In 2010 the ADA was 20 years old. Somewhere in those 20 years Quads became “persons with tetraplegia” which gave them an excuse to rename rugby into “murder ball” (at least briefly). Survival rates for SCI improved; but employment rates for disabled barely moved. Manual wheelchair weights came down by ~ 80% and nearly 60% of folks living with SCI are overweight or obese and “metabolic syndrome” has become the latest co-morbidity issue for living with SCI. The neurology section of the APTA began publishing a section journal (and it became indexed) and ABPTS certifies neurologic clinical specialists; yet many rehabilitation centers closed or diversified and the LOS in rehabilitation after SCI has dropped precipitously and continuously. PT educators embraced the DPT as the entry point to PT practice and “evidence based practice” became a mantra. Yet there is some evidence that we have seen declining outcomes in function after SCI.

So there seems to be some disconnects or at least dichotomous situations. What will the next 20 years bring? I hope we can gain a new connectedness and sense of sharing for the greater good. Where we embrace experience as evidence as well as evidence from experiments. I hope that for those of us working with individuals living with SCI that we remember and reconnect to our passion in helping each person to regain the ability to live a life that is meaningful to them. I think we have a good start with the International SCI PT Network which is coalescing as a platform for sharing information worldwide (see more details to later in this newsletter). Please go to the webpage (www.scipt.org) and see what is there and if you have information you can share that is marvelous. This web page is the brain-child of Lisa Harvey, a physiotherapist from Australia, and Joy Bruce with Shepherd Center. Lisa also established www.physiotherapyexercises.com which is a wealth of ready to use exercises and videos to assist in teaching functional skills for persons with SCI. In fact the US is the highest user of this web page and I encourage you to continue to do so. As you do, be careful to use wisely, do not fall into blind endorsement just because they are online and slick. There are some exercises and some techniques that are counter to the recommendations in the CPG for the preservation of UE after SCI (an evidenced based document from the Consortium of Spinal Cord Medicine). So let’s move into 2011 with renewed vigor, passion and critical thinking. I hope to see all of you at CSM. Please enjoy our educational offerings and attend the business meeting.

Jennifer Hastings, PT, PhD, NCS
CSM Programming

Don’t forget to attend CSM this year in New Orleans. The programming promises to be exceptional and it will be the biggest yet with a projected 9,500 attendees!!

Upcoming CSM SCI SIG Programming

Compensation and Restoration in Rehabilitation after Spinal Cord Injury: A Review of the Evidence and Implications for Practice by Martha Somers, PT, MS, DPT, Thursday, February 10, 2:30-3:45
*Raffle of Matha Somers’ new edition. Be on time to get your raffle ticket for a chance to win this new SCI resource!

Business Meeting, Thursday, Feb, 10 from 3:45-4:00 (pick of raffle ticket).

New family education videos coming out in February for persons with SCI (and ABI). They are funded by Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation, NSCIA, and others and will be highlighted by Sarah Morrison, PT, Shepherd Center, Atlanta

Myelin Melter Friday night—also Neuro Section Business Meeting 6-9pm

The Roundtable-Patrick Kitzman- Challenges and Opportunities for Rehabilitation of Patients with Spinal Cord Injury Living in Rural Communities. Saturday, February 12 from 1-2:45

International Conference on Spinal Cord Injury Medicine and Rehabilitation, June 4-8, 2011 Washington, D.C.

International Neurorehabilitation Symposium, June 27-29, 2011, Zurich, Switzerland

