

APPENDIX 1

Graeme's story

Graeme's son, Mark, contacted Borders Care and Repair to find out where he should go to request an assessment for his 95 year old father. Mark doesn't live locally and was unsure where to go for help. He was aware of Care and Repair as his father was already a subscriber of the handy person service and thought this would be a good starting point as the main difficulty his father was experiencing was with managing the stairs. Mark felt that his father could not remain at home any longer without a stair lift. He felt strongly about this and admitted that living out of area meant he worried about him a lot and felt a sense of responsibility that he should take whatever steps are necessary to keep him safe.

Graeme was happy to be assessed via the pilot and an appointment was arranged for the following week. Information gained from the assessment visit provided valuable information on the importance of remaining independent for Graeme. He has minimal support at home and has found his own strategies including purchasing ready-made meals from the butchers and using a mobility scooter to go to the shops nearby. He stated that he lacked confidence on the stairs now and demonstrated how he managed. The lack of a second banister meant he was trying to steady himself on the wall, whilst he was placing both feet on each step going up, he tended to rush going down putting himself at risk of falling. The bathroom and bedroom were situated upstairs.

A second banister was supplied and feedback from this was very positive – Graeme reported feeling much more confident now and had taken on board advice re being more mindful and rushing less when coming down the stairs. Mark was pleased with the quick response and commented that he couldn't believe the difference such a small thing had made to his father. Graeme's assessment also indicated the need for an external grab rail at the front door, this further reduced risk of falling.

At the time of Graeme's assessment, his self-assessed COPM scores were as follows:
Importance (in relation to being able to feel confident in managing the stairs): 10/10
Performance: 5/10
Satisfaction: 5/10

Potential savings: the cost of a stair lift: £1,800

Graeme reported age related frailty and other health conditions. He sometimes experienced problems with his knee but at time of assessment this had not been problematic for some time. Graeme felt that his health was okay given his age and that lack of confidence was the main issue – provision of the second banister helped greatly in this respect. The cost of the second banister and grab rail compared with the cost of an emergency hospital admission and stay in the event of a fall is very small. The following evidence highlights the significant cost of falls in over 65s in Scotland:

- Falls and fractures, in people aged 65 and over, account for over 18,000 unscheduled admissions and 390,500 bed days each year in Scotland (Scottish Govt. 2012).
- In the over 65 population, falls cases are the largest single presentation to the Scottish Ambulance Service (over 35,000 presentation each year). (SAS, 2011).
- Falls are implicated in over 40% of Care Home admissions. (AGS, BGS, 2001)