



Case Study – Ben, Rural Setting

Ben is a 60 year old man who sustained an incomplete spinal cord injury 8 years ago. Prior to his injury, Ben ran his farm independently in the mid-west rural area. The closest health facility is a 2 hour drive away.

Following Ben's injury, his son returned to the farm and took on the major role in running the farm, with support from his father. Ben now lives on the farm with his wife. His son also lives on the same property, with his wife and 12 month old daughter.

Ben walks indoors using a gait aid. He has a powered wheelchair which he uses outdoors and also has a modified quad bike. He is able to independently transfer into the powered wheelchair and onto the quad bike.

Ben requires some support with personal ADL, in tasks such as cutting meat, shaving and washing his hair. His wife does most domestic tasks. Ben however is responsible for managing their finances – banking, paying bills, etc., much of which he does on the computer. Ben also uses the computer to do some farm management tasks and he enjoys being able to maintain this involvement in the farm. Ben states that he doesn't go into town that often although he does occasionally enjoy meeting friends at the pub for a meal or a drink.

Ben generally enjoys doing any tasks around the farm and spending time with his granddaughter. He is hoping, in the next year, to do some travel with his wife. They have recently bought a caravan and started to plan their first trip. However, Ben realizes that before he starts to travel he is going to need to replace his powered wheelchair. He says it has required multiple repairs in the last twelve months and is really getting to a point where it is no longer repairable. He has been fairly happy with his wheelchair although in the last couple of years he says the ride seems to have got a bit rougher. When he first got the powered wheelchair, he said had a few bumps and things didn't seem to bother him, now however, he has a few more aches and pains and finds the bumps more uncomfortable. He reports he has had a couple of pressure areas in the last 8 years, the most recent one was six months ago. Ben feels a good powered wheelchair is critical for him to maintain his participation in many tasks which are important to him. He uses it to get from his house to his sons and around the sheds and areas of the property close to their homes. He also uses it when he goes into town and knows it will be very important when he is traveling. He wants to be able to explore scenery and walking paths with his wife.