16th International Functional Electrical Stimulation Society Conference, September 2011, Sao Paulo, Brazil
Announcing the release of the new clinical practice guidelines (CPG) by the Consortium for Spinal Cord Medicine entitled “Sexuality and Reproductive Health in Adults with Spinal Cord Injury: A Clinical Practice Guideline for Health-Care Professionals.” These CPGs are supported by a number of member organizations that comprise the Consortium including the American Physical Therapy Association. The PT panel member is our own SCI-SIG Chair, Jennifer D. Hastings, PT, Ph.D., NCS. Physical Therapy Expert Reviewers included Audrey Natale, PT, DPT from Craig Hospital in CO and Martha F. Somers, PT, DPT, MS from Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. The recommendations include topics such as the importance of sexuality and reproduction to the individual, sexual history and assessment, education, and maintaining sexual well-being. In addition, there are physical and practical considerations including bowel/bladder, skin care, secondary medical complications, and optimal positioning. Other topics included the effect of injury on sexual function, responsiveness and expression, the treatment of sexual dysfunction, female/male fertility and relationship issues. There are a myriad of suggestions for future research and the reference list classifies the citations according to I-IV rules for the levels of evidence that grew out of the work of the Canadian Task Force for the Periodic Health Examination where assessments were tied to that of the supporting evidence. As all of the other Consortium CPGs, each recommendation is presented using this same criterion for levels of evidence as well as Sackett’s categories of the strength of the evidence associated with each recommendation (A-C) and the Panel Consensus grading (low, moderate, strong). The guidelines could be very useful in caring for individuals with SCI who may have questions relating to sexuality.
The meeting center in Delhi was in an absolutely posh hotel with high security against terrorist attack. There were 3 parallel sessions with a large number of physiotherapists who were attending the post conference workshop. This made for some interesting Q & A sessions with many therapists taking the opportunity to challenge speakers or ask for clarifications. Of note there were a couple of themes in the presentations: Concern about the direction of spinal cord injury management and lack of adequate time for appropriate management, concern that managing SCI with medical professionals not trained in SC was not appropriate, a somewhat more jaded attitude toward likelihood of SCI repair/cure with some presenters stating that the animal model for SCI is not appropriate for application to human SC. In the President’s Lecture he stressed that we need to think about the PHYSIOLOGIC instability of the spinal cord. Acutely the SC is susceptible to hypoxia, anemia, hypotension, and sepsis. He asserted that spinal shock is usually not fully resolved for 4-6 months and suggested that the physiologic instability creates a very poor condition for rehabilitation and he advocates conservative management and return to time for the SC to heal; we have lost this time due to our ability to stabilize the bony structure with surgery and hardware. This, along with pressure from payer sources, encourages shorter lengths of stay.

**A point to ponder:**

80% of people with disabilities live in developing countries
82% live below poverty level

**An action to applaud:**

Rick Jay is developing a cushion for distribution only in third world countries – cheap
ASIA/ISCOS Meeting 2011 (URL: www.iscos.org.uk)


**ISCoS Topics:** Overall theme: From the Past to the Future – Achievements to Date, Challenges of the Present, Vision for the Future. Topics include
- Neurourology
- Autonomic System
- Respiratory Management
- Survival/Life Expectancy
- Free Papers

**ASIA will have the following additional topics:**
- Spine
- Translational Research
- Pediatrics and Adolescents
- Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology

**Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals:** (http://www.academyscipro.org/)

In addition to the above website, ASCIP will be adding on-line educational resources for its members, our site will soon be featuring the preliminary program for our annual conference in Las Vegas this fall (2011), at the Rio All-Suite Resort for September 5-7, 2011. The abstract deadline is March 14, 2011.

A Brief Review of ASCIP from their website follows:

The Academy of Spinal Cord Injury Professionals (ASCIP) is a not for profit incorporated association comprised of four professional sections: American Paraplegia Society (APS), Association of Spinal Cord Injury Nurses (ASCIN), Psychologists and Social Workers (PSW), and Therapy Leadership Council (TLC). TLC began in 2004 as a small meeting of VA SCI therapists. The meeting was held in Seattle, Washington and was sponsored by a grant from the United Spinal Association. Because of the grassroots efforts of these VA SCI therapists, TLC’s meeting eventually became a parallel meeting with the Congress on Spinal Cord Injury Medicine. For the next 5 years, support grew for TLC and membership now included private sector SCI therapists. On October 2009 TLC joined with the four groups and became the Academy of SCI Professionals (ASCIP). The TLC section membership is comprised of therapists and other professionals from every region that represent the continuum of SCI rehabilitation from research to clinical settings and from VA to private and academic sectors. Being a part of a larger interdisciplinary organization provides therapists with a broader outreach to fellow SCI professionals and a substantial voice for spinal cord injury.

As you know, ASCIP has separated from PVA and have moved forward without hesitation to serve its commitment to the membership and to the individuals with disabilities that are at the heart of their mission, through expanded advocacy activities and non-commercial educational offerings. In 2 months the board members, and the Academy's leaders, have worked to meet the unexpected challenge of creating an independent organization with all the necessary support services.


