

Brachial Plexus Injury Newsletter

In this edition...

Welcome to the Autumn/Winter 2011 edition of Brachial Plexus News. There's lots of interest in this edition. We have...

- the new team physiotherapist
- report from conference in Copenhagen
- news from the TBPI charity
- useful aids from the OT

Infirmery. This post has exposed me to many interesting cases and allowed me to specialise in upper limb rehabilitation. In the last few years I have had the opportunity to work with brachial plexus patients due to the exciting new developments in the provision of secondary reconstructive surgery.

I am very much looking forward to working more specifically within this field. The warm welcome I have received into the team has been great and I look forward to meeting you all and working together in the future. It is important that physiotherapy is available to the people who need it, so I am keen to be as accessible as possible to provide therapy, advice and information when required.

I am based at the Victoria Infirmery for the brachial plexus service three days a week, Monday, Tuesdays and Fridays but can always be contacted via email – lyndsay.hair@ggc.scot.nhs.uk.

Introducing a new Physiotherapist



I would like to introduce myself, as I have recently taken up post to provide physiotherapy input for the brachial plexus service. My name is Lyndsay Pawlikowski, but some people may already know me as Lyndsay Hair (I was recently married).

I trained in Glasgow but I have also worked in Stirling and enjoyed a six month period working in New Zealand, before returning to Glasgow where I have been based for the last seven years. During this time I have worked within the burns and plastics department at Glasgow Royal

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(Service Administrator)

Reports back from:

12th EFORT Congress, Copenhagen, Denmark June 1-4, 2011

The European Federation of National Associations of Orthopaedics and Traumatology

I was fortunate to have a paper accepted to present at this conference and to receive funding from both NHS GGC and also the Scottish National Brachial Plexus Injury Service to attend.

The main aim of the paper entitled "Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll – what do patients really want?" was to showcase the responsive role of the Clinical Nurse Specialist within the service multidisciplinary team and to demonstrate the delivery of a patient focused approach to care. My paper was presented as an e poster and was available to all delegates to view / download throughout the conference.

More than 6,500 participants from over 90 nations around the world made this Congress another impressive demonstration of the scientific and educational power within the European orthopaedic faculty in EFORT.

Claire McGeehan (the BPI service OT) accompanied me and we took the opportunity to visit one of the largest Danish regional hospitals, located in Hvidovre.

There was an afternoon of presentations made by local staff on the current research activity in the hospital and then we were taken on a tour of some of their orthopaedic facilities.

The following day we attended Congress and toured the vast trade stands at the exhibition availing ourselves of information on new products and publications etc. The Nurse/AHP attendance was in the hundreds and there



were some thought provoking presentations to compare and contrast with our own services in Scotland! The opportunity to network with fellow orthopaedic workers was enjoyed (over coffee and a Danish pastry!) and contact details exchanged.

Copenhagen showed us the sunny side of Denmark for the days we were there and we used every spare moment out with Congress to see some lovely sights....

This was a wonderful opportunity to promote the work of our service and for us both to enjoy the interactions and lively discussion that ensues at international conferences.

BW



TRAUMATIC BRACHIAL PLEXUS INJURY GROUP ANNUAL MEETING 5-7th AUGUST 2011

The website for the registered charity Traumatic Brachial Plexus Injury has been around for a few years and has undergone some changes more recently. They aim to provide help and support to adults with a bpi but have no medical expertise so the most useful resources on this site are the injured people themselves.

I was delighted to be invited down to their annual meeting in Yorkshire to speak to those present about my role, activities and what our Scottish National Service offers patients here. They made me feel most welcome and had arranged everything I needed prior to my arrival. I gave a presentation on different aspects of complementary treatments I offer including visualisation, guided imagery, relaxation, counselling etc (please visit the section on our website). This was well received and much discussion followed, despite the disappointing low numbers in attendance. The conversations continued throughout the social evening and it was a pleasure for me to meet such nice folk there....they know who they are! Special thanks to Neil for organising my visit so well and putting up with all my questioning e-mails!

I have made some plans for their committee and myself to work on some projects together e.g. anatomy section of their website and invite them to reciprocate! They kindly invited me back next year so those dates are in the diary...
.3-5th August 2012.

BWT

Contact the News Team

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Introducing:

THE TRAUMA BRACHIAL PLEXUS INJURIES GROUP

Registered Charity No. 1100691

www.tbpi-group.org

The Group was set up around 10 years ago by people with the injury for people with the injury. Its aim is to provide help and support to anyone affected by a B.P.I including family. We have approaching 400 members, all with varying degrees of injury and each with a different story to tell. These people have experienced life with a B.P.I. and are happy to share this with others. There is a message board site with a growing amount of information relating to the injury and also to the community we have here. You can post a question and someone will reply with advice, whether it be about pain control, driving adaptations, slings, etc.

We also have a medical section with articles covering different topics but we're not medical experts, so we don't put anything up that hasn't been verified by those that are! Beverley is going to link up with the TBPI group and help with the development of this part of the site. We have found the B.P.I. teams in Stanmore, Leeds and Glasgow very supportive over the years.

We have a section on resources e.g. help with benefits, re-training, and much more. We aim to forge links with the Scottish website to improve information for all. We also have a (rogues?) gallery section with pictures of members past and present, mostly taken at the annual meeting each August in Yorkshire.

So, if you are new to the injury and feel in need of somewhere to turn or if you are further down the road and feel you have something to offer then visit the site and join us. You will be most welcome.

Neil Finney (Chair, TBPI)

BW

Gone fishing!

It was a throw away comment that David Wombwell made to his orthotist, Christine McMonagle, that got David back to fishing again.

David was a commercial diver and dive boat owner based in Scapa Flow. In 1993 he had an accident when a high pressure cylinder violently discharged causing severe damage to his trunk and shoulder, resulting in a brachial plexus injury. David has worn a Stanmore brachial plexus orthosis for the last 3 years.

David was having a cast taken for a new orthosis made at the University of Strathclyde following surgery to his shoulder and mentioned that he had enjoyed a bit of fishing before his accident. David lives in Orkney, where water, and an abundant supply of fish, is never too far away!

Christine spoke with Brachial Plexus team and it was agreed that David could try out a fishing appliance. The appliance, although originally designed for upper limb amputees, is compatible with the Stanmore flail arm orthosis, and can be disconnected from the orthosis when not being used. Positioning the retainer in the correct position to hold the



appliance took a little bit of time during the fitting. However the results were well worth it, as can be seen from the photos below. David reports that the fishing appliance works very well, and although not suitable for deep sea fishing, as reeling in from deep water with a heavy catch can put a fair amount of strain on the shoulder, in shallow water it has proved a great success and has provided him with a number of successful catches.

Hair Dryer Holder



Drying your hair one handed is a difficult task. The Hair Dryer Holder makes the tasks more manageable. The product holds the hairdryer for you thus allowing you to use your hand(s) to style your hair.

If you require any information on the above products or are having difficulty completing any tasks please contact me to discuss.

Claire McGeehan, Occupational Therapist