

Partnership with Carers through Training

Mary Stewart (Manager)

Princess Royal Trust for Carers

Fife Carers Centre

Mary gave the conference a basic insight into a scheme which is training tutors in Postural Care, to work specifically with carers and families. Although currently the only scheme of its type in Scotland, it is one of five pilot schemes being run across the United Kingdom.

Four individuals are currently undergoing this training which is being delivered by PCSP UK Ltd. and accredited by the Open College. The training is eighteen months in duration and aims to give tutors the skills to provide education, training and to cascade skills down to carers.

Mary informed the conference that although the tutors are still in training, the feedback from carers has been extremely positive.

Contractor-based Involvement for Posture and Mobility Services.

Phil Swann

Contour 88

Phil Swann presented an overview of his company's work which is entirely with NHS Wheelchair and Seating Services. Their products include moulded seating, foam carve seating, lynx and matrix. Phil emphasizes the individual nature of their work and the importance of a good robust assessment for the best outcome for clients. A hybrid of the various types of seating is therefore quite common. The company strive to meet the challenge of achieving the best possible seating position while taking account of user friendliness and aesthetics.

The Fife pathway to sustainable postural care

Joyce McDonald

Fife Joint Postural Care Service

Joyce began her presentation with a brief summary of the audit that was completed during the beginnings of the Service to examine the current working practices in the postural management services for adults with learning disabilities in Fife. The audit confirmed that funding for postural management equipment was a lottery and that there was a large unmet need.

Joyce then highlighted the main developments of the Service, including how the delivery can be sustained with the involvement of the mainstream NHS and social work services, the development of a service pathway, information exchange, and how service referrals are made. Other developments include partnership working, incorporation of a simple screening system to anticipate future needs, outcome measures, and an ongoing review process.

Joyce brought her presentation to a close by outlining the future benefits of the Service to be a smooth transition and continuity from children to adult services, closer collaboration between agencies and disciplines, sustainability of service delivery between NHS and social services and trained, equipped and empowered mainstream services.

SMART Wheelchair Loan Service

**Catherine Mathieson,
Enabling Technology for Children (ETC)**

The SMART Wheelchair is a powered wheelchair fitted with sensors and a computer which can be driven by severely disabled adults and children. The sensors in the bumpers enable it to detect obstacles and avoid them. It is a great assessment and learning tool and can be fitted with a variety of seating systems.

The SMART platform is the latest development on which the patient's normal wheelchair can be placed to enable them to get a chance to try a powered chair but stay in their normal seating. This project arose because there were a number of children with complex disabilities who were being issued with powered indoor chairs in the hope that they would then learn how to use them. The work of correct positioning, and finding the correct control system had then to be carried out- which was a ponderous and time consuming process which was not always successful.

It was felt that such children would benefit from being assessed in the SMART system and a source of funding was found - a local radio station provided £25,000 to get both a SMART chair and a SMART platform. These are provided on loan to schools for a period of 4 months and this scheme has been running since May 2007. A second loan period can be requested. In this time the child is assessed as to which type of control is needed for the chair. The co-operation of the school staff is required and a careful activity record is made. There are regular assessment visits.

The platform is still on its first loan, the wheelchair is about to go on its second. The first wheelchair loan was interesting- the child with Lesch- Nghan Syndrome was very enthusiastic and rapidly mastered fine control of the chair, even through narrow doorways. Unfortunately the wheelchair then became a tool by which they could self harm, by rubbing their hands and arms on the walls as they went past. The chair had to be withdrawn for safety reasons.

It is hoped to get 2 further chairs - and have one for Fife, and 2 for Lothian and Borders

The Commercialisation Process

Alan Whiteside, Scottish Health Innovations Ltd (SHIL)

Janice Clark, NHS Greater Glasgow

Jason Broadberry, Broadberry Care Solutions

Alan, Janice and Jason presented three different perspectives on the involvement of SHIL in the commercialisation of an idea from NHS staff.

Alan gave a brief overview of the purpose and services offered by SHIL. SHIL aims to support the development and commercialisation of ideas from NHS staff. SHIL not only looks at the commercial viability of ideas, but also evaluates the perceived benefit to patients and/or staff. SHIL offers project management expertise and is able to prepare business plans, patent protection and grant applications when additional funding is required (SHIL does offer some funding for the development process).

Janice is a physiotherapist in Glasgow and the co-developer of 'My PAL' (Posture Assisted Lying). Janice spoke about how SHIL helped with the development of their initial idea and how SHIL brought the concept from an idea into a commercial reality. This included involving a product designer funded by SHIL and finding a commercial supplier.

Jason discussed the involvement of SHIL from a supplier's perspective, and the benefits of the combined approach of health professionals, project management (SHIL) and commercial/sales resources.

The User's Needs as a basis for commercial development
Catherine Jenkinson
Jenx Ltd

Catherine talked us through the development of her company Jenx Ltd. She herself worked as a Paediatric Physiotherapist and during this period it was the lack of equipment to meet the needs of her client group which began the process. The first ideas for seats and standing frames were sketched out by Catherine and made by her husband in their garage. Other colleagues and parents saw the products and asked where they could be purchased and a company was formed !

As the company grew Catherine has had many roles – design, marketing, human resources and strategic development but her main input is aimed at the needs of the child, their carers and their professionals.

Catherine finished her talk with a plea to referrer's to **PLEASE** be at the **assessment if you have requested one- you know the child and their needs best.**