



BUSH & CO  
CASE MANAGEMENT & REHAB

# Emma Benfield

## Case Manager | OT



# Regaining Independence following a Lower Limb Amputation

### Case Background

Emma Benfield, a case manager at Bush & Co, adopted case management support for a 75-year-old female client who underwent a left trans-tibial amputation and suffered an olecranon fracture to her left elbow following a road accident. Prior to her injury, the client was independent and had no significant medical history. She also led a very active lifestyle and, alongside her husband, engaged in hobbies that included canoeing and camping.

### Needs and Objectives

Following her discharge from the hospital, the client's objectives were to regain independence in all activities of daily living (ADLs) and return to enjoying her hobbies at the earliest opportunity. To ensure this transition was successful, Emma performed an Immediate Needs Assessment, which identified several critical areas to be addressed.

Firstly, the provision of equipment was crucial; the client required a suitable self-propelling wheelchair, a shower seat, and modifications to her home to ensure sufficient turning space for the wheelchair. As her husband spent his career as a structural engineer, some helpful modifications were already completed and awaiting the client's return home.

The family home was an old Victorian house spread over three floors with a lot of furniture and other obstacles throughout, which posed accessibility challenges and made a review of the client's accommodation arrangements high on the list of priorities. The client was not open to relocating, so additional modifications to her existing home were monitored and made as required.

Due to her limb loss, the client required rehabilitation services, including an assessment with a suitable prosthetics provider and ongoing rehabilitation through statutory NHS

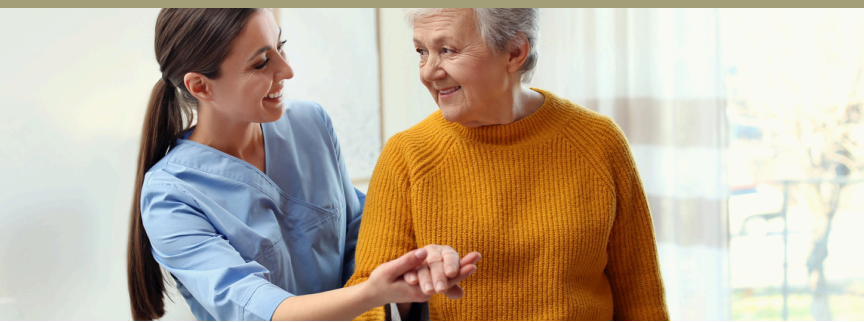
services for a period of up to 6 months. The client was fortunate not to experience any neurological discomfort or pain as a result of her catastrophic injury, nor did she present with any psychological impacts as a result of her amputation. The rehabilitation was, therefore, centred on her physical capabilities.

Initially, the use of a basic prosthesis and crutches was sufficient for mobility, but the client was clear that her long-term goal was to resume her active lifestyle outdoors, including canoeing, camping, gardening, and swimming. To facilitate this, the client was introduced to Dorset Orthopaedic, one of the UK's leading providers of private prosthetic and orthotic rehabilitation, where access to a waterproof activity limb and a microprocessor foot for outdoor walking and hiking would be available.

### Case Management Approach

Emma's case management process focused on the client's immediate and long-term needs, which centred on acquiring equipment to help her mobility in and around her home, particularly at times when her prosthetic was not in use. This included ensuring wheelchair access to the bathroom and bedroom, which presented challenges in a house with narrow staircases and hallways.

Recognising the potential limitations posed by the age and design of the client's home, Emma obtained quotes to inform a feasibility study for the installation of an internal lift covering all three floors. The proposal was completed and submitted, and even though approval was secured, the decision was made not to go through with the installation in



the short term. However, to maintain her independence and mobility away from home, Emma collaborated with the local authority to secure funding to make adaptations for the client's car.

Throughout the rehabilitation journey, Emma engaged the client in collaborative goal setting, including coordinating face-to-face meetings with the client and the rehabilitation team at Dorset, where she observed therapy sessions and worked on setting achievable goals, such as returning to canoeing, swimming, and camping. The client was fortunate to live very close to a Dorset Orthopaedic clinic and could independently travel to and from the clinic for rehabilitation, as well as access community-based rehabilitation throughout the process.

Despite the client's reluctance to engage in any psychological support, Emma continued to monitor her mental health to ensure the client felt supported throughout her rehabilitation journey.

### **Outcomes**

Through Emma's dedicated support and comprehensive case management, the client was discharged from Dorset Orthopaedic Services after successfully regaining the ability to engage in her passion for camping and canoeing. The client was assisted throughout by a very goal-orientated physiotherapist who could simulate scenarios the client would face post-discharge to help her prepare.

Additionally, she demonstrates independence in ambulating stairs and managing all activities of daily living without assistance and her pain management has been effective, highlighting Emma's central role in the client's recovery and reintegration into her active lifestyle following her amputation.



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