



OSP

Optimal Speech Pathology



September 2012

Spring Edition



Inside

Wednesday Without Words

Read all about the OSP's great poster campaign that aimed to spread the message about Aphasia.

4

Aphasia NSW

Read about the launch of the new industry group.

2

Welcome to OSP

Welcome to our brand new Optimal Speech Pathology newsletter! It has been a long time coming, but we finally got there! OSP is aiming for a quarterly newsletter release and each edition will be filled with information about what OSP is doing as well as sharing some of our great client stories from the last few months.

It has been great to see OSP continue to expand and grow with new clients and staff, so we would like to firstly officially welcome Alison, Eugene and Jodie to the team!

This month we celebrated Speech Pathology Week and it was great to reflect on some of the work we have done over this last year and think about some of the great successes we have witnessed. Please see Page 2 for a truly inspirational client story!

Continued on page

5



Marco Lazzaro

Patient Feature

Marco's Story

Marco, a patient of OSP's since a car accident in 2011, recently took a brave step forward in his brain injury recovery.

Speech Pathologist Colleen and Marco have been working together, teaching Marco to speak properly again after his facial and nerve damage.

Now, 10 months post severe brain injury, he is back at work part-time, amidst the maze of warehouses and trucks in the Sydney Markets. Marco and Colleen co-presented the story of his recovery to a very supportive management team.

Not only did he manage the group presentation comfortably, but he also gave his peers some first-hand insight into his recovery and the reality of coming back from a severe brain injury.

Marco's story has been shared with the OSP community as well as featured by Speech Pathology Australia (SPA). As a result, Marco's story will be printed in a book published by SPA, which included numerous patient stories collected during Speech Pathology Week 2012.

Marco (and his beautiful wife Amy) is a true inspiration, and OSP would like to congratulate Marco on all his hard work and for this great personal achievement.



Industry Update

Aphasia NSW

People with Aphasia Have a New Voice

For many months a small group of hard working people have been working towards delivering a very loud message! Colleen has joined other Speech Pathologists, people with Aphasia, and partners of people with Aphasia - all sharing a mission to make life easier for people with Aphasia and their families.

In August, Aphasia NSW was officially launched – to a gathering of more than 400 delegates at the Stroke Conference in Sydney. This group, under the umbrella of the Stroke Recovery Association, will act as a central resource for all people with Aphasia in NSW.

Our first stop is in Melbourne next month where the committee will present at the Australian Aphasia Conference – so it seems as though this is a new voice that intends to speak up!

In other news, The Australian Aphasia Association in collaboration with La Trobe University 4th year students and The William Buckland Foundation have produced 5 short DVDs about Aphasia, which are now freely available on YouTube. Essential viewing for anyone working with communication problems, find all the videos in the link below:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/AphasiaAssoc/videos?flow=grid&view=0>



Ollie's off to the Senate!

"Optimal SP is driven to spread the word about Aphasia – and now we are doing it nationally!"

Ollie's Story was one of two selected across the country to spearhead a campaign to review private therapy access. Ollie's bravery and his willingness to help with our Wednesday Without Words poster campaign struck a chord with the selection committee so next month Ollie's story and his photo are off to the Senate.

Thank you Ollie for making a difference!"

Wednesday Without Words

Raising Awareness about Aphasia

OSP celebrated National Aphasia Week through our poster campaign on 'Wednesday Without Words'. This was a day to specifically think about people who have Aphasia and raise awareness about the struggles they go through. It was our way to contemplate what it may be like to live without words and without a voice.

Aphasia is a communication problem caused by damage to the language processing areas of the brain. It affects more than 80,000 Australians after a stroke, tumor or brain injury.

Our goal was simple – we just wanted more people to know what Aphasia was – so we sent out our poster to spread the message!



Continued from Page 1

OSP on Facebook

As OSP has grown quite a bit, it was time for us to keep up to date with technology and make it more accessible to contact our patients and friends. It has been a very exciting process, and although we are still learning the ropes, it is going much better than we anticipated!

Facebook is a great way for OSP to regularly update people with pictures, interesting links, new information and stories about patient successes. We are working hard to create an 'online community' and would love for you to be a part of it.

If you would like to stay updated with OSP on Facebook, simply search Optimal Speech Pathology or type in the link at the bottom of this page and click 'like'. Liking us on Facebook means you will receive regular updates and is a great way for you to share your own story and send us a picture, so please keep us up to date with what you are doing!

Please note that Facebook will not be a substitute to our traditional email contact list, rather a compliment, and you will still be able to contact us via email or telephone.



Contact Us

OSP has undergone some changes, so here are all the ways that you can get in contact with us:

- 1 **Telephone**
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- 2 **Email**
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- 4 **Website**
www.optimalsp.com.au
- 3 **Facebook**
www.facebook.com/OptimalSpeechPathology



OSP NEWS

Speech Pathology Professional Development

Speech Pathology is dynamic and our OSP clinicians are dedicated to contemporary, evidence driven practice. This quarter, Colleen and Felicity attended the Stroke Conference, Linda and Colleen attended a workshop on Differential Dysarthria Diagnosis and Treatment and Vanessa, Deanna and Colleen participated in a very hands-on Head and Neck Oncology workshop. Colleen was also honoured to join the NSW Speech Pathology Professional Development Committee so we can have direct input in facilitating quality clinical education for our profession. Our team is so fortunate with our depth of experience and clinical specialty but there is always more to learn.

OSP and Brain Injury

One of our OSP areas of clinical specialty is Brain Injury – and our roles extend far beyond the therapy room. Last month Colleen was reappointed for a second term as a Lifetime Care and Support Dispute Assessor where she provides an opportunity for people with Brain Injury and their treating teams to seek objective review of their treatment needs. This is not just a prestigious role but also one that demands a high familiarity with current research findings in the field. This dovetails nicely with Colleen's other role as Co-Leader of the newly formed Traumatic Brain Injury Evidence Based Practice Group – which meets quarterly to answer critical questions about best practice for Speech Pathologists working in this field.

Back Page Announcements

Grants Success

OSP is happy to advocate for patient needs – particularly as some of our patients may struggle to self-advocate if their communication is impaired. Brain Injury NSW recently released some special needs brokerage grants to assist with costs of short term therapy programs or one-off items of equipment. Our OSP community rallied, with patients and families working together on the complex application process. Finally, a lot of work, and several hundred emails later, we are pleased to announce that BIANSW has approved more than \$10,000 to clients requesting Speech Pathology Services. These clients have very well defined, functional goals and we are delighted that they have turned to OSP to help them. The client's objectives vary from trying to communicate in a village activity - to wanting to give directions to a taxi driver on the way to a men's group. These people would have no access to services without the wonderful initiative of BIA NSW so we look forward to sharing their progress in the next issue!

For more information on the brokerage funds to go <http://www.biansw.org.au>

OSP at Macquarie University Hospital

We have seen many exciting developments in our Optimal SP work at Macquarie University Hospital. Our Modified Barium Swallow service for outpatients has commenced using the state of the art equipment at Macquarie Medical Imaging. Felicity Robinson also attended advanced training at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane to consolidate our skills in Fibreoptic Endoscopic Examination of Swallowing – or FEES. Both studies allow clinicians to look objectively at swallowing function in order to more accurately diagnose difficulties, assess risks – and provide solutions.

