, hope, integrity
and emotions..

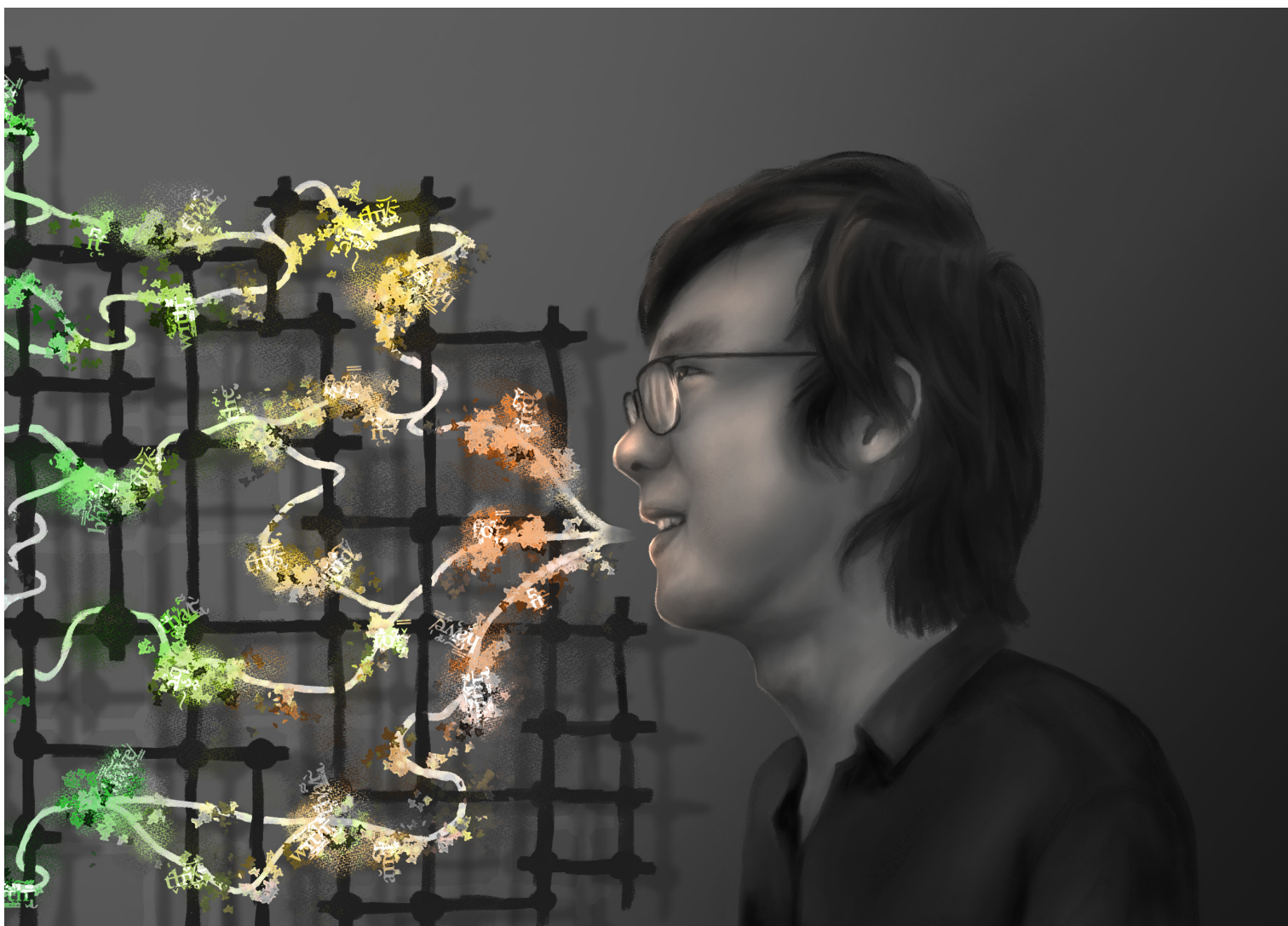
Oh NHS how we salute you...

Steve



Ameal Wolf

'Confluent Understanding'





18

Dear Doctor

I feel scared and hopeless
Do you sense that?
Please put me at ease.

I'm hiding behind smiles
Do you see that?
Please look beyond that.

I want to be healthy
Do you know that?
Please help me do that.

I struggle to tell you
Do you sense that?
Please encourage me.

I need you to see me
Listen to me
Help me help myself.

Naomi

Release In Silence

Silence		Makes me cry
Emotions well up		To be released
The Will they hold?		This silence
So that I can		Release safely
Will they wait?		And allow me?
The untapped tears		Trickle.....
Then run	Bursting	Out
Grows in strength	Like a dam	I look at her
Is SHE calm?	I know	I am scared
Will she Let me?		Let loose
Hold	and	Support me?
Understand		Me?
My		Inner Child
I have to stop	(Gasp)	Or I won't get up
I slow down		My breathing
In between	The sobs	And cries

Tissues galore
Into the bin they go
Along with the pain
The anger

All used up

The hurt

She watches
I look up

And waits.....
Slowly.....

A small smile
I hug myself

I feel relieved
She smiles

“Will you be OK?”
I nod

And...

She asks
We start talking

Tanveer

“Based on an appointment with a GP over a year ago. We discussed the diabetes, the eating disorder and my then weight.”

How Are You?

