

## **Case Study – Katherine, Community Setting**

Katherine is a 35 year old woman who was involved in a motor vehicle accident 6 years ago. As a result of the accident she has C5/6 tetraplegia (quadriplegia).

Katherine lives at home with her husband and four children, who are aged 7,9,11 and 14. Her husband works full-time. Katherine uses a powered wheelchair as her sole form of mobility. She drives the wheelchair using a modified joystick and switches.

Katherine receives 15 hours/week of personal care support, spread over 5 days. She also receives 3 hours/week of homecare support. Katherine has a suprapubic catheter. She is able to empty the bag, providing it is hanging on the front of the wheelchair (this is done discreetly). She hooks her elbow around the backrest push handle to maintain balance as she reach down to the bag.

Katherine's home responsibilities include

- Planning meals
- Preparing shopping lists
- Shopping
- Managing the budget
- Helping the children with their homework

Katherine uses her computer to do the banking, plan menus and shopping lists, send and receive emails and do some of the shopping.

Katherine attends her children's school two hours, one morning a week to assist with the reading program. She is able to get to the school independently in her powered wheelchair.

Katherine enjoys going out with her friends. They try to meet at least once/month and have lunch together, sometimes going to see a movie or doing a bit of shopping. On these occasions Katherine usually uses a wheelchair accessible taxi to get to and from the venue.

Now that Katherine's children are all settled at school, she is considering doing some study at the local TAFE or possibly getting involved in some sort of community activity. She states she is keen to "get out of the house" a bit more.

Katherine's current powered wheelchair has required frequent repairs in the last year and she has been told it is no longer viable to continue repairing it. The seating appeared to have worn, as it has not been replaced in the last 6 years. Katherine reports she has been fairly happy with her wheelchair and seating up until the last 12 months. She is now finding the seating is a bit uncomfortable and often has neck pain at the end of the day. She also had a stage 3 pressure ulcer about 9 months ago.