

From the Chairman

After nine years of rent-free accommodation at Greenfield Farm, Lower Dunsforth, we moved to our new depot in April and, on the 29th, we loaded our final shipment from our old home. The shipment was dedicated to the memory of the late Sue Jackson and the Jackson family, the owners of the farm, and included a service of thanksgiving in recognition of the Jacksons' support by allowing our free use of their premises.

Our new depot is at Gelsthorpe Farm on the A59 at Whixley.

Trustee Changes

John Smith has stepped down as Treasurer and

Trustee after many years' service to PhysioNet. His support included many thousands of miles carrying out collections of equipment, offering additional storage facilities and making his and Val's home and garden available for many of PhysioNet's social events. Long-standing Trustee, Carl Stitt, has taken over as our Treasurer.

Another Trustee has also retired after many years' service. Scott Green was with Peter Thompson at the very beginning when they took the first load of equipment to Sarajevo in 2005. Scott has served PhysioNet well and has offered to continue supporting us.





Care in the Community Equipment

Care in the Community

On 4th and again on 11th September last year the *Mail on Sunday* devoted three full pages to “exposing waste in the NHS” and certainly the issue of waste resonates more loudly with the British public than anything we can say about helping the disabled overseas. This subject was picked up more recently by both the Daily Mail and by the BBC’s One Show.

In fact the media picked a ‘soft target’ for the campaign by choosing **care in the community** items rather than **aids for the disabled**, where PhysioNet specialises in the export of such equipment.

Items such as perching stools, bath aids, shower chairs/ stools, trolleys, raised toilet seats, toilet rails and rollators etc.(see photo) are commonly issued to the elderly

and/or infirm for use in the home. They tend to be relatively low cost, bulky, and given the cost of labour in UK are expensive to collect, sterilise and re-issue. This often makes such items un-economic for the NHS to take back and/or re-issue. Even entirely volunteer-based PhysioNet has difficulty in finding markets for this sort of equipment, because in developing countries the poor and elderly are often even lower down the ‘pecking order’ than the disabled.

We believe that there may be an under-developed market for such equipment in eastern Europe and on 26th

Fundraising

Individual donations, particularly where Gift Aid applies, are very important to us. If you are able to donate, our bank details are:

Sort code: 40-24-32 Account number: 91439618 (HSBC) Account name: PhysioNet.

Alternatively our account with **Total Giving** provides an easy way for supporters to donate. A link to Total Giving can be found on our website: www.physionet.org.uk

November 2016, working with the charity Bulgarian Aid, we sent a 45 ft truck load of equipment to Ruse in Bulgaria. Everything was successfully distributed and the new value of the 820 items sent (excluding wheelchairs) is estimated at £51K.

It may take time to develop markets for this kind of equipment but if successful it would make life easier for the recipients as well as being a positive response to the accusations of waste in the NHS.

Shipments

The following shipments have been made in the six month period to the end of March

Bulgaria A truck load of mainly SN equipment was sent to Sofia on 29th October at the request of the UK charity Frontline Bulgaria and The Bulgarian National Association of Resource (Remedial) Teachers. (NART). Transport costs were met by NART.

Bulgaria A second truck load of mainly Care in the Community items (see note above) was sent on 21st November to Bulgaria at the request of the UK charity Bulgarian Aid for distribution by two Rotary clubs in the city of Ruse. Transport costs were met by Bulgarian Aid.

Bhutan A container was loaded on 21st January for the Disabled Persons Association of Bhutan. The shipment arrived safely and good feedback has been received from two SN schools which took a part of the load. Shipping costs were met by individuals with an interest in Bhutan along with a matching grant from the Bhutan Society in London

Syria The UK charity Samara Aid Appeal contacted PhysioNet explaining the urgent need for disability aids in war-torn Syria, where at the height of the fighting there were reportedly 10,000 permanent trauma injuries per month. A 40ft shipping container was loaded on 18th February and all shipping costs were met by the Samara Aid Appeal.

Syria. A second shipment for Syria was loaded on 18th March. As with the first shipment the 40 ft container was non-returnable and destined to form part of a temporary hospital in Syria. Shipping arrangements and costs were met by the Samara Aid Appeal.

Third Party Shipments

PhysioNet supplied the UK charity 1Step2Step with over 50 items of SN equipment for onward shipment to Bangkok.

Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM will be held at Markenfield Hall near Ripon on 2nd July. However the Hall can only accommodate a small number of attenders so invitations will be sent to trustees, support groups, partner charity representatives and registered supporters. A garden party for volunteers will be arranged later in summer.

Our Physios in South Africa

Alma Brambles and Heather Angilley are paediatric physios who volunteer for Physionet. They were granted funding by the Private Physiotherapy Educational Foundation (PPEF) to evaluate the use of therapy equipment sent to South Africa by Physionet and to provide training to recipients as required.

During March 2017 Alma and Heather visited the Rotary Northcliffe project which runs the main depot for shipments from the UK. The depot employs two members of staff who restore incoming equipment and distribute both to individuals and groups. Alma and Heather also visited care homes, schools and some families in townships. They looked at how equipment was being used, what was still needed and provided support and advice.

A number of new links have been made between the locations visited and the Rotary depot, increasing the awareness of the depot so equipment can be passed on more efficiently and to a wider group of people.

Alma and Heather then visited centres in and around Cape Town, including the Cerebral Palsy Association who expressed an interest in receiving equipment, and the Red Cross Hospital who are wholly reliant on charity donations for their work.

