

## “I got my life back...”

Mrs. A was a 72 year old lady who had Cerebral Vascular Accident (CVA) resulting in a right side paralysis. Prior to her CVA, Mrs. A was a very active, independent lady who enjoyed meeting friends, playing bowls and going out with her family who live locally. Mrs. A lived alone in her own home. Following the CVA, she spent 5 months in hospital and was discharged home with a full care package, with 2 support workers calling 4 times a day. Mrs. A was unable to stand and walk or complete many daily tasks.

Mrs. A was referred to Reablement to assess whether it was possible for her to regain as much independence back as possible and reduce her need for care; Mrs. A was just “desperate to walk again”. When we first met Mrs. A she was extremely low in mood and very tearful. Her days were spent sitting in a chair, unable to move, often wet as her catheter would leak frequently.

So, we initially worked with Mrs. A to promote a better standing position, tolerance and encouraging her to put weight through her right leg. She soon progressed and her care calls during the day were reduced. However, Mrs. A was still dealing with a leaking catheter which was understandably distressing for her. What mattered to Mrs. A was for this issue to be resolved. We continued to work with Mrs. A daily on her standing and sitting and also showed her how to empty her own catheter into a plastic jug, Mrs. A mastered this within a week. This seemingly small task, which she was now able to complete independently gave her a sense of achievement, control and dignity.

We then began to practice getting in and out of bed with Mrs. A using a transfer board, again she soon got the hang of this. As rehabilitation progressed, along with the support of her two daughters who visited regularly, Mrs. A reduced her care calls even further.

However, Mrs. A was very determined she wanted to walk again independently. Her personal outcomes were to be able to walk into Airbus Café to meet her friends for lunch and to be able to attend afternoon tea for her daughter’s birthday. So we involved the Physio and a plan was put in place to work on Mrs. A’s hip and knee control. As Mrs. A progressed, we then assessed her to see if she would be able to use a walking stick. We also practiced car transfers, to enable Mrs. A to go out more easily with her daughters.

By the end of the Reablement support, provided by a multi-disciplinary team of professionals, Mrs. A was able to walk independently using a stick for support both indoors and a limited distance outdoors. She was able to meet her friends for lunch which was so important to her. Eventually, Mrs. A was able to do more tasks for herself and described the support she had received from the team as having “given me my life back”.