

**Subject: Comments from CGSP Web Site**

First Name: Deborah

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Contact Me: Yes

Ok to use my comments: Yes

Own a Fawset now: Yes

Web site OK: 5

Comments: Dear Fawset:

We live in the suburbs of New York City, in a two-story house. Our bedroom and bathroom are on the second floor of our home. When my husband was diagnosed with ALS at the age of 50 in October of 2005, we were devastated, but the final blow came when Ken lost his ability to walk in the early months of 2007. When it became impossible for Ken to get around on his own, I had to rearrange our house to accommodate Ken's decreased mobility.

We used a stair lift to bring Ken to the second floor to use the shower for as long as we could, until it finally became impossible to get Ken upstairs, and into the shower safely. I had to look for other options. After having several contractors and assistive technology experts assess our living arrangement, all came to the conclusion that we had two options; either make major renovations to our home, or Ken would have to be sponge bathed for the rest of his life. We lost substantial income when Ken had to stop work. We lost even more of it when I took a leave of absence from my job to take care of him. Where would we stay while renovations were done even if we could afford it? Renovations were out of the question.

I needed a simple, immediate, inexpensive way to give my husband some comfort. My husband is 6'2" and weighs about 220 lbs. Having served in the Marine Corps for four years, and then working for IBM for over twenty-six years, Ken has always taken pride in his appearance. Only two short years ago, Ken wore a suit and wingtips to work every day. Now he cannot walk, talk, or move his arms. He chokes often while being fed, or drinking liquids. The guy who once ran three miles a day to stay in shape, now cannot even scratch his own nose. If you have ever had a sponge bath, you know it is not a great experience. Even when the person giving it does a good job, it is not relaxing. Maintaining the health of the patient's skin is especially difficult when the patient has limited mobility, especially on pressure points like the back and bottom. Many aides could not do a sufficient job of bathing Ken, who often complained that the aide had missed a few spots. Many health professionals have told me that a sponge bath does not really clean the skin, because you cannot use sufficient amounts of water to do a good job. Sponge bathing an adult is not like bathing a child, since the body is not in a tub where the water can be poured over the skin to rinse it thoroughly.

Ken is also quite "hairy" so using soap sparingly is out of the question. The doctor ordered a hospice setting for my husband, to try to make him more comfortable. His prognosis is not good. ALS makes his muscles twitch constantly, so he cannot relax easily. His mind is intact, but he cannot speak. It is a frustrating existence for us both. I re-arranged the house to accommodate Ken as best I could. He cannot sit on the stair lift anymore, because it is not safe for him. He lies in the hospital bed, or sits in his wheelchair, and watches TV most of the day. It is a depressing existence

for a guy who is college educated, to sit and vegetate. He has so little to look forward to. He has so little comfort. I was truly desperate to find a way to offer Ken some comfort.

I stumbled across your product on the Internet. I discussed it with the Veterans Administration, and after they investigated it, they agreed to pay for it. It has proven to be far more cost effective than any of the renovation that was suggested to us. Even though Ken cannot talk, one look at his face will tell you how much he enjoys his shower. It relaxes him so much, he usually takes a nap afterwards. I cannot begin to tell you, what a wonderful product the Fawcett is, and what a comfort it has been, both for Ken, and for me. Ken is no longer self conscious about his body odor, because he gets a good shower three times a week. His hair and skin smell clean, and he is in better spirits after he has had a shower. It proved to be invaluable during the hot summer months, when even the air conditioner could not provide much comfort for him. In the cool weather, it helps to warm Ken's legs and arms, which get cold from poor circulation. He has no pressure sores, and his skin is healthy. Like a commode, getting a shower gives a patient some dignity. This shower has made a difference in Ken's mental health, because it has made it a little less difficult for him to live with ALS, which in turn makes it a little easier for me, too. Like a commode, the Fawcett shower helps to maintain the patient's overall comfort. All the aides that have taken care of Ken, have been impressed with the Fawcett. They recognize the significance of a shower to a disabled person. They find the shower is easy to use, and every one of them has asked me for the website address to pass the information along to other patients or family members. The ALS association sent a representative by to see it, so she could recommend it to other ALS patients. I understand the VA has ordered it for several other disabled Veterans in the area. I tell everyone about it, because it really is such a smart solution to a serious problem.

As I have discussed with your representative, I just have a few suggestions..

- We use a slider chair that was meant to use over a toilet, and slides into the tub next to it..it has 4 small wheels and turns on a dime, and fits perfectly in the wheel chair shower.. It has an opening so it can also be used as a commode and has a webbed back, and two seatbelts, so almost anyone could be seated safely in it. The chair can be dried when the patient is, and can then be wheeled anywhere in the house. The chair is made by:

Assistive Technology, Inc.  
Model # SL100  
Phone: 800 - 478 - 2363  
web site: [pvcdme.com](http://pvcdme.com)

- It's wise to put a large sponge over the end of the hose and drain where the pump sends the dirty water into the drain of the sink.
- We use towels around the outside of the shower, on all four sides, just in case of accidents. They can be used when draining the shower, to help lead the water to the drain hose.
- Although tricky, the showerhead can be set up on a spray handle faucet. It may take some "playing" with the enclosed faucet adapters, and may necessitate removing parts of your faucet.
- It would be more convenient if the shower hose provided were about a foot longer.
- The floor where the shower will be set up should be swept to insure there is no debris that could potentially puncture the shower floor.

- If the patient is not washing himself, it is possible for one person to shower the patient, but two is so much easier. the front shower curtain is not necessary when an attendant is showering the patient.
- Cleaning and disinfecting instructions should be included.

Thank you so much for providing a great solution to our problem. A shower is such a simple thing..and your product is the perfect solution. It works so well, is easy to maintain, and takes up very little space. I hope your company is successful in getting Medicare/ Medicaid on board with this product, because it really is as necessary as the commode for someone who is sick. Besides getting a patient clean, which in turn will help get them healthy, it will improve the mental state of anyone who is unable to use their house shower, therefore improving their quality of life.

Please feel free to use any parts of this letter, to further your fight with insurance companies to include this product as necessary medical equipment.

If you require any additional information, feel free to contact me at (xxx)xxx - xxxx or through e-mail, at [cxxxx@yahoo.com](mailto:cxxxx@yahoo.com).

Yours truly,  
Debbie & Ken Rienecker