Los Angeles- April 15-17
New York Metro- May 20-22
Chicago- July 8-10
Houston- August 26-28
San Jose- November 18-20
The International Network of SCI Physiotherapists (www.scipt.org)

This network was set up by Lisa Harvey (Australia) and Joy Bruce (past Chair of the SCI-SIG) three years ago. The purpose of the network is to:

1. encourage and facilitate communication between SCI physiotherapists worldwide
2. support therapists from less-resourced countries
3. share resources and educational material
4. develop potential for future international collaborations in SCI PT research initiatives

In particular we would encourage members to consider uploading any of their teaching or clinical resources which might assist therapists from other countries. Currently there are 120 presentations to view from physiotherapists around the globe and 80 documents and policies, including templates for discharge summaries, policies on PT management, and pamphlets for patients. If you want to get an idea of what happens in other countries, then we would encourage you to take a look. Please also consider contributing something. Your material can help other PTs elsewhere. In addition, the network has a restricted list server comprising up to 7 senior SCI physiotherapists from 40 countries (200 members in total). The US representatives on this list server are Joy Bruce, Jennifer Hastings, Edelle Field-Fote, Sue Ann Sisto, Debbie Backus, Sarah Morrison, Therese Johnston, and Susan Ostertag. If people want any issue raised at an international level, then we would encourage you to communicate with one of these people, and ask them to post a message on your behalf.

The organization’s latest newsletter is on this website (http://www.neuropt.org/go/special-interest-groups/spinal-cord-injury/new-and-noteworthy/).

E-learning in SCI for Students and Junior Physical Therapists

There is currently an initiative to develop e-learning modules in SCI for students and junior physical therapists. This is be driven by Livability (an Irish NGO who supports a number of SCI units in Asia), Handicap International (a Belgium based NGO who funds many different SCI initiatives in places such as Vietnam, China, Haiti and Africa), The International Spinal Cord Society, the Asian Spinal Cord Injury Network, and the University of Sydney. All have been successful in attaining a substantial grant from Coloplast to together develop these modules. This grant has been supplemented by an additional grant received by our Sydney PT colleagues. The development of these modules is being overseen by an international group of SCI PTs. The US representatives are Jennifer Hastings, Joy Bruce, and Sue Ann Sisto. Anyone interested in this initiative can get in contact with one of these people, especially if you have libraries of videos or photos and are willing to put them to a good cause. The modules will be free for all to access.

Looking for exercise ideas for your patients?

Check out www.physiotherapyexercises.com. It contains over 1,000 different exercises for people with SCI. You can search for different exercises appropriate for your patients and then readily compile them into professional-looking exercise booklets. The really neat thing about this website is it is absolutely free. You can also now download an Iphone App. The developers tell us that they have had over 40,000 downloads, and US is one of the biggest users. This website is available in 7 different languages. This website has been developed on a volunteer basis by physiotherapists worldwide. The developers are looking for volunteers to help translate the website into Portuguese or Spanish. It could be a great project for PT students. The developers are also always interested to receive new exercise ideas. So, if you are interested, please let us know.
NEW TECHNOLOGY

eLegs and ReWalk Systems Make Their Debuts...

2011 Neurology Section Slate
Call for Nominations
The following positions will be elected in 2011:

Neurology Section Executive Committee:
Secretary
Director of Communications
Nominating Committee (1)

Special Interests Groups:
Degenerative Diseases:
Chair
Nominating Committee (1)

Spinal Cord Injury:
Chair
Nominating Committee (1)

Stroke:
Chair
Nominating Committee (1)

Traumatic Brain Injury:
Chair
Nominating Committee (1)

Vestibular:
Chair
Nominating Committee (1)

Balance and Falls:
Chair
Nominating Committee (1)

ACRM Progress in Rehabilitation Research
October 11–15, 2011 | Hyatt Regency, Atlanta
Clinician and Consumer Guides

People with spinal cord injuries and their caregivers have a resource to help with improving the quality of their lives:

Preservation of Upper Limb Function Following Spinal Cord Injury: A Clinical Practice Guideline for Health-Care Professionals

It is from the Consortium for Spinal Cord Medicine. See the next page for additional Consortium guidelines that are available free-of-charge. Click on each Guideline for a link to the ordering page.