

CUSTOMER STORY APRIL 2022

Five-year-old Nicole plays with friends for first time ever thanks to unique 3-in-1 Recare wheelchair

Nicole Kuliskova, 5, from Shamley Green, can independently play with her friends for the first time ever, thanks to a specialist powered wheelchair from Recare.

**STORY 015**

Nicole is a bright and cheerful girl who lives with her mum Adriana and brother in Surrey. Despite living with an undiagnosed condition with symptoms similar to muscular dystrophy, Nicole is a joy to be around, full of life and doing great at school.

Originally from the Czech Republic, Adriana came to the UK 20 years ago and worked as an au pair and personal

chef. However, with Nicole's condition developing, Adriana put her career on hold to become a full-time carer. Due to Nicole's condition, mobility is challenging for her, so she uses a wheelchair and requires supportive seating to ease the pressures of scoliosis.

Before being introduced to Recare, Nicole had a manual NHS wheelchair that she found increasingly difficult to propel.

This resulted in her mum having to push Nicole everywhere and the loss of vital independence and social interaction with other children. Nicole's condition might be progressive, so it was essential a better solution was found; however, they had very little budget for specialist equipment. Adriana contacted the charity AFK for help and they recommended Recare. As AFK and Recare had already worked closely

together for many years, this was the beginning of a life-changing journey for Nicole.

Recare is the proven choice

Recare is a highly respected, family-run healthcare and rehabilitation equipment specialist. Providing a nationwide clinical service from headquarters in Oxfordshire, Recare regularly works with charities so the most appropriate assistive equipment can be supplied to children with disabilities. AFK recommended its proven track record to Adriana as she explains: "AFK knew of other companies; however, they said Recare were the most established and the best for Nicole's needs. Both AFK and Recare have been fantastic – mind-blowing regarding efficiency and helpfulness. It's been amazing to be part of the process. We had two home assessments from Andrew at Recare; he couldn't have been more supportive. I have received details of what's going on and information about the product, which has given me peace of mind."

Charity steps up

Celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2022, AFK 'provides specialist mobility equipment not available on the NHS to disabled children and young people up to their 25th birthday, across the UK.' Working with equipment specialists such as Recare, 'AFK helps disabled children and young people live independent and fulfilling lives.' To ensure Nicole could regain her mobility, AFK coordinated with four other charities to raise £11,000, part of which helped to fund her new wheelchair from Recare. Nicole now proudly owns a Ki Mobility Klik manual wheelchair with a powered Benoit Light Drive 2.1 Mini and a Rehasense Track Wheel. This combination provides a flexible three-in-one solution for Nicole, so her abilities are maximised both indoors and out, on and off-road.

AFK said: 'We are delighted to see the difference partnerships like ours and

Recare's can make in transforming the lives of young people like Nicole. After having to close our waiting list to new mobility applications for a few months due to such high demand, seeing Nicole receive her adapted wheelchair in time for summer is a real joy. We look forward to hearing how she gets on as she is able to socialise, see her friends and enjoy the warmer months outside. We also look forward to opening our mobility applications once more in early May, so many more disabled young people like Nicole can gain access to much-needed specialist mobility equipment.'

Fun times return

Adriana continues: "Oh my gosh, Nicole thinks it's the best wheelchair ever! She loves it. Now she can go anywhere. It's so lovely to see her chasing around with other children. The independence she has is incredible. As I help out at her primary school, I see her having fun. It makes me cry with joy. She manoeuvres her powerchair so nimbly and finds the joystick easy to control. Andrew from Recare said she is the youngest user of a Benoit power add-on; we are so proud of her. Her cognitive skills were thoroughly checked, so we knew she would be safe to drive her chair. The driving controls are exact, which makes a big difference. As ever, Nicole takes it all in her stride."

"We can now get to school much more easily. Nicole can drive herself without needing me to push her. Her Ki Mobility Klik Wheelchair combination easily goes across the village green and cricket pitch with no problems and into the woods. The daily forest walk is now pleasant for us. Her primary school has been so supportive, they even built a proper accessible toilet before Nicole started."

"Away from school and the many mid-week therapy appointments, being outside as much as possible is important for us. As Nicole's wheelchair is now



all-terrain, we can go on grass and tackle bumps on the pavement. It's three wheelchairs in one. We have an indoor manual wheelchair, an outdoor powered wheelchair and a specialist supportive seat to help Nicole's posture. It's also easy to dismantle to fit in the car as the Benoit power add-on comes off. I have a small car, but it all fits in the boot. This makes a huge difference, especially with so many hospital appointments at St. George's Hospital and Stanmore in London. We can always take the car and park instead of going by train or taxi, making life much more straightforward and stress-free."

Unique support, best outcomes

In summary, Adriana concludes: "Recare treated us so differently – they gave us time and support. It shows they are family-run as everyone cares, and you get that personal touch. We both know we've got the right wheelchair for Nicole and that Recare will be there to help us in the years to come."

Since Nicole received her grant-funded equipment, Adriana has continued fundraising for her daughter and Muscular Dystrophy UK. She is completing a skydive to aid the charity and coordinating donations organised by her local pub – The Fox Inn, Rudwick. Unable to work full time, Adriana has trained herself to become an artist and is regularly commissioned to produce pieces via her Instagram business 'ArtbyAdi222'.

Call for a free consultation: 01993 880200

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