

Margaret

A story about how listening and understanding individual needs helped improve comfort and lessen pain

'Margaret'* is a longtime sling user. For the past 20 years she has been using the same access-style sling. However, Margaret also suffers from severe scoliosis. Scoliosis is known to be a progressive condition that can worsen over time as muscles weaken and the curvature of the spine increases. With these changes to body tone, a more supportive sling style is better suited than an access style which particularly requires stronger torso muscles. Both the local Occupational Therapist Team and other sling suppliers had tried unsuccessfully to get Margaret to swap to a style more suited for her current body tone, but Margaret was adamant the access sling suited her.

Recognising that Margaret was struggling unnecessarily, the Occupational Therapist contacted Care & Independence to ask for advice. *"In situations such as these", explained Steve Watson, National Sales Assessment Manager, "objections are not usually founded on the products themselves - it quite often turns out to be more about comfort zones; people feel reassured with what they already know and trust. When that's been a constant for years on end, it's only natural to be reluctant - even fearful - for change and the unknown."*

Steve and local Product Specialist Kathryn Emasealu attended a joint visit to learn more direct from Margaret herself about the situation and daily difficulties she faced. With their professional insight, they knew a different sling style would make a positive improvement to Margaret's everyday life. Having spent much of the assessment patiently listening to Margaret's perspective and speaking with her about her real needs and self-perceived fears of trying something new, Steve and Kathryn's caring and empathetic approach gave Margaret the self-confidence to try something different; that being a combination of the GLOVE Diamond Deluxe with a GLOVE Foot.

The integral padding and no-seam leg sections of the GLOVE Diamond Deluxe provided Margaret with the comfort she sought, whilst still allowing the toileting access she had come to rely on with the access sling. The sling's diamond-shaped aperture was purposely designed to alleviate pressure on the coccyx and sacrum, making it ideal for those with spinal concerns such as Margaret. The full body deluxe shaping allowed the sling rather than Margaret's weakened body tone to take the strain during hoisting. As is usually the case with severe scoliosis, Margaret's hips windswept to one side, requiring a hammock fit of leg sections. Whilst the GLOVE Diamond Deluxe itself was still hammocked, Margaret was encouraged to additionally use the GLOVE Foot. This specialist sling accessory reduced the pressure to her legs and would help alleviate the pain Margaret was experiencing in her hips and knees, delivering a far more comfortable lift during hoisting.

With Margaret fitted into the new sling combination, Steve, Kathryn and the Occupational Therapist waited in anticipation of Margaret's verdict. It was a success - Margaret had been won over! By taking the time to listen to and understand Margaret, Steve and Kathryn had managed to achieve what no-one else had in the past two years – get Margaret to embrace a change for the better.

"The best thing about this outcome", says Kathryn, "is that Margaret is now in a much better suited sling for her condition. The strain on her body is considerably lessened and her comfort has increased, but most of all, Margaret herself is at ease and happy with the new solution."

CONDITION: Severe Scoliosis

PRODUCT: GLOVE Diamond Deluxe (GDD)
GLOVE Foot (GFOOT)



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**Due to the sensitivities of medical conditions, names have been changed to protect privacy and images used are for illustrative purposes only.*