

Patients' Perceptions of the Odstock Dropped Foot Stimulator (ODFS)

Paul N Taylor, Jane H Burrige, Anna L Dunkerley, Amanda Lamb, Duncan E Wood, Jonathan A Norton, Ian D Swain

Clinical Rehabilitation. 1999; 13: 333-340

Objective: To determine the perceived benefit, pattern and problems of use of the Odstock Dropped Foot Stimulator (ODFS) and the users' opinion of the service provided.

Design: Questionnaire sent in a single mail shot to current and past users of the ODFS. Returns were sent anonymously.

Setting: Outpatient based clinical service. Subjects: 168 current and 123 past users with diagnoses of stroke (CVA), multiple sclerosis (MS), incomplete spinal cord injury (SCI), traumatic brain injury (TBI) & cerebral palsy (CP).

Intervention: Functional Electrical Stimulation (FES) to correct dropped foot in subjects with an upper motor neurone lesion, using the ODFS.

Main Outcome Measures: Purpose designed questionnaire.

Results:

- Return rate 64% current users (mean duration of use 19.5 months) and 43% past users (mean duration of use 10.7 months).
- Principal reason cited for using equipment was a reduction in the effort of walking.
- Principal reasons identified for discontinuing were an improvement in mobility, electrode positioning difficulties and deteriorating mobility.
- There were some problems with reliability of equipment.
- Level of service provided was thought to be good.

Conclusion: The ODFS was perceived by the users to be of considerable benefit. A comprehensive clinical follow up service is essential to achieve the maximum continuing benefit from FES based orthoses.