



# P&O Day 2021

**Patient – Aleksiya Chausheva**

**Advanced Occupational Therapist - Jackie Bevan**

**Orthotist – Peter Iliff**

Born with a congenital defect that resulted in an extremely lordotic spine, Alex suffered a further spinal injury at level T8 and has no functional movement in her lower limbs.

Alex grew up in Bulgaria and is keen to attend college and undertake a further education course in business studies at her local college in Liverpool. Alex needs to have stability in her wheelchair, which is made difficult by her lack of natural trunk control and she also suffers from lower back pain due to the extreme lordosis.

To provide stability so Alex could manoeuvre her wheelchair in comfort a spinal support was required, to shift the centre of mass posteriorly. Being more upright allows Alex to control the wheelchair, by placing her hand at the highest part of the wheel and apply the force required to efficiently propel the wheelchair. Following discussion with Alex it was agreed that rather than provide a rigid support, which would be difficult to tolerate, a fabric sitting brace would be more suitable. Employing the design which our colleagues from TayCare have successfully used at the National Spinal Injuries Centre in Stoke Mandeville, it incorporates lateral supports, in addition to the standard posterior steels.

Due to the degree of lordosis the unit in Southport provided the technicians in TayCare with photos of Alex's lordosis. This ensured that the visual image could complement the measurements taken, which included the depth of the lordosis required, in addition to standard circumferences and heights.

Initially assessed in June 2021, the assessment and fitting took place in July with the initial seating brace being supplied in August. The assessment and fitting took place in the North West Regional Spinal Injuries Centre at Southport And Formby District General Hospital, Southport, Merseyside.

A second support has now been supplied, which Alex described as "fantastic". "It allows me to control my chair and my back no longer hurts". She also said that the care she received in the unit was "Just great".

Alex is looking forward to starting college in September 2021, without pain and with the ability to easily manoeuvre her wheelchair.