

THE BIONIC REVOLUTION

Hobbs Rehabilitation are at the forefront when it comes to offering state-of-the-art treatments. Here **Helen Hobbs**, Neurophysiotherapist, answers our questions about their latest therapy, the Bionic Leg.

Q What is the Bionic Leg?

A The Bionic Leg is a wearable robotic device which provides assistance to extend the knee and provide stability for carrying out activities such as standing, walking and going up and down stairs. The motor assisted device is intention led, which provides assistance once the movement has been initiated by the individual. Sensors in the foot-plate and within the device detect weight changes and initiation of movement. The settings on the Bionic Leg can be easily adjusted to provide variable amounts of assistance or resistance, dependent on the individual's ability and the activity.

Q Who can benefit from it?

A People with severe lower limb weakness as well as mild lower limb weakness. This covers a variety of neurological conditions including stroke, multiple sclerosis, acquired brain injury, spinal cord injury and Guillain-Barré Syndrome. A useful tool in neurological and orthopaedic rehab, it has shown good results in improving quality of gait, gait speed and lower limb strength.

Q Is it for clinical use only?

A The Bionic Leg is easily portable with a smart, hard carry-case and can therefore be used in a clinical setting or home environment. Once set up by a trained clinician, you can then put on the device and input your own settings.

Q Am I able to buy one?

A The Bionic Leg can be bought in the UK, but it is necessary to have an assessment and training session with a clinician in order to gain the most potential. The very nature of rehabilitation is that it is progressive and responsive to developments. The clinician will lead the programme in accordance with your outcome measures, tailoring the use of the

Bionic Leg to access the optimum results and avoid the temptation to overdo things!

Q What do those who have tried it say?

A Feedback has been very positive, mainly about improved confidence in the individual's ability to weight-bear on their weaker leg. Because they are more confident using their affected limb, they are using it more which increases strength and therefore im-

proves day-to-day capabilities. This means they are happy to attempt higher level gait training or exercises than they would previously have tried.

Q Do you have anything exciting coming up?

A Amongst other technology and in addition to the Bionic Leg, Hobbs now offers a specialist assessment and treatment service for clients wanting to trial the Ekso Bionic Skeleton. This enables lawyers and case managers to refer people, or you can self-refer, to try the Ekso to determine its suitability and explore its potential benefits for them. The Ekso has recently been voted 'One of the three Coolest Medical Breakthroughs' at Healthtech '15! Another point of difference... if it's clinically appropriate, innovative and ground breaking, it's a perfect match for Hobbs! ■



Founded by **Nicky Ellis** and **Helen Hobbs**, **HOBBS REHABILITATION** offers a full multi-disciplinary 'one stop shop' covering adult and paediatric physiotherapy, speech & language therapy, occupational therapy, neuropsychology and much more. Operating from 8 locations across the South of England, Hobbs Rehabilitation provides a co-ordinated patient-centred, goal-orientated service. This makes Hobbs the ideal provider for complex care cases and as a result Case Managers, Legal and Medical Professionals find us an efficient and useful partner.

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