



PROSTHETICS, ORTHOTICS AND REHABILITATION TECHNOLOGY – EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

## Reflections from the Chair of Trustees

Life is busy. We all seem to be juggling more and more projects and activities across our work and home life. Last year I spent 11 months away from my Scottish base working in various projects, based in a prosthetics/orthotics service in Malawi, one of the poorest countries on earth. Currently, I am based back in Scotland in my home office working as a grant manager on development contracts and I am also a respite support worker for foster carers.

My experiences in Malawi and my return to Scotland have really made me take stock of everything, including PORT-ER. It has been very hard to keep going in a small charity, but I believe more than ever that the status quo in the field of prosthetics and orthotics has to be challenged, both at home and abroad. In the UK we need to encourage services to be even more client centred and innovative. Globally, over 29.1 million people with a physical disability cannot access the prosthetics and orthotics devices that they need because there are not enough services.

Our choice is to do nothing, or to do something proactive to change the status quo. Thanks to PORT-ER Trustees and volunteers we can choose to do something and continue to raise funds and support PORT-ER's grants.

Let's choose to do something good. Mobility matters!

*sandy*

Sandra Sexton, Chair of Trustees, PORT-ER

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# Thank you Diana!



Diana, working hard for PORT-ER

As many of you know, Diana Corrick served as Chief Executive Officer to PORT-ER until her early retirement due to ill health last year. We really miss Di's passion and enthusiasm for PORT-ER and are delighted to find that when her health allows, she still dedicates some of her time as a volunteer for PORT-ER. Seen here at her desk during her time as CEO, Diana helped to make a big difference to the lives of many people. Together with her daughter and PORT-ER Trustee Mel Wade, they organised the 2014 charity dinner to support our Burn Injuries and Disability Project to mark her retirement, having been touched by the stories of people with burn injuries in Malawi. Read about this in later pages of the newsletter.

Looking back at her time with PORT-ER, Diana and the PORT-ER Trustees can reflect on the number of projects we have supported and indeed delivered. As well as creating, planning and delivering events for PORT-ER over the years, Diana has been involved in promoting our charity aims and fundraising to help us award £19,307 in small grants to date. Diana really believes that we can make a difference and that every action towards our goals, no matter how small, can make a difference. She devised our Mobility Matters campaign and logo and says "one step at a time".

**Thank you Diana for all you have done and continue to do. Let's keep on stepping...**

## Fundraising News

### Picking Up Chicks!



These Easter knitted chicks were hatched in Exmouth, Devon by Diana Corrick and Mel Wade and sold to raise funds for PORT-ER. This picture was taken by Sandy Sexton who collected them at the AGM in February to take them to 500 miles north to Wishaw, North Lanarkshire. Sandy said she was not sure how many of the chocolate eggs nestling inside the chicks would make it to the frozen North as she might need them for emergency supplies on the long journey!!

### Could you help?

We are always so grateful to anyone who has a collecting pot. If you are interested in having one contact Mel Wade at: [mel@port-er.com](mailto:mel@port-er.com)

### Collecting Pot News

Thanks to Clyst St Mary Post Office in Devon who had a collecting pot for us and it brought in £12.79

### Inverness Half

### Marathon Success!

On the 9th March 2014 Sharon Thompson completed the Inverness Half Marathon raising £155 for PORT-ER.

Many congratulations to Sharon and a big thank you!

### PORT-ER SEALS

Remember the PORT-ER SEALS? Collette Defoe's two Channel swims raised a fantastic £2574 and with gift aid came to £3190!

Another big thank you to the SEALS!

### Salcombe Coastal

### Marathon 2014

This raised a wonderful £750 for PORT-ER.

Thanks to all the runners!!



### PORT-ER - Our Online Shop

Don't forget you can purchase mugs, T-shirts, wristbands and refillable pens via the PORT-ER website [www.port-er.com](http://www.port-er.com)

# PORT-ER Grants Round Update

## **International Grant: Burn injuries and disability project, Malawi**

Burn injuries account for a significant proportion of deaths in Low Income Countries. Survivors of burn injuries can experience disability caused by contracted scar tissue and may also need major limb amputations. The risks of debilitating burn injuries are heightened in developing countries because of the use of open fires for home cooking and a lack of access to health services means deformities are more likely.

Burn injuries account for around 4% of all injuries attending Kamuzu Central Hospital in Lilongwe, Malawi. Around 370 burn injuries are recorded in the trauma registry in a year. Most patients are under 15 years old and the main cause of the injury is scalding followed by exposure to flames. 26% of patients undergo amputation and a similar number have surgical contracture release. The hospital is a major referral hospital but is poorly resourced. During the course of the year there were shortages (meaning none available) of certain medicines and intravenous drips in the hospital. There is no physiotherapy or orthotist input for inpatients on the burns ward.

During 2014 the 500 miles Prosthetics and Orthotic (P&O) Centre, a department of the hospital treated a number of burn injury outpatients. There is a potential for 500 miles to provide a better focus on people with burns injuries who require P&O treatment integrated with their existing activities.

