

Foundations of Practice and Beyond

Wednesday

Stream D

Session 7 1100

Stream E

Session 8 1300

Jenry

The millie-mova system – a “hidden” problem solved at last!



Abstract

My invention, the millie-mova system, fits virtually any dining chair. It is a safety device that allows a carer to move a seated person up to table very easily and therefore safely. It now also does the reverse and allows the carer to move the seated person away from the table when the meal is finished. The beauty of the device is that it does not affect the chair stability, as the wheels are held above the floor when it is not being used.

You may wonder why the title is a “hidden problem” – well it has been my experience that many in management in Care situations are reluctant to admit that their care staff are at risk when trying to move people into a table for meals and other activities. I installed my device at a County Council Care Home only to be told by the manager “we don’t need your device here”. I paid a visit to retrieve it and whilst I was removing it from the chair a member of the staff asked what I was doing. I told her and she said “what a shame, I use it to move residents up to table. It is very helpful for that”.

The development of the millie-mova started around 4 years ago. I was sitting with my mother (she had Alzheimer’s) in her Care Home. I noticed a young care assistant leading a lady up to table. She sat the lady on a chair and tried to push the chair up to the table. Suddenly she cried out in pain – she had hurt her back!

This disturbed me and I thought of a solution. Some research revealed that this is a common problem for care staff’s knees and backs. I realised that when you push the chair back forwards it moves the weight towards the front legs. This means that you need only lift the front legs onto wheels to make it easy to move the seated person forwards. A trip to B&Q provided me with a piece of wood, some castors and brackets. A second hand chair was placed into service. It worked!

Using Confidentiality forms I took my “Heath Robinson” device around Care Homes in Bournemouth and was rewarded with a general thumbs up.

I designed a working system and we went into production in Poole and China. I gained a UK Patent and have a US Patent pending.

May 2009 saw my device win the Naidex New Product of the Year award, and we sold hundreds in the first year.

There are currently around 1,300 in use in the UK.

A number of customers asked if the device could be used backwards, as the original unit only provided forwards movement. I had always been against using fixed wheels as my intention was to ensure that the chair would retain full stability. This is important as it is essential that the chair could be leaned on without running away from the person, perhaps leading to a fall.

I was thinking about this when I suddenly realised that fixed wheels on the rear legs are not an issue as nobody leans on a chair from the front. Leaning on a chair from the back is not a risk as we provide stabilisers to the front chair legs. We launched this add-on kit in December 2009 and have found good success with the system now it allows easier forwards movement and backwards movement.