

Neuro Rehab Results Newsletter

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Some examples of NZ adventure sports:

- Making Trax is a company that works with outdoor adventure companies to provide education, information and adaption suitable for people living with physical impairment. Current tours, which seem to be in the South Island at this point are: rafting, jetboating, kayaking, skydiving, paragliding, aerobatic flights, horse wagon wilderness, canyon swing, glacier tours. www.makingtrax.co.nz
- Szilveszter Toth (Sly) teaches diving to teenagers and adults with physical and/or intellectual impairments. He is based in Auckland. www.divewithsly.com
- Sailability is an Auckland based organisation that provides opportunities for children and adults with physical impairments who want to learn how to sail. Some of the training is achieved through use of a sailing simulator. www.sailabilityauckland.org.nz



Ingenious Design:

We're really impressed with the Batec attachment for wheelchairs. Attach it in seconds and you transform your wheelchair into a scooter capable of 20km/hr like Jimi above! While they are not yet available in NZ, they may be coming soon to Australia. For more information & videos, check out <http://batec-mobility.com/en/>.

Traveller's Gold

Like striking gold... is the feeling many of you with mobility problems have if you find just the right kind of motel unit or hotel room when you travel. Because it's so hard. It's hard because there is so little information of the kind you need about bathrooms, steps, door widths and many other potential obstacles.

A new online accommodation and activity guide called ACCESS4ALL fills that information gap. It uses a set of photos showing the places (entrance, bathroom, bedroom, kitchen/living room) that many of you most want to know about. The photos are taken in a way that lets you can judge for yourself whether the unit you are looking at is OK for you.

There is also photo coverage like this one of activities so you can see if they are something you can do



Stage 1 of the guide that is online now lists all motels, holiday parks, and popular activities in the Bay of Islands. Have a look...

www.access4all.co.nz

By October it will cover accommodation and activities at all major NZ destinations.

Thanks to Richard Fanselow for sharing this information with us.

Client Profile: Andrew McMillan

Can you tell us a little bit about yourself.

I am 42 years old. I had a BMX accident just over 10 years go which gave me an incomplete spinal cord injury (C3-4). I've had various programmes of rehabilitation that have included using pulleys, functional electrical stimulation (FES), cycling, assisted standing, weights, harness training, and hydrotherapy.

Tell us about some of the things that are happening in your life at the moment.

I finished a masters in Music composition last year – have since been applying and submitting for grants and opportunities to have work developed and played. I'm also looking to get back into finding commissioned work.

I currently have three sessions of physio a week and the programme is currently focused on harness assisted treadmill training. We're looking to develop a way to continue the programme at home and the picture below shows me walking for the first time with the gutterframe overground with no harness support.



What do you like best about physio?

I like the process of the exercise and how it relieves tension and spasm in my body. Also I like the change from a sitting position to standing. It's great also to get a cardio workout. I value the gradual changes that we notice in what my body is able to do and how these changes could be used. All these things can have an effect on my functionality – both internal and external as well as my psychological well being.

What have you found helpful to stay focussed on your recovery?

Making slight changes in the programme – and taking risks at times that show surprising results. Setting goals, then adapting them as things change. Being creative and inventive and not being closed minded to possibilities or limitations.

Research Project: Circuit Group Study

What is the purpose of this study?

The Balance-Fit and Move! classes have been running regularly and aim to improve your strength, balance, endurance and/or mobility abilities. Although testing is routinely done before starting the classes, we have not been re-testing to see if you have made any changes.

How will this study help?

The study will help us to learn whether the circuit group classes improve your strength, balance, endurance and/or mobility. This information will be used to improve the classes if needed.

What happens in this study?

If you agree to take part in this study, we will test your physical ability and compare it to the tests taken before you began the circuit group. We will also use a questionnaire to ask whether you have noticed any benefits and whether you think there are ways the classes could be improved. The re-testing will take about 30 minutes in total.

Who is able to take part?

- If you are currently attending either the Balance-Fit or Move! classes
- OR if you want to participate in the Balance-Fit or Move! classes and you will benefit from one of the classes.

Who should I contact for questions or if I want to participate?

Michala Mewa – 022 101 947

Louise Robinson – 021 931 299

Email: circuitgroupstudynz@gmail.com

Spotlight on Rehab Techniques: Mental Practice

What is it?

