

---

## CASE STUDY: Maintaining independence and eliminating a complex care package and specialist manual handling equipment

---

*Debra Corney Consultant Occupational Therapist BSc Hons, HCPC  
Registered*

➤ **Case Study:**

Shirley is 65 years old and has been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, moderate arthritis of the spine, lower leg lymphedema and cellulitis. Shirley is 5'2" and weighs 26 stone (65kgs). The combination of her health conditions and weight has resulted in her lower limbs becoming very swollen, affecting movement in her chair and bed, as well as her ability to mobilise. Shirley has a history of falls and paramedics are often called to assist her from the floor.

Shirley lives alone in the ground floor of her house. She has carers twice a day to wash and cream her legs and refit her pressure stockings. Otherwise, Shirley is independent in all other tasks. Shirley has to get up to use the toilet up to eight times in a night, and has begun to notably struggle with transfers in and out of bed.

The difficulties experienced with transfers can be attributed to Shirley's physique; her lower leg length is just 14" and her body mass concentrated around her lower back, hip and thigh area. Shirley's legs are too heavy for her to lift onto her current profiling bed, resulting in her brother having to sleep over at night to support lifting her legs in and out of bed.

➤ **Results:**

A FloorBed and bed lever have been put in place for a trial. Once seated, Shirley lowers the bed right to the floor, where she utilises the bed lever to assist in sliding her legs into the bed. Through use of the FloorBed, Shirley is now able to independently transfer in and out of bed.

Shirley is now also able to independently reposition herself in bed. The reduction in pain, discomfort and shortness of breath [caused by the strain of having to lift her legs into bed], enables Shirley to achieve a central lying position. Shirley uses the back rest raise to ensure an appropriate sleeping position which in turn improves and aids respiration whilst in bed.

The FloorBed benefits all:

- User – Shirley is now experiencing independent, pain free and effortless transfers in and out of bed.
- Family – Shirley’s brother no longer needs to wake up eight times a night to support and lift Shirley’s legs in and out of bed. The risk of a significant manual handling injury is reduced.
- Local authority – The existing package of one carer twice a day was maintained, however, an extensive package of care was avoided. (i.e. two - three carers x four daily visits using specialist manual handling equipment such as bariatric hoists and slings to support safe bed transfers)

#### Testimonial

*“The bed is very comfortable and transfers are much easier. I don’t feel any pulling or twisting in my spine like in my old bed.” ~ Shirley*