

Neuro Rehab Results Newsletter

July 15, 2011

Vol. 2, issue 4



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Arm Clinic

*Arm clinic is running regularly on Mondays from
1pm – 3pm.*

*If you are interested in attending arm clinic,
please contact Sue in the clinic to make a
booking.*

What's been happening?

Arm clinic is up and running again. We have had a successful couple of weeks. If you have been thinking about coming along, why don't you call Sue to book in a session? We would love to have you join us.

Kirsty, our occupational therapist is leaving Neuro Rehab Results on Friday 29th July. We would like to invite you along to a farewell finger food lunch at the clinic on Monday 25th July, 12pm – 1pm to say goodbye. There is no need to bring anything as lunch will be provided.

Upcoming event

Mobility Assistance Dogs Trust Open Day



**Saturday 23rd July. Drop in between 10am – 2pm.
Venue: Mobility Dogs Kennels, 55 Airdrie Road, Swanson.**

Mobility Dogs enhance the lives of people living with physical disabilities to increase independence, confidence, self-esteem and participation in New Zealand communities.

Light refreshments will be served. Meet and talk with the Mobility Dogs team. Observe some of our dogs in training. Have a chat with some current working teams.

Find out if a dog may be suitable for you. We welcome any potential candidates, puppy raisers, friends, fans and funders!

Contact tina.french@mobilitydogs.co.nz or (027) 7007018 for more information.

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Rehabilitation Principle 1: Use It or Lose It

Last month we considered neural plasticity. Following on from that we are going to discuss the principle of 'use it or lose it'. Failure to use specific brain functions can lead to a further decline in function following brain injury.

A good example is someone who has had a stroke; the stroke has affected one side of their body, their arm is most affected. The effect of the stroke on their arm is decreased sensation and movement. Because of this they do not use the arm or include it in everyday activity, thus relying on the non-affected arm for most tasks. Research tells us that in order for the brain to re-organise itself and to create new connections (neural plasticity), the affected arm needs to be used.

So, how can you try to use what function you have? Sometimes therapists might use a method of therapy called constraint induced movement therapy (CIMT). In CIMT the unaffected arm is constrained in a sling or a mitt and the impaired arm is then used for a lot of different exercises and tasks. This assists in improving the function of the impaired arm and promotes greater movement - associated activation in the injured part of the brain. If you have any questions about constraint induced movement therapy, you can ask your OT or physio.

So how can I use my affected arm or leg in every day life? Your therapist will advise you on the best way to do this. Some suggestions will be things like weight bearing through the impaired limb. Use your affected arm or hand to stabilize items for example: jars, bowls, and paper when writing. If you have more function in your hand, try to include it in eating, meal preparation tasks, and showering, dressing, housework tasks. And remember the principle...Use it or Lose it.

References:

Kleim & Jones. (2008). Principles of Experience-dependent neural plasticity: Implications for rehabilitation after brain damage. *Journal of Speech, Language and Hearing Research* 51: S225-239.

HOW DIVERSITY WORKS

AN ART EVENT TO DEVELOP IN-DEPTH
DIALOGUE ABOUT DIVERSITY

17 August to 3 September 2011

Artstation Gallery 1 Ponsonby Rd Auckland

"How Diversity Works" delves into a complex and intriguing dialogue about diversity, moving beyond the usual categories. It confronts head-on humanity's challenge to recognise, understand and respond to the uniqueness and commonality that exists in all people, in all places, at all times. The exhibition features works in a variety of mediums, by a wide range of artists from both New Zealand and abroad.

Opening - Tuesday 16th August, 5 – 7pm. Drinks and nibbles. Cost: Free

Artist Panel Discussion – Saturday 20th August 2pm – 4pm. Cost: Free

Diversity Inquiry Workshop – Wednesday 24th August 5.30 – 7.30pm, cost \$46.00

See [website](http://www.diversityworks.co.nz) for registration details
www.diversityworks.co.nz or call 09 376 4830

Useful Websites

Weka

www.weka.net.nz

Weka is New Zealand's disability information web site.

DME

www.dmedirect.co.nz or 0800 890 616

New Zealand's leading supplier of quality medical equipment.

Touch Compass

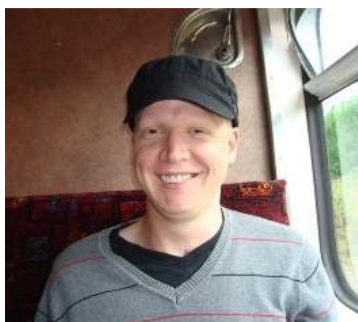
www.touchcompass.org.nz

New Zealand's premiere integrated Dance Company, combining dancers with and without disability in ground breaking professional performances and events.

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Getting to know a client...

Gary Farrow.

When was your injury?

My injury was in February 2007. I was involved in a car

crash and suffered a brain injury which has left me with right hemiparesis – impaired control of the right side of my body.

How long have you been going to Neuro Rehab?

I have been coming since November 2007, so I am a bit of a veteran client! Neuro Rehab has obviously been responsible for my treatment throughout much of my rehabilitation.

Since starting at the clinic, what improvements have you seen?

Where do I start? Before, I needed someone to push me around in a wheelchair whenever I went out in public. But now, I can even negotiate stairways with no handrails, all by myself, because I have become so much more steady and strong on my feet. I used to have trouble mustering up the energy to walk from my bedroom to the table for breakfast, but I am now capable of walking great distances on rough ground. Also, when I started at Neuro Rehab, I needed to have a one-hour rest every day. These days, I rarely need to have a rest at all which show there have been great improvements in both my cognitive and physical strength and endurance.

Tell us about your greatest achievement so far.

Within the last year I managed a walk of 8.7 kilometres between Auckland University and Mission Bay. That's the longest distance I've managed to cover in one go since receiving my injuries. I had done it several times before the crash, when I was completely able-bodied, so

it was great to show myself that I was still able to achieve it, even with my impairments, thanks to the constant efforts put in by my therapists and I.

I have also progressed to the point in my rehabilitation where I am attending a community gym. I go there three times a week. In two of my visits I follow my exercise programme on my own, and then once a week I have a session with my great personal trainer, Eric, who has a lot of experience in nursing and gives me ingenious advice as to what I could improve on. It feels great being able to independently keep physically active and healthy.



If you would like to share your story in our next newsletter, please contact us