

# Assistive Technology and Spinal Injury



*“I can do things myself and not rely on others. It keeps my sanity!”*

Jonathan – Possum Vivo! user

## Case Study

Since leaving hospital following an industrial vehicle accident in 1989, Jonathan has used a range of Assistive technology provided by Possum.

The accident caused a C4, C5 complete injury (damaging the vertebrae and spinal cord) leaving Jonathan Tetraplegic, paralysed from the shoulders down, with limited upper body movement.

After a review of Jonathan’s requirements, in consultation with the local community occupational therapist, Stoke Mandeville spinal injuries OT and the local GP, Jonathan’s home was adapted with a PSU6 Environmental Control System. When Jonathan moved house the system moved with him. As the technology developed and Jonathan’s requirements changed, Possum installed a Companion controller and then more recently upgraded to the Vivo! home control device.

For Jonathan, being left without the need of assistance, especially at night, is important. Providing Jonathan with the means to control his own entertainment and immediate environment means that this is possible.



The robust and reliable assistive technology provides reassurance that help is accessible whilst maintaining privacy and independence. The total portability of the control unit has meant that even when visiting relatives Jonathan is able to control certain items away from the home.

With the easy to use, portable Possum Vivo! Environmental Controller and other assistive technology supplied by Possum, Jonathan is able to:

- Control the televisions both in the bedroom and in the living room
- Operate a Hi-Fi stereo unit
- Switch the radio on and off
- Switch a fan on and off
- Operate the lights in the bedroom
- Operate the curtains in the bedroom
- Operate the electronic profiling bed
- Answer the telephone, make calls
- Call for assistance via the specially adapted switch, intercom and pager system
- Use an internal multi room intercom which enables communication from upstairs and downstairs and room to room
- Answer the door
- Switch an air conditioning unit on and off

*“It’s the small things that make the difference, I can sit up in bed, open the curtains, call for assistance at night, be left without the need for constant care. The Possum system is robust and reliable providing me with a level of freedom, independence and privacy. Without it I would be restricted, dependant on others and unconfident that I could get help when I need it.”*

**Jonathan**

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