

*Subsidies don't cover market rent*

### **Matthew Wright's Story**

I have been on the waiting list for New Brunswick Housing for over 30 years, which is when I graduated high school. I compare the hunt for accessible living accommodations to winning the 649 lottery, but feel that I have a better chance of winning the 649 than receiving an accessible house or apartment.

Accessible housing was never a thing while I was growing up; neither government nor the private sector invested in this type of housing. We as a group who need accessible housing are paying for that now. Now in the era of supposed accessible housing, you need a large income because the apartments that are wheelchair accessible are out of reach for the common person and the government subsidies have not kept up with market rent.

This is why we need to be more adaptable in our housing stock today and in future because we do not know what the future holds. We need all homes and apartments to be built to universal standards from before the shovels go into the ground. This allows for aging in place.

I do not hold out much hope that an accessible unit will be available unless I do it myself, but that is impossible while I'm only making between \$700 to \$1,000 per month.

We need grants to help low-income people to build universal design housing. Until then I am stuck in a house I would stay in for life if only it were accessible, and I am stuck on one floor unless I have help from Bayshore HealthCare or my family as I am in a wheelchair.

I have had mobility issues since birth but they were more hidden than they are now. I was able to adapt my lifestyle to work around my mobility difficulties and live what was called a somewhat normal life until I reached 47 years of age, when I had a major fall and broke 3 bones in my left leg and ended up in a wheelchair for 6 months.

I tried to get an accessible apartment for at least a short term, but could not find any as I am a low-income earner, and the places that do offer respite services charge close to \$6,000 for this service and it is not economically feasible for me.