

Representative of Japanese Tertiary Education Syndicate Visits NCPO

The NCPO was pleased to host a visit from Mr. Paul Lee last month. Mr. Lee, a representative of the Jikei group which owns twenty-seven tertiary institutions including the Prosthetics and Orthotics College in Kobe, toured the NCPO clinic, International Programs Office and Campus accommodation venues.

In addition to meeting with University staff and students, Mr. Lee took video footage and collected information to pass on to prospective NCPO students from the Kobe school. The visit was a tremendous success with Mr. Lee reporting that he was extremely impressed with the University's facilities, commitment towards international student education and the NCPO's P&O program.

Three students from Mr. Lee's College are expected to enroll at the NCPO next year.



Recent visitor to the NCPO, Mr. Paul Lee, pictured with some Australian wildlife at Healsville Sanctuary.

NCPO Collaboration with the Cambodian School of Prosthetics and Orthotics

The NCPO was recently approached by the Cambodian School of Prosthetics and Orthotics (CSPO) to investigate the opportunity for educational collaboration between the two institutions. The CSPO delivers a three-year prosthetics and orthotics educational program that gives their graduates an ISPO Category 2 certification. The CSPO was interested in developing further educational opportunities for their graduates to obtain Category 1 qualifications, and chose to approach the NCPO as a potential partner. The decision was based on the NCPO's international reputation for excellence in P&O education, and the CSPO's favorable impression of NCPO graduate attributes.

Following initial discussions, the institutions have undertaken a course comparison project. The project will investigate areas such as subject content, P&O technology and assessment, and will make comparisons to allow an in-depth understanding of both programs. A report detailing the curriculum comparison will be presented to the NCPO, CSPO and ISPO in April, with further collaborative ventures expected to develop following review of this initial report.

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Curriculum Corner

Detail about the P&O curriculum can be found in the 'Course outline and subject descriptions' section on the NCPO homepage:
<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/ncpo/>

Changes to First Year Curriculum

Following revision to the whole Bachelor of Prosthetics and Orthotics program, first year core curriculum has been substantially revised. Commencing with this year's intake, students will complete Introduction to Prosthetics in first semester and Introduction to Orthotics in second semester. Many of the old introductory practical projects have been removed from the first year program because they were repeated in later years, and three important areas of clinical practice have been moved into first year.

Prosthetic studies will focus on introducing students to theoretical and applied prosthetic management with an emphasis upon upper limb applications. The major practical project undertaken will be the manufacture of a body-powered training arm.

Second semester orthotic studies will focus on introductory theoretical and applied concepts, with a focus upon spinal and upper limb orthotic management.

Because upper limb prosthetics, spinal orthotics and upper limb orthotic management will be covered in first year, they will no longer be offered in later years. The shift of these subjects from their biennial delivery in the later years of the course allows a more clinically focused approach to the first year of the course and an increased allocation of time to these important subject areas.

P&O Clinical Education

Fourth year students are nearing the completion of their first block placement. This round, students have traveled to Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth, throughout Victoria and Cambodia. Thank you to two of our facilities for offering two placements, at short notice, due to cancellations.

The Fourth year clinical examination format has been confirmed and will consist of two parts:

1. A patient assessment (either prosthetic or orthotic) as in previous years
2. A written case scenario (opposite to the 'discipline' in Part 1).

Standardized questions will be formulated for both parts. Further information can be found in the Clinical Education Guidelines (<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/ncpo/>).

Clinical Examinations will be held on June 30 and July 1, followed by a Symposium Day on July 3.

Second year placement results have been processed. Thank you for returning the paperwork so promptly.

First year students are busy looking over facility information and nominating their preferences for their placements. All students lodge preferences for their placements. Placements are allocated based on those preferences and facility availability. As a result, not all facilities that offer placements will receive students each round.

Clinical Supervisors Meeting

The next Clinical Supervisors meeting will be held on **Wednesday April 16, at 4.30pm** in the Health Sciences Clinic. If you have not received an Agenda then please contact Kaisha Gurry.

