

Activities of Daily Living

by Carol Marler

**Story Submitted for the
10th Speculative Fiction Contest**

**Sponsored by
Society of Actuaries
Actuary of the Future, Forecasting & Futurism, and
Technology Sections**

© 2013 Society of Actuaries, All Rights Reserved

The opinions expressed and conclusion reached by the authors are their own and do not represent any official positions or opinion of the Society of Actuaries or its members. The Society of Actuaries makes no representation or warranty to the accuracy of the information.

Activities for Daily Living

by Carol Marler

Is it cold?
Is it cold in here?

When I awaken
It is warmer
I am in my bed
In my own room.
I see a woman
Dressed in white.
I wonder
Is she an angel?
I ask,
"Who are you?"
And she replies,
"My name is Adele, and
I am here to help you"

She asks, "Do you
want a drink?"
She brings me water.
I sip from the straw.
It is cool
and refreshing.

I am thinking
about water.
There were lakes
Rivers and streams
Where we hiked
Those days
In the mountains.
The path
Sloped gently
Up the hill
And a great tree
Stood at the top.

I sleep a lot
These days.
She brings me
Applesauce, says that
I must eat it.
It has my medicine
For I cannot
Swallow pills.
Spoon by spoon

She lifts it
To my mouth.

I sleep a lot.

She bathes me.
The soap
Smells of flowers.
The towel is very soft.
When I am all dry
She smooths on lotion.
I sit in the chair,
Wearing my
Blue robe
While she puts
Clean linen
On the bed.

She asks,
“Do you need
To use the toilet?”
I remember
How we used to say
“Go to the bathroom.”
But now my bed
Is my bathtub.
As we make our way
To the toilet
We go past the shower
That I no longer use.

It seems a long trip
Back to my bed.
The entire world
Has been reduced
To the size
Of my bedroom.
I doubt that it could
Be made much smaller.

I remember a night
A telescope on the balcony
Of our apartment.
We could see
The great nebula
Of Andromeda
Although the city light
interfered, and
it was not like

The photos in the book.

Adele says we have
An appointment
To see the doctor.
I think this means
That I must dress
And travel in the car.
But it is all arranged
We see him from my room
On the television screen
And I suppose that
He can see me.
He asks, "How are we today?"
But he is not looking at me.
He is reading dials
And looking at the
EKG print.
Now I wonder when he
Will be replaced by
A computer brain.

My brother and I
Played in the sandbox.
It was beside the garden,
And beyond the garden
Was the dusty road
Where the sheep
Went to pasture every year.

My family does not visit me.
All of them have passed away.
Now I am alone
Except for Adele.
She is always here.
She does not stop to eat.
I do not think she sleeps.
She tells me,
"I am here to help you."

I am in my bed
In my own room
I have been here
For a long time.

Is it cold in here?
Is it cold?

Physician's Statement

Patient was visited using Remote House Call technology.

Patient appears alert, responds promptly and appropriately to questions, does not volunteer information. Skin condition and color look good. No sign erythema at pressure points.

Head and neck: No problems observed. Teeth and gums look good.

Back: No problems observed.

Abdominal: Normal

Extremities: No change in condition. Wheelchair confined due to loss of mobility in both legs.

Standard monitoring results – See Adele's Report.

Still slightly underweight.

Patient compliance with medication seems to have improved. Little or no resistance to taking the prescribed doses. I think Adele really knows how to handle her.

No other significant changes.

Recommend:

Continue around-the-clock monitoring of this patient.

Food order continues – low carbohydrate, soft foods, strained, plus 8 oz. of over-the-counter liquid dietary supplement per day. Six ounces per day of calcium-fortified orange juice.

Medications:

Oral diabetes – no change, one tablet per day, crushed in food.

ADL Data Summary: Part One – Physical Monitors

Height:	150	cm.	
Weight:	41.4	kg.	
Temp:	36.4	degrees C	
Pulse:	87		regular
Blood Pressure:	118	systolic	
	72	diastolic	
Respiration:	16	per minute	regular

Heart and Lungs:	normal auscultation
EKG:	no abnormalities
Immunizations:	all up to date

Patellar response:	
Left	0%
Right	20%

[Dietary Intake](#)

[Lab Results](#)

[Health History](#)

[Medications](#)

ADL Data Summary: Part Two – Activities of Daily Living

Bathing	Requires assistance
Dressing and undressing	Requires assistance
Eating	Requires assistance
Transfer from bed to chair and back	Requires assistance
Vol control urine/feces	Capable
Using toilet	Capable
Walking	Requires assistance

Claim Reviewer's Report

See attached:
Physician Statement
ADL Data Summary

Comments:

It is clear that the client continues to qualify for round-the-clock monitoring and assistance. The ADL mech is proving to be a very cost-effective solution. Client's quality of life is as good as can be expected under the circumstances. She accepts this form of support and shows no signs of apprehension. I note that even the doctor refers to it as Adele.

Recommendation:

Continue use of ADL mech. Have doctor review the case again in 12 months, or sooner if Adele notices any change in status of the client.