This project will see 500 miles:

- Continue to manage contractures with orthotic and/or prosthetic interventions.
- Liaise with the burns ward at KCH so that 500 miles educates people working in the burns ward about how their service can assist burns patients and about how important early intervention is and also identify more potential patients for the 500 miles service.
- Include specific mention of burns patients in their sensitisations in advance of outreach so that people in villages and people working with those with disabilities who bring potential patients to the outreach clinics know that such people can be assisted.
- Ensure that all of 500 miles qualified staff are equipped to give advice to burns patients about managing contractures.
- Develop materials to advise burns patients about contracture management.
- At next review, extend 500 miles standard materials to include specific reference to burns injuries.
- When a rehabilitation technician is allocated to the service by the Ministry of Health, provide physiotherapy to all burns patients.

## **Burn injuries and disability project, Malawi continued:**

The £5000 funding will be used to fund activities as shown on the previous page and may include:

- Travel and subsistence expenses associated with outreach visits
- Physiotherapy interventions that include therapy and patient advice
- Orthotic interventions that include an orthosis and patient advice
- Prosthetic interventions that include a prosthesis and patient advice.
- Patient advice and communications
- Mobile internet and telephone costs to assist with information sharing and contacting patients
- Patient transport costs to attend the Lilongwe service
- Costs for producing, copying and printing leaflets and posters
- Other expenses as deemed appropriate by 500 miles.

The case study below illustrates the issue of burn injuries and prosthetics and orthotics and the impact the project can have.

### **Orthotic management of a burn contracture of the knee**



*Before treatment at first appointment the knee was quite contracted and the leg was painful. The patient could not stand on the leg. Image 500 miles*



*After 1 month of treatment with a knee orthosis the knee was straighter and there was no pain. This little girl walked into clinic easily. Image 500 miles*

### **PORT-ER UK Grant: £486**

We are supporting Judy Scopes, a PhD student at Queen Margaret University in Edinburgh for her study 'Clinimetric Properties of Outcome Measures of Physical Function used with Lower Limb Amputees'.

The Trustees were very impressed with this application and would have liked to have awarded more, but due to limited funds and other commitments were unable to do this. However, in order to encourage and support this research the Trustees agreed to award £486 to cover the participant travel and participation costs associated with one part of the study which involves established amputees.

## **International Grant: Rehabilitation Worldwide - Uganda Polio Project**

As the Rehabilitation Worldwide - Uganda Polio Project is an on-going initiative since 2012, there exists an opportunity to support the project as the project team will again be going out to Kampala in 2015. The overall project has to date provided donated orthoses and conducted training and research. The Uganda Polio Project's continued aim is to improve the theoretical and practical skills of the existing orthopaedic technologists via classroom teaching / lectures and practical demonstrations.

This PORT-ER grant of £1,500 to Shirley Cox-Christie, a Scottish prosthetist/orthotist will help to support two aspects of the Uganda polio project in 2015:

- **The project aims to broker a meeting to start the first steps towards initiating a proper supply chain.** In the late eighties and early nineties the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) were in partnership with the British Red Cross Society (BRCS) and provided funding and personnel to help run the workshops, set up a small Orthopaedic Technology Training School (OTTS) and run training courses for orthopaedic technologists. They used 'appropriate technology' and a supply chain was in existence at that time. This has since diminished so there is no regular supply chain for materials and components. Once a supply chain is established, the orthopaedic technologists will have materials with which to provide a service to everyone that needs it and not only to their private patients. Additionally, the materials can be used in the practical and clinical elements of training courses
- **This project will provide training and update the skills** of the local orthotists and orthopaedic technologists working at Mulago Hospital in Kampala, Uganda. The project is in a position to begin expanding into prosthetics and into education. With education in mind, it is hoped to make contact with those responsible for the prosthetic, orthotic and orthopaedic workshops in Mulago Hospital as well as with the Minister for Health and Defence in Entebbe and with the International Committee of the Red Cross Special Fund for the Disabled (SFD) based in Tanzania.

The clinical orthotic and prosthetic training that will continue to be run throughout the 2 weeks of the visit, fulfil the "Mobility Matters" PORT-ER initiative.

Further criteria are:

- A. to encourage safe standards of prosthetic and orthotic care to internationally recognised standards;
- B. to support the advancement of knowledge in prosthetics and orthotics by sharing information.

The continuation of clinical training courses fulfil the requirements of items A and B above. Additionally, the establishment of a components and materials supply chain supports the advancement of componentry knowledge and encourages safe standards of care by encouraging use of safety tested products. Training in the use of UK and ICRC technology both shares information and promotes international standards.

