

## SELECTING AN ADJUSTABLE BED

When selecting an adjustable bed it is important to consider the needs of the individual user/s. There are a range of beds on the market with a variety of options and accessories to meet an individual's support, comfort and functional needs. This fact sheet describes some of the common features and options that may be available on an adjustable bed.



### BED ADJUSTMENTS

An adjustable bed may incorporate one or allow of the following adjustments:

**Height adjustment:** also called hi-low function enables the bed height to be adjusted. This may be needed to assist transfers or for carer tasks such as changing bed linen or nursing someone in bed. Some beds have an extra low height adjustment.

**Backrest adjustment:** This may be used to support the user in a semi-sitting position or to assist the user from lying to sitting.



**Knee break adjustment.** This function elevates the knees without elevating the feet. This may be used to help prevent the user sliding down the bed.

**Leg elevation:** This elevates the users legs from the hip and may be used to help prevent or reduce leg swelling.

**Trendelenberg or reverse Trendelenberg:** This feature allows the entire bed to be tilted towards the head or towards the feet. This may be useful for individuals with a range of medical conditions such as circulatory problems, breathing difficulties or reflux.



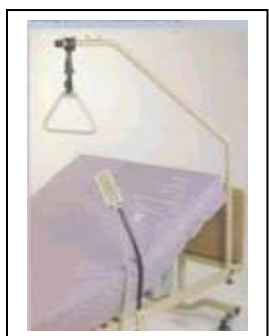
### COMPANION BEDS

These are two beds that can be placed directly beside each other. Depending on the needs of the users, both or only one of the beds may be adjustable.

### ACCESSORIES

Accessories may include:

- Bed Rails
- IV Pole
- Built in Massage
- Removable Head Board
- Self Help Pole
- Bed Extensions
- Alternative Controls
- Removable Foot Board
- Battery Back Up
- Voice Activation



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### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Adjustable beds may be manually or electrically adjusted. Electrically adjustable beds have a hand help controller and allow the user to adjust the bed while they are in it. Manually adjustable beds tend to use a footpump or hand-wind mechanism.

Some adjustable beds can be folded for transport and storage.

More adjustable beds are on castors to allow the bed to be repositioned. Most also have locking castors which may be individual locks or a central locking mechanism. Directional castors on some beds may assist in steering the bed in one direction. Beds are available with different load capacities. It is important to consider the combined weight of the user and mattress when checking this specification.

Different beds have different clearance space under them. This is important to check if the user will be hoisted in and out of the bed.

### MATTRESSES SUITABLE FOR ADJUSTABLE BEDS

Mattresses for adjustable beds are specialised as they need to be flexible and able to bend with the movement of the bed. They come in a variety of types including:

**Inner Spring:** The most common style of mattress. They consist of padding over springs (which support the user's posture while they sleep). Manufacturers recommend this type of mattress should be replaced approximately, every 10 to 13 years.

**Latex:** These can be firm and it is not known whether they offer the same postural support as an innerspring mattress. Latex mattresses can be a better choice for users who are incontinent. They can also be a good option for older people, as they do not have to be turned as regularly.

**Foam:** Foam mattresses are generally lighter and easier to flip and turn. Many foam mattresses are now covered with a water-resistant two-way stretch covers that can protect the foam from incontinence as well as assisting with pressure care. Different densities and combinations of foam further improve the pressure care qualities.

**Pressure Care Mattresses:** Some users at risk of developing pressure ulcers require a mattress that provides a high level of pressure care. These are available as either an overlay that lies on top of an existing mattress, or as a complete mattress replacement system.

### NEED TO KNOW MORE?

Telephone, fax or e-mail your enquiry to obtain further information from one of the therapists about products. Alternatively, you can make an appointment to trial the equipment at our display centres or through our outreach service. Please phone LifeTec Queensland for further details.

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