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To Whom It May Concern

After a paraplegic injury (T7 & 8) I still managed to operate heavy goods vehicles via a modification to the truck. I then suffered a separate unrelated injury, which meant that for several years I have been the recipient of 24-hour care, this has been supplied to help me get in and out of my bed. I need a special mattress to prevent ulcers, diminish neurological pain and to prevent instances of spastic hypertonia, otherwise known as muscle spasms.

Whilst I was grateful of the endeavors of the care team, I really wanted to regain my independence.

My first objective was to find an air mattress that would tick all of the boxes in terms of clinical efficacy but also to offer enough stability to transfer independently to my wheelchair. The air mattresses that had been provided up until this point required a third party to assist in this relatively simple maneuver. Another problem with dynamics is the fact that their perpetual movement produces a nauseous sensation.

I then chanced across an article concerning Hampshire Primary Care Trust (attached). Their physiotherapists were apparently trying to get as many people up and out of bed as possible - and wanted an airflow that would boast high stability, offer subtle movement and suit patients of all risks of pressure ulcers. Their new build hospital had purchased Squirrel Diamonds for just such a purpose and I was keen to try.

My district nurse was extremely supportive and within a matter of days a sample mattress was delivered as part of a four-week trial period. It was – is in fact bliss. I cannot express in words the change that this simple product has made to my life.

On my part, I have agreed to write this testimonial covering what I believe to be the most critical factors from the perspective of the end user.

1. Spastic Hypertonia

The substantial difference between the Squirrel Diamond and all of the other airflow mattresses (that I have tried) is that it has significantly reduced my muscle spasms. This spasticity or involuntary movement is not pleasant and would disturb anyone's sleep. I guess that the firmness of the surface of the Squirrel Diamond does something, as I have also noticed no neurological pain.

2. Adjustable Beds

When most air mattresses are placed in a seating position, their depth and the spacing of cells means that when they are re inflating they cause pinching or a rubbing against the skin. This doesn't appear to occur on the Diamond.

3. Stability & Independence

The motion of most air mattresses is enough to create danger for the most simple of tasks such as reaching for a glass of water or sitting up in bed – let alone preparing to breach the gap from bed to wheelchair. On this point the Squirrel Diamond is perfect. It is extremely stable and allows me to transfer without assistance. This simple act means that I have obtained the freedom and independence to go to bed whenever I like in total privacy.

2. Pressure Relief

On this point I will not say that it is better than the others as I believe that once an optimum performance has been achieved that it is difficult to notice significant advantages. I will say however that their special cover worked better with my bedding than the others. Bedding can cause marking and this appears to have been resolved..

3. Pain Relief / Comfort

I used to suffer serious sleep issues on previous airflows. This was due in part to neurological pain, spastic hypertonia and nausea as well as the various injuries that I had sustained.

I am now able to sleep for up to eight hours on one side and in one position. This is quite remarkable. When I turn over there is ample purchase on the mattress surface (unlike other mattresses) to turn myself. This mattress is the most comfortable I have ever owned.

4. Safety

I can sit up in bed to get dressed on my own and if I drop a book I don't have to fear falling out of bed because of a cell deflating – I just reach for it with the same confidence as I would on a regular mattress. I have tried numerous mattresses over the years and the subject of bed rails is always an issue. The real benefit here is that the Squirrel Diamond is just 5" depth, which means I am not looking over the top of bed rail. It is a low profile design and feels not too dissimilar to that of a memory foam mattress.

Summary

From an engineering and technical perspective I have find the Squirrel Diamond quite a clever design. Whilst I am not qualified clinically I do have a broad understanding of my medical and social requirements and hope that these observations will help others seeking the aforementioned benefits.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Mason