Further information about P&O Clinical Education can be obtained from the Coordinator, Kaisha Gurry, phone: (03) 9479 5864 or e-mail: K.Gurry@latrobe.edu.au

NCPO Attracts New Research Grants

Staff of the NCPO have attracted research funding for a number of projects commencing in 2003.

Ms Margaret Hodge and Dr Tim Bach received \$10,000 from the Faculty of Health Sciences Research Committee for a study of plantar tissue thickness and stiffness in Rheumatoid Arthritis. In this study, the investigators will use a Tissue Ultrasound Palpation System (TUPS), developed at Hong Kong Polytechnic University, to measure mechanical characteristics of the plantar tissues in healthy and RA subjects. This information is important in understanding the biomechanics of foot orthoses used in the management of RA.

Dr Tim Bach, Mr Rod Cooper and Ms Margaret Hodge received \$10,000, again from the Faculty of Health Sciences, for a study of the relationship between foot orthosis contour and plantar pressure. In this study of normal feet, the Novel Emed insole pressure measurement system will be used to study the effects of metatarsal pad thickness and shape on pressure under the metatarsal heads. The investigators hope to provide clinicians with information that will reduce the time-consuming trial-and-error approach commonly required in clinics to select an appropriate metatarsal pad. Ms Monique van den Boom is undertaking this project as her honours thesis.

Dr Tim Bach, in conjunction with Mr Richard Law of Law Comfort Pty. Ltd., received a \$3,850 La Trobe University Industry Collaborative Grant for a study of compression socks for transibial amputees. The study will involve the collection of anthropometric information of transibial stumps in the Australian amputee population, to be used for sizing purposes. The study also requires mechanical testing of compression stockings to obtain information about the relationship between pressure and stump size, so that a stocking which provides optimal pressure for stump volume control can be designed. Ms Lee Brentnall is undertaking the project as her Honours thesis.

NCPO Continuing Education Eight P&Os Attend Quality Supervision 2003

Each year the Foundation for Quality Supervision, a multidisciplinary group with representatives from La Trobe, Deakin and Monash Universities, offers a certificate course for health professionals who supervise students. The Quality Supervision course is presented in two modules, the first involves three days in February and the second module consists of two days in March. One of the features of the course is the *experiential learning* mode of delivery, which exposes participants to a large variety of teaching modes during the five day program. Formal lectures are minimized and participants learn through experiencing many different activities involving small group work and action. Although some course participants may find this non-traditional presentation a little challenging at first, most enjoy the variety of experience and gain an understanding of the need to vary teaching modes when supervising students.

Eight prosthetists and orthotists were part of the multidisciplinary group of participants, which consisted of 120 people from all allied health professions. Four of the P&Os had travelled from interstate to attend the course: one each from Queensland and the ACT, and two from New South Wales. Two other P&Os were from rural Victoria and the remaining two work in Melbourne. The NCPO appreciates the considerable effort put in by the P&O participants to attend the course and by their facilities, which supported their attendance. NCPO students on clinical placement benefit from having supervisors who have gained knowledge and skill in clinical teaching, and it is likely that course participants apply some of their learning more generally, perhaps when supervising other staff in the workplace.

Ms Margaret Hodge represents the NCPO on the Foundation for Quality Supervision and has developed P&O-specific components of the Quality Supervision program. Advertising for the course is circulated in October each year and there is considerable competition for places. For further information about the foundation or the Quality Supervision course, please contact Margaret on phone: (03) 9479 5778 or email: M.Hodge@latrobe.edu.au

NCPO Staffing Update



*New NCPO lecturer
Dr. Michael Dillon*

The NCPO welcomes Dr. Michael Dillon as our new lecturer in prosthetics and orthotics. Michael is a La Trobe honours graduate who completed his doctoral studies at the University of Queensland. In addition to his research, Michael has lectured in the prosthetics and orthotics program at Hong Kong University and has worked as a clinical prosthetist. The NCPO looks forward to Michael's contribution towards our educational delivery and research activity.

