

## Susan's Story



### CASE STUDY: Reducing Risk of Bed Fall Injury by Turning a Bed Fall into a Roll

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

#### ➤ Case Study

Forty-nine year old Susan experiences involuntary movements in all four limbs as a result of Huntington's disease. These movements can be very expansive and cause Susan to become off balance when mobilising and transferring; they have also resulted in several bed falls, as the movements continue whilst Susan is asleep. Susan lives with her husband, Jim, and was sharing a double bed until the large movements began to disturb Jim and he had to sleep in another room.

Unfortunately, Susan was falling out of bed whilst asleep each night, often more than once. Susan frequently required paramedic and hospital intervention due to significant injuries, including injuries to her eye and shoulder. On one occasion she required stitches to her head.

Susan is able to mobilise independently and requires support from a riser recliner and toilet frame to enable her to retain her independence with her transfers. Susan required an intervention to reduce the risk of bed fall associated injuries without impacting on her independence with bed transfers.

Provision of side rails would have prevented Susan from being able to transfer in and out of bed independently, and a crash mat is likely to have increased the risk of falls as it would have been a trip hazard when attempting to stand and mobilise.

#### ➤ Results

A FloorBed was put in place to reduce the risk of bed fall injuries. Once Susan has transferred into the FloorBed, she lowers it to the ground and the ultra-low mattress platform height of seven centimetres turns the fall into a roll, which reduces the impact and therefore the likelihood of injury.

This has been very successful in reducing the occurrence of injury for Susan. The uncontrolled movements are still causing Susan to come out of the bed whilst asleep; however, since provision of the FloorBed, Susan has not sustained any injuries as she is no longer falling but rolling out of the bed.

Susan also benefits greatly from the hi-lo function, as she is able to use the controls independently to raise the bed, which enables her to retain her independence with bed transfers.

An intercom system has been put in place to alert Jim when Susan falls, and he is then able to assist Susan back to bed safely. Since provision of the FloorBed, Susan has not required paramedic intervention or further hospital admission.

*~The family has advised the OT that they are less anxious as they do not worry about Susan hurting herself as a result of a bed fall. Susan has also reportedly advised that she is very grateful for the FloorBed as it has reduced the occurrence of injuries.~*