## Rehabilitation Worldwide - Uganda Polio Project continued



*Images of a child with hydrocephalus and foot deformities—before and after treatment at the Uganda Polio Project  
Images: Courtesy of Ana Feio, David Gamble, Eleanor Weinberg and Shirley Cox-Christie.*



*Recent Ugandan students with Shirley Cox-Christie.  
Image: Courtesy of Ana Feio, David Gamble, and Eleanor Weinberg.*

# Infographics about prosthetics and orthoses

These are the first two 'infographics' about Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO) and Knee Ankle Foot Orthosis (KAFO). Two more will appear in our next newsletter, They are reproduced with the permission of 500 miles.

## Ankle Foot Orthosis (AFO)

Made using polypropylene technology to international standards

The plastic leg and foot shell fits intimately around the ankle and foot. This helps it to support or correct the foot and ankle position.

Straps are placed in certain positions to ensure the correct forces are applied to the body. The straps also hold the AFO securely onto the leg and are made of Velcro and webbing and attached by rivets to the plastic shell.



Actual full cost of production at the 500 miles Centres in Malawi = **£46**

Thanks to Sandra Sexton and Eastern Exhibition & Display

## Knee Ankle foot Orthosis (KAFO)

Made using polypropylene technology to international standards

The plastic thigh and leg/foot shells fit intimately around the thigh, ankle and foot. This supports or corrects the thigh, knee, ankle and foot positions.

Orthotic Knee joints are placed at either side of the human knee. A KAFO is usually used to stabilise an unstable or painful knee. Knee joints can lock when the user stands and can be unlocked for sitting.

Straps are placed in certain positions to ensure the correct forces are applied to the body. The straps also hold the KAFO securely onto the leg and are made of Velcro and webbing and attached by rivets to the plastic shell.



Actual full cost of production at the 500 miles Centres in Malawi = **£259**

Thanks to Sandra Sexton and Eastern Exhibition & Display

# Did you know that the Salcombe Coastal Marathon 2015 are fundraising for two great projects this year?

On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2015 you could take in a 26.2 miles marathon with an ascent of 4,500 feet in the Salcombe Coastal Marathon. Amputee participants are welcome. The event is registered with the Fell Runners Association. If you like a challenge and want to take part please submit an application and visit their website.: <http://salcombecoastalmarathon.blogspot.co.uk/>

The two projects supported will be:

## **PORT-ER's Mobility Matters! – Burn injuries and disability project in Malawi**

See our grants section in the newsletter for detailed information on this project. This project has already started thanks to funds raised at our Exeter fundraising dinner in 2015, but we want to continue our support. 50% of the proceeds of the Salcombe Coastal Marathon will help this project keep going.



*This little boy was burned in a cooking fire and was in pain. After receiving a right prosthetic foot and a left ankle foot orthosis he could walk with no pain. Images 500 miles*

## **The South West Coast Path matters! – Maintenance work**

The South West Coast Path Association strives to maintain the beautiful coastal path despite the weather! This project is ongoing and as the marathon uses part of the SW Coastal path, they want to support their excellent endeavours. 50% of the proceeds of the Salcombe Coastal Marathon will help the path open.

More information at [www.southwestcoastpath.org.uk](http://www.southwestcoastpath.org.uk)



# LIMBPOWER DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE 2015 ADVANCED REHABILITATION CLINIC

LimbPower, the National Disability Sports Organisation dedicated to helping amputees and the limb impaired reach their sporting potential, are holding another Advanced Rehabilitation Clinic following the success of the initiative launched last year. This clinic will help primary amputees build confidence, strength, stability and empower them in the early stages of their quest to improve their mobility.

LimbPower's Advanced Rehab Clinics aim to bridge the current gap that exists between the rehab offered by the NHS, and the ability to participate in sports, fitness and lifestyle activities. The current service teaches amputees how to walk using their artificial limb with training on basic techniques, but there is much more that could be done to aid amputees in the early stages of rehabilitation which would have a huge impact on their quality of life.

Research shows that participation in physical activity enhances the lives of amputees, reducing the risk of medical interventions such as knee and hip replacements and even improving life expectancy.

For 2015, the Advanced Rehab Clinic will include a separate programme dedicated to carers, partners and case managers, ensuring that this important support network are equipped with the information to assist in the ongoing progress of the amputee.

Kiera Roche, LimbPower Founder commented; "Back in 2006 I attended a running clinic where I was taught the basic techniques of running, but what really opened my eyes were the day-to-day benefits of the stability exercises and leg strengthening exercises I was taught to improve my gait and balance. We have used these techniques within our own successful 'Learn to Run' clinics since then, but the Advanced Rehab Clinics will allow us to reach those new amputees who are yet to even consider sport as something for them and help them to get the most from their prosthetics."

The one-day course will be a mix of educational and practical training sessions focussing on core stability, proprioception of the artificial limb, gait training exercises and general health and fitness. The course will encourage new amputees to take control of their own rehabilitation and well-being and equip them to take part in any sport or activity they choose.

The 2015 Advanced Rehab Clinic will be on the 15<sup>th</sup> April at and be held at Roehampton University.

Anyone interested in finding out more details should contact Gemma Trotter on:  
[Gemma@limbpower.com](mailto:Gemma@limbpower.com)