We are pleased to welcome back Ms. Kaisha Gurry who is returning to the NCPO after spending the past year on maternity leave. Kaisha will resume her role as Clinical Education coordinator.

Michael replaces Mr. Tim Jarrott and Kaisha replaces Ms. Danielle Bonett, who both completed their contracts at the NCPO and returned to clinical service provision at the start of this year. The NCPO wishes to thank both Danielle and Tim for the contributions that they have made to the NCPO in their time with us.

Mr. Paul Stoney from Cybernetic designs and Mr. Anthony Francis from Network Orthotic Services compliment the NCPO teaching team in their role as sessional consultants this semester. Paul will be assisting in teaching the Transfemoral Prosthetics program and Anthony will assist in delivering the Lower Limb Orthotics program.

**** DATE FOR YOUR DIARY ****

NCPO P&O Student Society (POSS)

& the La Trobe (Podiatry Students Association (PODSA)

P & O and Podiatry Ball

When: May 8th 2003 Venue: South Atlantic Wharf on Southbank

A three-course meal and drinks will be provided

Held in a beautiful reception venue, it will be a great night and a fantastic opportunity to catch up with old friends.

More details to come via facilities.... Or email: yvonesapiej@hotmail.com

P&O Facilities List

The NCPO maintains the most up-to-date list of P&O facilities in Australia and New Zealand on our webpage: www.latrobe.edu.au/ncpo/

To request changes to the NCPO Facility list, please contact Stephen Hockey on phone: (03) 9479 5747 or email: <S.Hockey@latrobe.edu.au>

Smith & Nephew, Otto Bock and Law Comfort support NCPO teaching

The following companies have donated to the NCPO so far in 2003:

Smith & Nephew donated materials and expertise for the Orthotic Management of Fractures subject in second year, semester 2. Fracture management forms a large portion of orthotic practice in some facilities and clinicians would be aware of the expensive materials used in fracture bracing. This generous donation from Smith & Nephew assists the NCPO to provide fracture bracing practice for students. The students also receive instruction in the pathology of fractures and bone healing, medical imaging related to fractures, an orthopaedic view of fracture management and the theory of orthotic management of fractures.

Otto Bock generously provided catalogs for student use, and a range of lower limb prosthetic componentry for the teaching program. NCPO staff think it is important for students to become familiar with product catalogs, because clinicians frequently use catalogs as a resource in practice, and students need to understand the range of componentry available when prescribing. The lower limb prosthetic components provided by Otto Bock will contribute to the stock available to students when working on practical projects. These components are never provided to patients, but are recycled multiple times through different student projects.

Law Comfort donated second stump socks for use by NCPO Volunteer amputee patients. It is important for students and volunteers to be able to use additional stump socks when fitting prostheses, to optimize socket fit. Again, the socks are not provided to patients, but are kept by the NCPO for application within practical classes.

The NCPO is very grateful to these companies for their generous support of our teaching program. Companies interested in providing similar sorts of support to the NCPO should contact the Head of the NCPO, Mr Rod Cooper, on phone: (03) 9479 5862 or via email: Rod.Cooper@latrobe.edu.au

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Annual Scientific Meeting of ISPO Australia

November 27-29, 2003

La Trobe University, Melbourne

The 2003 Annual Scientific meeting of ISPO Australia will be held at La Trobe University from November 27 to 29, 2003.

The venue for the meeting is the Western Lecture Theatre complex. A Trade exhibit will be held in the adjacent foyer.



The major theme of the meeting is **Lower Limb Prosthetic Socket Design**. Other themes include:

- Acquired Brain Injury
- Post Polio
- Sports injury rehabilitation
- Spinal Cord Injury (ambulatory orthoses, wheelchairs)
- Orthotic Management of the Rheumatoid Foot
- Cerebral Palsy

A number of workshops are planned for November 26. Details will be announced shortly.

For more information, visit the ISPO Australia website: www.ispo.org.au.

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