

Dear staff at the Ontario Brain Injury Association and PIA Law;

I am writing this in sincere thanks for sponsoring me to attend the Locomotor Training course through the NeuroRecovery Network. Without your support I would not have had the opportunity to attend this amazing and informative conference, and my patients would have missed out on the knowledge that I gained as a result. This intensive, hands-on course allowed me to better understand the mechanics of standing, stepping, and walking in individuals with an intact nervous system and in individuals with an injured one.

The Locomotor Training course is based on current knowledge of how the brain and spinal cord control stepping, and the important factors that mediate and help to regain this pattern in the event of an injury. The research shows that by optimizing the sensory feedback into the nervous system, it can generate improved motor activity and output even in a damaged neurological system. By using a body weight supported harness system, it allows the patient to relearn the proper walking mechanics and patterns without having to support their own body weight, in a controlled and safe environment. The repetition of a stepping pattern that the treadmill environment allows is essential for motor relearning.

The course also covered ideas and strategies to bring these skills into everyday life, through community integration and overground work. This allows patients to implement the new strengths and techniques into their daily lives, and improve their independence and function both within their home and in the community. This is so important to help patients learn to be resilient and improve their overall life satisfaction.

I have begun to implement some of the knowledge and skills that I have learned with some of my patients, and they have already begun to see some progress. The hands-on skills that I have learned through this course will benefit my patients in many situations -- not just the treadmill environment. The skills transfer over to every type of gait retraining and overall mobility goals that many of my patients have.

I would like to thank everyone at OBIA and PIA law for making this course possible for me to attend. I appreciate the support and will continue to use the knowledge and skills that I have learned for years to come in the future. Most importantly, my patients will be better informed and served as a result.

Sincerely

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