

How the BedChair evolved:

Wayne of Multifit became interested in the aspect of being able to get in and out of bed independently, first with the introduction of other Leg Lifting devices, first brought in 15 years ago. When first promoting them, many ots wanted to trial them, but trials where unsuccessful because they would only lift legs up but not transfer legs to the bed's surface. So we could see a need for the leg lifter but not a full solution. That's how the Multifit leglifter was born, due to the frustrations with available models, developing a leg lifter with a more complete solution to getting the client into bed safely.

Our success ratio of selling leg lifters is around 2 out of 3, for every 3 requests, 2 are successful, quite a high success ratio but Wayne's concern is that it doesn't help everybody, some clients are still unable to get their legs on the bed for the following reasons:

- * not able to sit and balance while their legs are being lifted
- * because the leg lifter doesn't move legs to middle of bed, many clients cannot shuffle their legs over to the middle of the bed
- * Clients can't get pull their blankets up over their feet once they are lying down in bed
- * Leg lifter can't help client get out of bed

Knowing these challenges and looking for a solution, Wayne started looking at other products that might be able to be imported. There are a couple of interesting options, but travelling overseas Wayne noticed that while they offered some good features, the complete package was missing in some aspects. So he decided to start making the Bed Chair, designing it around providing a solution to the short falls in similar products overseas. Other products don't go low enough to enable the person to get a secure sitting position in the chair, to feel safe.

When a person is new to powered lifting device, too many buttons in the handset can be confusing and upsetting. Wayne decided on a hand set with only two buttons, one for up and one for down. By pushing one of the buttons, the BedChair goes through a sequence of actions, from the chair position to the profile position, to the fully laid flat position, then back to the chair position if you wish. The handset is easy to use for those easily confused with too many options. The Buttons are raised which makes it easier for people with arthritic fingers to use the handset. The synchronized action can be stopped at any time by releasing the button. If for some reason they can't take their finger off the button, the BedChair will stop after about 30 seconds. You repush the button to make the BedChair perform the next action.

Another benefit is the gentle handling of the person's muscles and often delicate skin by eliminating the twisting action you normally use getting into bed. Where you normally sit on the side of the bed, swing your legs up, twist on your rear and lay down, the BedChair allows you to go from the sitting position and lay straight down without twisting, while supporting your legs straight up without the need to swing them onto the bed. These actions are taken care of by the action of the BedChair, and don't require physical effort from the user. Because the BedChair action will lay you straight down, there is minimal stress on the person's skin. Because the BedChair takes you from sitting to laying, and then back to sitting, and the hand rails and the seat tilt help you to stand, circulation is improved and pressure sores are minimized.

When people get older and become ill, they can often become depressed. The depression that they feel can give them a mindset of apathy around choosing to be mobilize out of the bed because of the physical effort required. With the BedChair, the physical effort required to get out of bed is very minimal. By simply pushing a button, all of the physical effort is taken care of, and puts the person in a position where they can grab hold of their walker and have a little shuffle around the bedroom. This opens up a whole new world of possibilities – meeting the grandchildren at the door instead of in bed, making a cup of tea for a neighbour, getting up to watch their favourite soap.

Ways to brighten your day:

Motivating people to be mobile is often a challenge, so things that can help are very valuable. Consider these suggestions for improving and/or maintaining your (or your loved one's) mobility:

- Clear and tidy the bedroom – reducing clutter is very calming.
- Have a picture of loved ones beside the bed. Ask one of your children to bring a recent picture.
- Exercise, no matter how small, can produce endorphins, an instant mood enhancer. Try it with a little music.
- Set yourself a little goal each day – make yourself a cup of tea, get out of the house, meet the postie or paperboy at your gate.
- Find a way to help someone else. A phone call to a neighbour or friend. Thank those that help you.

What was difficult yesterday, becomes less and less so the more you move, getting the blood flowing.

The whole purpose of the BedChair to allow a person that is unable to use the leg lifter to easily transfer from a standing to a seated position, and then with easy to use handset be supported from the seated to the lying position ready to sleep.

“Residents who are unable or choose not to leave their beds are not always entirely immobile. In many cases it is medical interventions or cognitive limitations that prevent them from getting out of bed. Often, more mobility is possible if the bed can be adjusted in such a manner that it forms a seat in which a residents’ feet can be placed firmly on the floor. In most cases, depending upon these residents’ ability to care for themselves, this allows more mobility and the promotion of a resident living a more active life ¹”.

1) see also s. 28 Para 4 SGB XI (Social Code Book XI)

Multifit Hospital Supplies is a New Zealand based company specialising in the design and development of therapeutic appliances which offer greater independence for the elderly and disabled, and lighter workloads for therapists and caregivers. The company's latest innovations are dedicated to providing assistance for therapist, caregiver and client - in easier management for the daily tasks of getting in and out of bed.

"Quality of life is precious. Our mission is to provide you with quality long lasting equipment that enables you to live your life with independence."

Gwen Rose, BSc(PT), Reg(On)
President
Wheels of Fitness



FEATURED ARTICLE: High Risk of Functional Decline Following Hospitalization

Older people are at high risk of functional decline following hospitalization. Functional decline being defined as the loss of at least one point on the ADL (activities daily living) scale. Therapy aims at trying to prevent decline and restoring functional independence. However sometimes this isn't possible, especially with people who are obese, have edematous legs or were very frail and weak prior to their hospitalization.

There are many people who sleep on chairs at home simply because they can't get in into their beds (even if they have a hospital bed). Often they can walk to their bed or transfer from their wheelchair onto their beds but can't bring their legs up. Transfer straps have limited ability to help and can often lead to shoulder problems.

Caregivers are at great risk of injury to themselves, especially their backs with repeated assistance to transfers. And of course, not everyone is lucky enough to have a caregiver to assist if they are living at home.

The good news is that the Multifit Leglifter now has 2 new models. The Mk3L was created especially for low beds and now there is a universal model that fits onto hospital beds.

Multifit BC1 Series BedChair

A power assisted bed that turns into a chair for the purpose of assisting a person into and out of bed with minimal effort. Ideal for home or rest-home, this power-driven integration of comfort chair, recliner and lifter converts to a full-function, adjustable profiling bed with a superior flat sleeping surface - all at the touch of a button! Uniquely, in chair mode, the fold-away foot-rest section tucks completely under the frame. This provides room for stable footing under the body to assist balance and standing.

- Simple two-button commands offer a range of positions at any level.
- Layered foam mattress offers a superior, flat sleeping surface with memory-foam overlay.
- In-line motion aligns the body naturally with no physical exertion to achieve comfort.
- Bedside seating height adjusts down to 400mm to assist bedside access for people of shorter stature.

Wayne Manson, owner of Multifit Hospital Supplies - "The BedChair is an important tool in helping people make the most of the mobility they do have. Many times people find it such an effort to get out of bed, they find reasons not to even if they're able to, leading to loss of muscle tone. The BedChair is so easy to get into and out of, it will enable them to build on that existing mobility and hopefully help them to rehabilitate or at least be a useful way to maintain existing mobility".

Benefits include:

- Power-driven transformation from profiling bed to recliner to chair to lifter with simple handset controls
- Synchronised, in-line movement path eliminates strenuous body alignment for comfort at any level
- Variable bedside seating heights as low as 400 mm
- Models with motorised bed-height control to suit ideal working levels for therapist and caregiver tasks.