

# Connections

RSLSteeper Newsletter | April 2011



**Dr. Gary Sheard**  
CEO RSLSteeper

At last, spring is here - the sun is shining, birds are singing, daffodils are out and the buds on the trees are about to burst into leaf.

This edition of *Connections* comes to you as we change from the cold of winter to the warmth of spring. Someone famous once wrote that 'the only constant in life is change itself'. Some of us like change and some of us don't, but as the founder of Coca-Cola once wrote, if you're 'not growing you are dying'.

We are seeing changes in the NHS, we are seeing changes in our customer base, we are seeing changes in patient needs, and we are seeing changes in technology.

This edition of *Connections* focuses on how we are making positive changes for patients, customers and the company through new technology and innovation.

Our business continues to grow based on the fundamentals of: ever-improving quality,

shorter delivery times, being cost competitive, and most important of all 'Improving people's lives'. The latter being our newly-adopted company strapline.

So spring is here, after one of the longest and coldest of winters, and nature shows us that change can be good! Enjoy the sunshine...and thanks for making positive change happen!

Gary

## Employee of the Year

The *Employee of the Year* Contest for 2010 saw many deserving RSLSteeper employees nominated by their peers for demonstrating extraordinary commitment and dedication at work. We would like to congratulate all the nominees for their hard work that earned them a nomination including Graeme Innes, Vicky Jarvis, Rob Edden, Julie Matthews, Steve Martin, Tim Verrall, Val Challis, Melissa Coley, Mehboob Ur-Rehman, and Tony Jack. Special congratulations go to Mehboob Ur-Rehman (Mab) for winning this prestigious title.

Mab is a Clinical Support Technician in our Leeds centre where his fellow colleagues nominated him for always going the extra

mile to help patients. He is also well known in several of our centres thanks to his willingness to travel to provide sickness and holiday cover.

The celebrations were held at Oulton Hall in Leeds, where all the nominees were treated to a congratulatory night out.

*Employee of the Year* allows us to acknowledge and reward employees that demonstrate 'Best People' attributes and are dedicated to improving the lives of their patients and colleagues.



**Mehboob Ur-Rehman**  
Clinical Support Technician

## UKAS Accreditation Award

We are delighted to announce that RSLSteeper has successfully attained UKAS accreditation to ISO9001:2008 for the orthotic and prosthetic divisions of the business.

This is a great achievement and demonstrates our drive for continuous

improvement to become the world's most clinically effective, cost-effective and innovative provider of high-quality, prosthetic, orthotic, assistive technology and healthcare solutions.

Lee Kempton, QA Manager, commented: "Attaining UKAS accreditation

demonstrates our competence, impartiality and performance capability against internationally-recognised standards. I would like to thank all parties involved for their assistance during these audits."

# bebionic hand gets even better



RSLSteeper are delighted to announce the launch of the next generation of its cutting-edge, fully articulating, myoelectric hand, *bebionic*. Combining ease of control with elegance of design, *bebionic v2* is available in a new medium size and features major improvements to grip, speed, accuracy and durability, in addition to new grip patterns and software features.

New features include upgraded individual motors for significantly higher operating speeds. Additional grip patterns have been introduced including a Precision Grip, improved Tripod Grip, Mouse Grip, for operating a computer mouse, and Trigger Grip. The gripping ability of each digit has also been significantly improved via the addition of soft, textured

finger pads and a wider thumb profile.

The new medium-size hand suits people with smaller frames, making *bebionic v2* available to a much greater number of potential users. The new hand is still available in the original large size, with all the updated features and improvements.

Paul Steeper, Product Sales Director said:

“We have made substantial improvements to our ground-breaking *bebionic* hand, making it faster, more accurate, easier to programme and more robust. New grip patterns open up increased functionality and enable the hand to complete a greater number of everyday tasks, and these can now be more easily configured



thanks to improvements to the *bebalance* software.”

For further information on *bebionic*, please visit [www.bebionic.com](http://www.bebionic.com). You can also connect with *bebionic* on Facebook and Twitter.

