



Case #3: Married Veteran with Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Returning Home to Live with Wife and Children

The Background

Tracy and Matt had been married for eight years when Matt was deployed to Iraq. They had three young children and were enjoying the chaos that raising small children can bring. Then came the call that changed all of that. Matt was in a HUMVEE that ran over an IED. While he had some physical injuries they were relatively minor compared to his Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). Tracy and Matt's family lived close by. They dedicated themselves to his care and recovery and helping Tracy take care of Matt and the children. She could never do it without them. Matt was coming home in a wheelchair and the home needed substantial modifications for his care. Getting him into a rehabilitation hospital was key to learning how to speak, walk, and to perform many tasks again.

The Challenges

Luckily, a great rehab hospital was only about 45 minutes away. It was going to be months of grueling shifts of speech, occupational, and physical therapies with inpatient care. When Matt came home he was still going to be using a wheelchair and a walker. He would still be struggling with memory and speech loss. He would need help with everyday activities and self-care. Tracy had to care for her small children and depended on the help of close family for help with the children and Matt.

The Obstacles:

- Matt and Tracy lived in an already cramped two story home with no bedroom on the first floor.
- This was going to be a long term rehabilitation and Tracy was determined to keep Matt with her and their kids.
- With the absolute necessity of the parent's support, they needed a first floor bedroom for Matt and an additional bedroom for parents helping as caregivers.



The Family Alternative Care Solution (FACS)

Tracy learned very quickly that she was going to need the help and advice of both her parents and Matt's parents if she was going to be able to keep Matt at home with his family. Her father-in-law had been researching options on the internet for modifying their home for Matt's

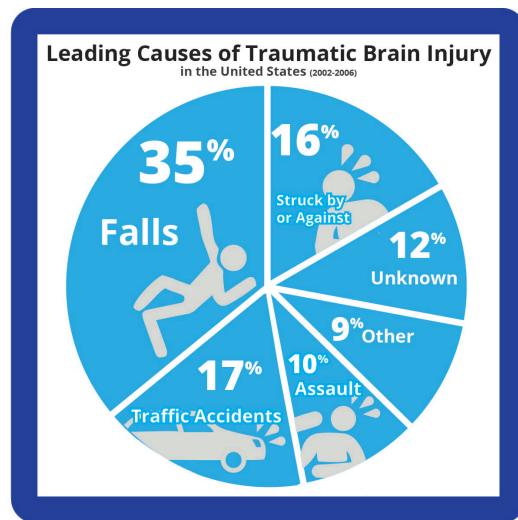
return. He found an Occupational Therapist that mentioned Better Living Express on their website's blog. Together, he and Tracy called and talked with a FACS Advisor.

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The FACS Advisor asked them a number of questions and listened to Tracy and her father-in-law explain the specifics of Matt’s care program. They were delighted to find out that the plans on the website were very adaptable based on the family’s needs. In this situation, it was determined that a cottage plan could be modified and turned into an addition. This would provide the home with two additional bedrooms on the first floor. Other benefits included:

- The addition could give them the extra room they needed for Matt’s care with many upgrades that were needed already included as standard.

- A separate entrance was built for the new addition with no step and zero thresholds making wheelchair access much easier.
- The large addition could be delivered quickly. Matt was coming home from rehab within two months of the decision to do the addition.
- With the benefits and donations Matt had received, the family was able to cover the remaining costs of the construction.



The best benefit of all was that Tracy was able to keep her kids with their father. Matt had a long fight ahead but he was able to do it in an environment with his whole family.



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