'I have a pulse so I'm all good'

'I'm sorry to bother you'

I'm not good.

There's not enough time to tell you
my issues.

I'll talk quickly.

Anxious.

Worried I'll say the wrong things.

Brain freeze.

Babble.

Don't know what to tell you.

Say what I think you want to hear.

I'm a waste of space.

I need help.

Beyond help.

The doctor is writing things down
not at me.

Is she listening to me?

I am here and she is

The silence

looking at the screen

Is she hearing me?

there

is

crushing.

Naomi



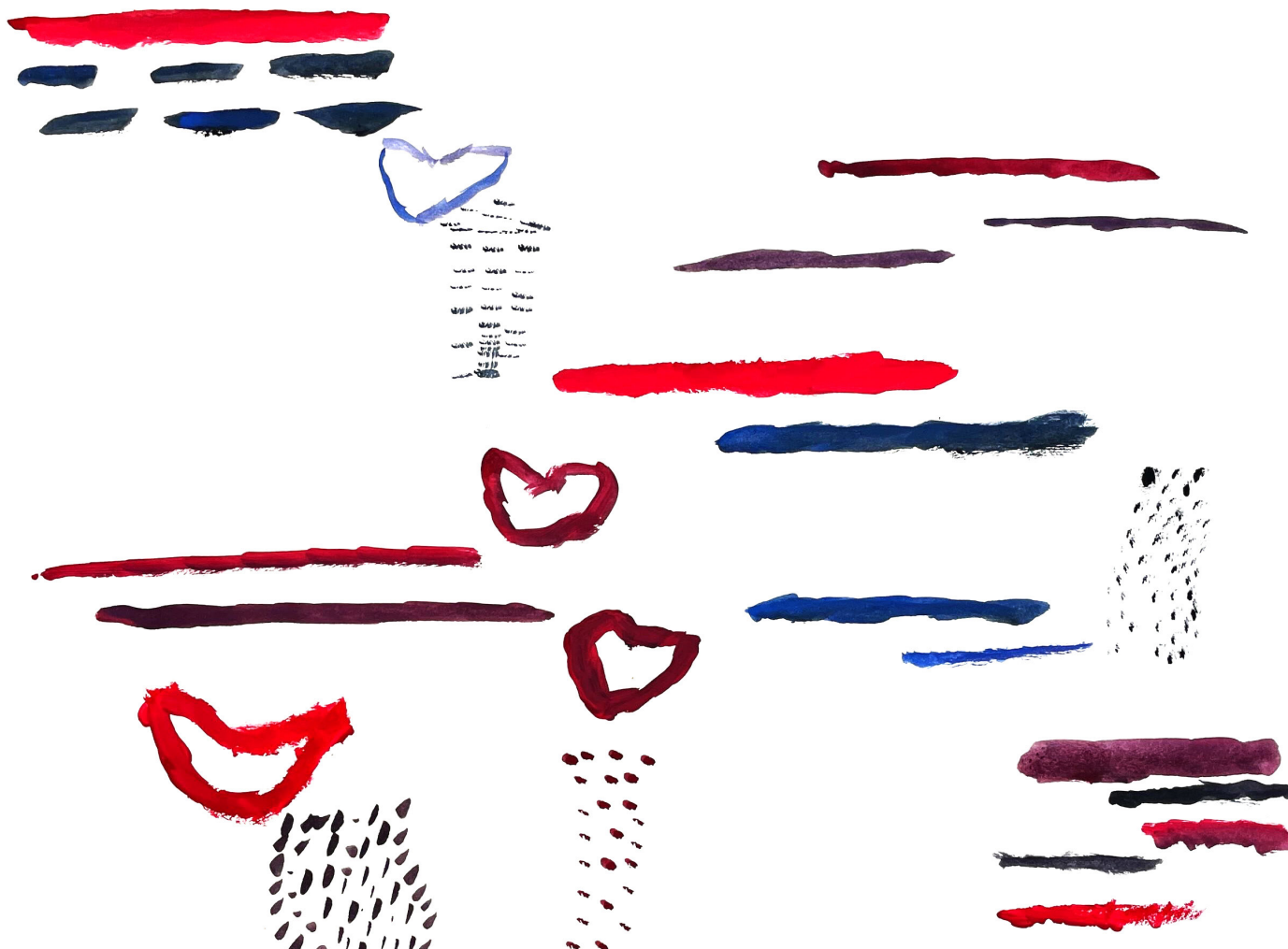
Naomi

“This is me holding a balloon of hope, and if the outside pins don’t pop it then my own spiky forcefield will.”



Gill

“I feel like I’m going round in circles. It feels pointless what else
can I say? I just feel anxious”



Debs

“The lines, different colours, and some hearts was to represent different conversations that I have had with different primary care clinicians about weight related issues and I was trying to show how hard that has been. and with the hearts how I have tried to explain that the struggles I have had with food and weight ... Telling me what to eat and how much to exercise was telling me stuff I generally knew...”



Anonymous

Our team of communication scientists, based at the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford, research communication between patients and healthcare professionals. We involve people with lived experience throughout all of the work that we do.

Find out more about our team's work here:



If you live with obesity, or are a healthcare professional, and you'd like to get involved in our work and research, please contact us here: orca@phc.ox.ac.uk



NUFFIELD DEPARTMENT OF
PRIMARY CARE
HEALTH SCIENCES