## motionSupport® insoles keep patients active for longer

RSLSteeper have partnered with insole experts Kriwat, to offer the UK market an innovative range of ready-made insoles that feature unique design and construction. The full-length polyurethane insoles offer improved forefoot control whilst the three-quarter-length fibreglass reinforced shell and fibreglass extension on the lateral aspect

permits a more propulsive gait. With a flexible construction under the first metatarsophalangeal joint head that allows the first ray to plantarflex and a small metatarsal button that reduces pressure on the metatarsal heads. The insoles are available in three arch heights to optimise sagittal plane control and feature a slim profile to allow for easier fitting in footwear.

Andrew Nicol, Orthotic Clinical Services Manager, said:

“*motionSupport®* insoles offer flexibility, durability, excellent value for money and a design that hasn't been seen before in the UK. They offer increased choice and improved shaping to enhance fit and optimise control, ensuring a better outcome for our patients.”



## RSLSteeper employees raise £3000 for charity

Congratulations to a group of RSLSteeper employees who raised over £3000 for charity last year when they completed the Three Peaks Challenge in North Yorkshire. The money raised, which includes a

£1000 donation from RSLSteeper, will be split between Reach (Association for Children with Upper Limb Deficiency), the Limbless Association and MacMillan Cancer Support.

# Steeper Clinic treats “flat head syndrome” in babies

RSLSteeper recently launched STAR@SteeperClinic, a new service based in Leeds designed specifically to help treat babies suffering from head shape abnormalities, such as deformational plagiocephaly.

The clinic offers a free, no-obligation consultation service to parents, provided by an experienced team of HPC-registered and CRB-checked paediatric orthotists.

In addition to diagnosis and advice, Steeper Clinic also provides a holistic treatment service for the condition, which includes the use of repositioning techniques through to the use of STARband cranial-remoulding orthoses (helmets).

STARband is the leading orthotic treatment for deformational plagiocephaly in babies aged between 4 and 18 months. Over 125,000 babies have been successfully treated using STARband worldwide.

Kate Chauhan, Orthotist at Steeper Clinic, said:

“Cases of deformational plagiocephaly are becoming more common in the UK, and at the moment, the NHS does not fund treatment for the condition as it is seen as a purely cosmetic issue, despite evidence that in some cases there is an increased risk of developing associated problems later on in life. At Steeper Clinic, we can offer our expert advice as to the best course of treatment, which depends on the severity of the condition”.

“Typical treatments range from the use of “tummy time” and repositioning techniques for younger babies, to cranial-remoulding orthoses, which significantly improves the shape of heads in babies who suffer from moderate to severe deformational plagiocephaly.”

A new website, [www.steeperclinic.com](http://www.steeperclinic.com) has been launched to accompany the clinic, and includes a range of helpful guides for parents about deformational plagiocephaly. You can also connect with Steeper Clinic on Facebook (STARatSteeperClinic)

and Twitter (STARatSteeper).

To find out more visit [www.steeperclinic.com](http://www.steeperclinic.com), email [enquiries@steeperclinic.com](mailto:enquiries@steeperclinic.com) or call 0113 2070 432.

**STAR@**  
SteeperClinic



## Prosthetic Best Practice Guidelines

RSLSteeper's commitment to clinical effectiveness is demonstrated through its best practice group. This group has been running under various guises for 12 years and works tirelessly to produce best practice guidelines to assist clinicians to work in an evidence-based manner.

We are delighted to announce these guidelines will soon be published making them available to a wider audience including prosthetists not employed by RSLSteeper as well as other healthcare professionals working in the field of prosthetics both in the UK and internationally. They will be available for sale at £95 each although will continue to be available to all clinicians working within RSLSteeper centers free of charge.

The guidelines are produced using the Delphi technique, which involves a critical review of available evidence followed by circulation of recommendations to a multi-disciplinary group to achieve consensus of opinion. This technique has been independently verified to show its effectiveness. The guidelines are revisited regularly to ensure they are kept up-to-date with any new evidence that becomes available and are based on generic hardware so are not biased to any manufacturer's products.