Mental practice is the use of your imagination to rehearse an action so that you feel like you are and/or picture yourself doing the action. It has been used by sports players for many years to improve sports performance. In the last ten years, it has begun to be used in rehabilitation as well.

How does it work?

Studies show us that the same parts of the brain that are involved with planning a movement are activated when people imagine themselves doing the movement. A recent study found that people with stroke who used mental practice in addition to their regular rehabilitation got better results than people who just had rehabilitation.

How would I use it?

There are a couple of different ways to use mental practice.

1. Visualise yourself performing the desired action; make sure you take yourself through all the steps involved. Try and make it as vivid as you can.
2. Visualise someone else performing the action, so that you are the 'observer'. Watch all the steps.
3. Think about the things you will feel when you do the action (e.g. is something heavy, hot, slippery etc? Can you feel the air when you move your arm?)
4. You can also listen to and follow someone talking and giving you instructions of the movement you want to achieve.

You can talk to your therapist about which of these options would work best for you and the specifics of what you could do.

How Can Massage Assist My Rehabilitation?

by Kirsten Pirie

Massage is used for a myriad of reasons and has both physiological and anatomical benefits:

- Increases/improves circulation
- Helps muscles return to their full resting position
- Improves range of motion of joints
- Improves muscle tone
- Reduces pain and injury time
- Assists with joints' neural messages to the brain

Massage works well alongside your physiotherapy. Whilst a rehabilitation programme is vital in assisting you to regain motion and balance amongst other things, massage techniques can assist. If you find, for instance, muscles remain contracted, long effleurage strokes can help send messages to remind the brain how a particular muscle can lengthen/relax.

Kirsten is more than happy to talk with you or your carer about how a massage could benefit your rehab programme.

At present, Kirsten is at Neuro Rehab Results on Thursdays – you need to make an appointment directly with her. You can call or text Kirsten on 021 129 4542.

Neuro Rehab Results special - \$50 per hour (at the clinic). Home visits can be discussed – travel fee applies.

Arm Clinic

Arm clinic is now running twice a week – on Mondays and Thursdays from 1-3pm each day. Sessions cost \$100 for 2 hours. Work in a group, but on your own programme focussing on arm exercises and activities.

For more information, check out our website <http://neurorehab.co.nz/therapy/arm-clinic/>

Changes to the Therapy Team:

We were very sad to lose Pip Charlesworth at the end of 2014. But we have had Sam Henry start at the beginning of 2015. We remember Sam well from when she was a student and helped out with our exercise classes, so nice to have her back! Read more about her below. Although Shona started in the middle of 2014, we haven't had a newsletter since, then so we also welcome her (belatedly!) on board. We are also sorry to say goodbye to Viv Dykes, our dietitian, who is semi-retiring and hope to introduce you to our new dietitian shortly.

Sam Henry, Physiotherapist

Sam completed a Bachelor of Health Science in Physiotherapy at AUT University in 2012. She is a physiotherapist with a particular interest in neurological rehabilitation and has experience working with clients with brain injuries in both an intensive setting and a longer term residential setting. Sam is enjoying working with clients with all neurological conditions and runs the Move! classes for clients with Parkinson's disease. Sam works for us 5 days a week and when not working enjoys spending time with her children, being at the beach and paddleboarding.



Shona Chalmers, Occupational Therapist

Shona completed her Diploma in Occupational Therapy in Wellington in 1990. After working in stroke rehabilitation and elderly care in New Zealand she moved to the UK where she worked as a research occupational therapist on the South London Community Stroke Project and completed her Master of Science in Neuro rehabilitation at Brunel University.

Following this Shona continued her interest in community based rehabilitation in the UK and NZ primarily working with people with traumatic brain injury, spinal injury and stroke.

She then moved to Australia where she practiced as a rehabilitation consultation in vocational rehabilitation, assisting people to return to work following serious injury or illness. She continued in this field following her return to NZ.

Shona is a very experienced occupational therapist who is passionate about assisting people to engage in meaningful activities.



If you have an idea for the newsletter or would like to be answer some questions for the client profile, please let Suzie or Sue know. We're always looking for contributions!