



# PSV News

## POLIO SERVICES VICTORIA

A Department of Human Services Program  
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P O L I O  
S E R V I C E S  
V I C T O R I A

ISSUE 15

PSV Hotline Toll Free 1800 030 324

June 2007

### PSV TEAM 2007 (INCLUDING DAYS OF WORK & CONTACT DETAILS)

#### JANE HENDERSON

Service Coordinator and Physiotherapist  
Monday – Friday 9288 3900

#### DR GENEVIEVE KENNEDY

Rehabilitation Physician  
Tuesday clinics only 9288 3900

#### DARREN PEREIRA

Orthotist  
Monday – Wednesday 9288 3838

#### MARGARET PETKOFF

Occupational Therapist  
Monday & Thursday 9288 3900

### IN THIS ISSUE

- ◆ PSV Clinic Timetable 2007
- ◆ PSV is Staying in Touch
- ◆ Polio Network Victoria
- ◆ Polio Support Groups
- ◆ Manual Handling of Wheelchairs
- ◆ Equipment Prescription
- ◆ PSV Online

### PSV CLINICS IN 2007

#### Regional

Wed 25 <sup>th</sup> July	Mildura
Wed 26 <sup>th</sup> Sep	Leongatha
Wed 28 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Warrnambool

#### Metropolitan

Clinics are held on most Tuesday afternoons at St Vincent's Hospital Melbourne.

### PSV IS STAYING IN TOUCH

In January 2006, PSV identified that there was no established method of ensuring that our clients maintained contact with our service. We were particularly concerned with clients who had been assessed as 'high priority', because they had significant service needs from PSV; and who had not been in contact with us for 2 years.

In May 2006, PSV commenced monthly mail-outs to these 'high priority' clients. After one year of conducting these monthly mail-outs, PSV has evaluated the results.

About 50% of our clients who have received a letter have made contact with us, updating us on their current status. A third of our clients receiving the letter have booked an appointment with one of the PSV therapists, or a review assessment in the PSV clinic.

A few letters have been returned to PSV with notification about change of mailing address or other important information about contact details.

This initiative has been a successful process to maintain contact with each of you who need our service, and to maintain accurate PSV records. PSV will continue with this monthly mail-out to 'high priority' clients.

PSV would like to encourage each of you to maintain contact with the service. If you are in need of our assistance, please call the PSV Hotline, or one of the PSV team members, at the numbers shown on the front of this newsletter. Likewise, if you just want to update us on your current situation, please give us a call or send us a letter at P.O. Box 2900, Fitzroy 3065.

### POLIO NETWORK VICTORIA

As many of you would be aware, Polio Network Victoria (PNV) is a free service that provides relevant and accessible information, referral and support services to people who have had Polio, their families, carers and advocates.

PSV has an excellent working relationship with PNV. However, we do not share client information, such as personal contact details, due to confidentiality rules.

Being a client of PSV does not automatically register you with PNV and vice versa. Therefore, if you have not made contact with both organisations, we encourage you to do so. This way you will benefit from the best clinical AND community services available for polio sufferers.

To find our more about PNV, phone Mary-ann Liethof on 94180411 or go to the PNV website at:  
[www.polionetworkvic.asn.au](http://www.polionetworkvic.asn.au)

### POLIO SUPPORT GROUPS

PNV has an associated 20 Polio Support Groups (PGS) across Victoria, established and run by local members. They are a great opportunity for people who have had polio to meet socially, exchange information and share ideas.

Ron Bell, of the Yarra Ranges PSG, was the first recipient of the E-knee in Australia. He has kindly offered to provide peer support to any polio client undergoing management with orthoses. Ron has offered to visit you or your group to share his experience of polio and orthotic management.

## MANUAL HANDLING OF WHEELCHAIRS

Often people will use a manual wheelchair when they have difficulties walking for long distances in the community. Using the wheelchair may involve pushing oneself or being pushed by a spouse or carer to a destination within walking distance, or it may mean placing the wheelchair into a car so that it can be used once the destination has been reached.

Wheelchairs are large and awkward with many moving parts. It is important to learn good habits when moving your wheelchair, as moving one in and out of a car has the potential to cause injury, especially to backs and shoulders if not performed properly.

Take off any removable parts as this will significantly reduce the weight being lifted. Moveable parts include footplates, armrests and wheels. Given that the average weight of a wheelchair with all parts is 18kg, it is well worth spending the time to do so. If you are able to remove the wheels and leg rests, you can reduce the weight of an 18kg chair down to 11kg. The amount of equipment you can remove from the wheelchair is dependent upon how it is made. Generally, very cheap chairs will have less moveable parts than more expensive ones. Therefore if you are in the market for a manual wheelchair, please ensure that you buy the lightest one you can afford with the most removable parts. Staff at PSV are happy to provide advice about wheelchairs if required.

There are a number of simple steps that should be taken to minimise risk, which include the following:

- Allow yourself enough time and space to put the wheelchair into the car.
- Push the wheelchair as close to the boot as possible. There is no need to carry the wheelchair.
- Take off all removable parts. This not only makes the wheelchair smaller to place into the boot, but it will also reduce the weight considerably.

- Lift the slung seat up so that the frame is narrower. Take off one or both wheels to reduce the weight even further.
- Lift the wheelchair by holding onto the frame. Do not lift the wheelchair by holding onto removable armrests.
- Bend your knees when leaning forward to lift up the wheelchair and rest it on your thighs. Keep your back straight and lift the wheelchair either to rest on the lip of the car boot or place it in the boot.
- Slide the wheelchair into the boot. Slide the wheelchair by using your arms, not your back. If you have no car lip, placing a knee in the boot can make pushing and pulling the wheelchair easier.

Many people find it easier to take a wheelchair in and out of the car when they use a slide sheet. A slide sheet can for example be an old blanket or picnic rug. A rug allows you to slide the wheelchair in and out of the boot without damaging the car's paint work.

Pelican Manufacturing Pty. Ltd. sell a wheelchair boot slider. The slider encloses the chair and with the aid of a boot blanket reduces the heavy lifting involved in the task. If you would like more information please see their website:

[www.pelicanmanufacturing.com.au](http://www.pelicanmanufacturing.com.au)



Depending upon the size of your car and the number of passengers taken, it may be possible to place a manual wheelchair behind the driver or front passenger's seat. The front seat will have to be moved forwards to provide adequate space in the back.

The footplates and armrests are taken off but the wheels remain in place. It is a matter of tipping the wheelchair backwards, placing the wheels on the side of the car and gently pushing the wheelchair into the car.

Take the time to practice so you can work out what suits you best.

## EQUIPMENT PRESCRIPTION

Choosing the right wheelchair or mobility device is a complex issue. If you are considering the purchase of a wheelchair or scooter, we advise that you first contact PSV. We will help you to decide which device is the most suitable for your needs and your home and community environment; and we will help you to apply for government funding to cover part of the cost of the item through the Aids & Equipment Program (A&EP).

Jane and Margaret are happy to assist you with any of your equipment needs. If you are in need of a new or replacement mobility aid, such as a wheelchair or scooter; or require any other type of equipment, please contact PSV for assistance or advice.

## PSV ONLINE

If you have an email address and would be happy to receive this newsletter electronically, please let us know by sending us an email at: [psv@svhm.org.au](mailto:psv@svhm.org.au). And don't forget to check out the PSV website at [www.psv.svhm.org.au](http://www.psv.svhm.org.au). You may wish to recommend it to relevant friends, family or health professionals.



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