Vicky Robinson, Lead Prosthetist, said:

“The best practice manual contains comprehensive guidelines for prosthetic treatment and are an excellent resource for any clinician working in prosthetics. We are delighted to share this work with the wider prosthetic community and are confident that their combination of evidence-base and consensus of professional opinion will serve to improve clinical effectiveness where they are used.”



## Contract News

We are very pleased to announce that RSLSteeper commenced a new orthotics contract in North Cornwall on March 7th and would like to welcome Timothy Constantine, Orthotist, to our

team of clinical staff.

A special thanks is extended to Tony Jack, Clinical Lead Orthotist for Cornwall, for his support in helping set up the new service.

We are also pleased to announce the renewal of the Northumbria orthotics contract until March 2014 and would like to congratulate Simon Donaghy and his team in the North East

for their work in retaining this contract.

# EvoAssist - the evolution of home control

We are delighted to announce the launch of EvoAssist, an application that turns an iPhone, iPod Touch or iPad into a universal home-environment controller. Facilitating a huge range of everyday tasks, from answering telephones, opening curtains, raising alarms, unlocking doors and changing television channels, EvoAssist is designed to offer users independence and control of their home environment.

With flexible, easy-to-use controls via touchscreen or external switches it can be configured to any user's needs, whether physically disabled or able-bodied. Working with the latest Apple technology,

EvoAssist has been designed to integrate seamlessly with RSLSteeper's comprehensive range of home-control peripherals. This innovative new product provides users with independent and total control of their environment, using a mainstream device which does not label the user as being disabled.



## TOBII EYE CONTROL PARTNERSHIP

RSLSteeper's AT Division has teamed up with Tobii, the world leader in eye-tracking and eye-control technology, to become a reseller for a range of advanced products designed for people with physical disabilities.



The Tobii range of AAC (alternative augmentative communication) tools are designed to help those affected by conditions such as Motor Neurone Disease, spinal injuries, autism, cerebral palsy and strokes to express themselves and interact with the world around them.

RSLSteeper will be offering the Tobii C-Series range of PC-based tablet computers to its customers, alongside the Tobii S32 recorded speech and environmental control device. With control via either touchscreen, or through eye movements via Tobii's groundbreaking CEye

eye-tracker, these products help users with both verbal and physical difficulties to communicate more easily with family members, carers and friends.

The new products will join RSLSteeper's existing range of home automation products, which are designed to help people who lack full mobility to communicate, open doors, answer telephones and intercoms, and operate a host of electronic devices from lamps and televisions to motorised chairs and beds.

Dave Howson, Director of Assistive Technology at

RSLSteeper said:

"We are really pleased to be able to add the Tobii devices to our extensive Assistive Technology product range. The C-Series from Tobii includes the first eye-tracking control device RSLSteeper have offered, our dedicated teams of specialist engineers can install, maintain and service these systems, providing on-site training to users and their carers. The addition of the Tobii devices enables us to create new environmental control systems to help an even greater range of users to live more independent lives."

## ECS Product Advisor role supports growing AT Division

In response to the increasing range of innovative products designed and supplied from our Assistive Technology Division we are delighted to announce the recruitment of Kat Smith. Kat joins RSLSteeper as ECS Product Advisor following nine years in

the AT industry and brings a wealth of experience working with various conditions and age groups. In addition to providing excellent product advice and customer support, Kat will be available to support assessments, provide demonstrations and

deliver informative presentations. We would like to welcome Kat to the team at this exciting time of growth for the AT Division. Kat can be contacted at [kat.smith@rslsteeper.com](mailto:kat.smith@rslsteeper.com) or on 07801 136187.



**Kat Smith**  
ECS Product Advisor

For further information on our Assistive Technology Division, please visit [www.assistive-technology.co.uk](http://www.assistive-technology.co.uk), email [assist@rslsteeper.com](mailto:assist@rslsteeper.com) or call 0113 207 0449.