

Polio Australia

Representing polio survivors throughout Australia



**A Report on
Rotary District 9685 partnership with
Polio Australia to deliver**

**The Late Effects of Polio:
Clinical Practice Workshop Series**

November 2015 to June 2016

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Katoomba Workshop: (L-R) Melissa McConaghy (presenter) and Merle Thompson (polio survivor) with Rotarians John Isbister and Michael Small

Background

In June 2015, Polio Australia and Rotary International District 9685 commenced consultations regarding a partnership proposal to facilitate ten Late Effects of Polio Clinical Practice Workshops throughout the Blue Mountains and North Western Sydney between November 2015 and April 2016.

The project was developed following preliminary discussions between PDG Bob Aitken AM JP, Chairman, RI District 9685 Polio and Public Relations Committees 2015/2016, and Polio Australia's President, Dr John Tierney OAM PhD, at the 2015 District Conference in Cessnock, NSW. Polio Australia had previously conducted a successful trial Clinical Practice Workshop in Melbourne in 2014, and was seeking support to continue providing training opportunities for health professionals in managing the Late Effects of Polio.

The need for this training has been established anecdotally through a great many accounts from polio survivors over the decades of uninformed, expensive, and inappropriate treatment by a range of health practitioners. In addition, participant feedback from the 2014 trial Workshop revealed that 17 of the 19 health professionals attending answered 'Yes' to the question: ***Do you believe there is a need for additional education for health practitioners on the LEOp and/or PPS?***

At the beginning of the 2015/16 Rotary year, the incoming District 9685 Governor, Gina Growden, was briefed on the discussions with Polio Australia and immediately supported a proposed series of **free** Workshops. The Governor shared the concept with her Clubs and District Leaders and agreed that the project had great potential to be further developed by Rotary International and play a role in the culmination of the Polio Plus campaign. It was emphasised that the proposed program had a strong 'fit' with Rotary's vocational base.

Project Development

Polio Australia negotiated with Melissa McConaghy, Neurological Physiotherapist and Principal of ARC Health based in St Leonards, NSW, to develop the presentation and facilitate these Workshops. Melissa is a member of Polio Australia's Clinical Advisory Group.

As Melissa was on maternity leave when the Workshop series started, the first one was facilitated by Anna Jones, Senior Neurological Physiotherapist at ARC Health, and the second was co-facilitated by Anna and Melissa.

Polio Australia engaged the services of Catriona Morehouse, Physiotherapist, Post-Polio Clinic at Mt Wilga Private Hospital, to facilitate the final Workshop, using the presentation prepared by Melissa.

Jennifer McConaghy, administration assistant at ARC Health, was also contracted to provide administrative support for the duration of the project – excluding the final Workshop. Jennifer was responsible for promoting the Workshops to health professionals throughout the region using existing ARC Health database resources, and contacts identified through online research, which was time consuming.

Mary-ann Liethof, National Program Manager for Polio Australia, provided overall project management.

A number of local polio survivors volunteered to attend the Workshops to participate in Question and Answer discussions at the end of each presentation: Di Bull, Rosemary Cantwell, Sue Ellis, Anne O'Halloran, Di O'Reilly, Gillian Thomas, Merle Thompson, John Tierney, Ben Tipton, and Wayne Woolley. Evaluation feedback from the Workshops indicate that these sessions provided invaluable practical learning opportunities for the health professionals present.

Workshop Logistics

A budget of \$2,000 per Workshop was proposed, most of which paid for contract time, plus any travel, accommodation, and other overhead costs. Polio Australia provided brochures, hard copies of its *"The Late Effects of Polio: Introduction to Clinical Practice"* resource, a PDF of its *"The Late Effects of Polio: Managing Muscles and Mobility"* resource, and a Certificate of Participation for 2.5 hours of Professional Development points.

The participating Rotary Clubs were asked to secure local wheelchair-accessible venues, organise refreshments, and liaise with Jennifer regarding logistics, including dropping flyers into local health service providers to generate bookings. (See Appendix i)

Rotary District 9685 was committed to running ten Late Effects of Polio Clinical Practice Workshops over a six-month period, which Polio Australia believed was an ambitious goal for such a specialised topic in a concentrated area.

Workshop locations and times were negotiated between Rotary District 9685, participating Clubs, and Melissa as facilitator. Consideration needed to be given to: geographical rotation to avoid running Workshops too close to each other in a short timeframe; Melissa's availability, as she continued to balance maternity leave and her own clinical practice; and varying the day and time options to accommodate a wide range of health professionals.

Polio Australia also set up a webpage on its www.poliohealth.org.au website which provided comprehensive details on the Late Effects of Polio Clinical Practice Workshop series. Bookings were made through the online TryBooking website – set up by Polio Australia – in order to capture specific contact information, and to provide participants with a confirmation 'ticket' they could print out for the Workshop. No fees were collected.

The final outcome was eight Late Effects of Polio Clinical Practice Workshops held in the following areas:

| Date | Location | Health Professionals |
|---|-------------|----------------------|
| 26 November 2015 | Ryde | 10 |
| 8 December 2015 | St Leonards | 21 |
| 6 February 2016 | Katoomba | 16 |
| 10 March 2016 | North Rocks | 23 |
| 24 March 2016 | Penrith | 10 |
| 7 April 2016 | Hornsby | 20 |
| 28 April 2016 | Gosford | 29 |
| 28 June 2016 - rescheduled from 16 April 2016 | Windsor | 11 |
| | | 140 |

Workshops cancelled due to insufficient bookings were:

| Date | Location |
|--|-----------|
| 19 November 2015, then rescheduled to 5 May 2016 | Narrabeen |
| 27 February 2016 | Wyong |
| 24 March 2016 | Penrith |



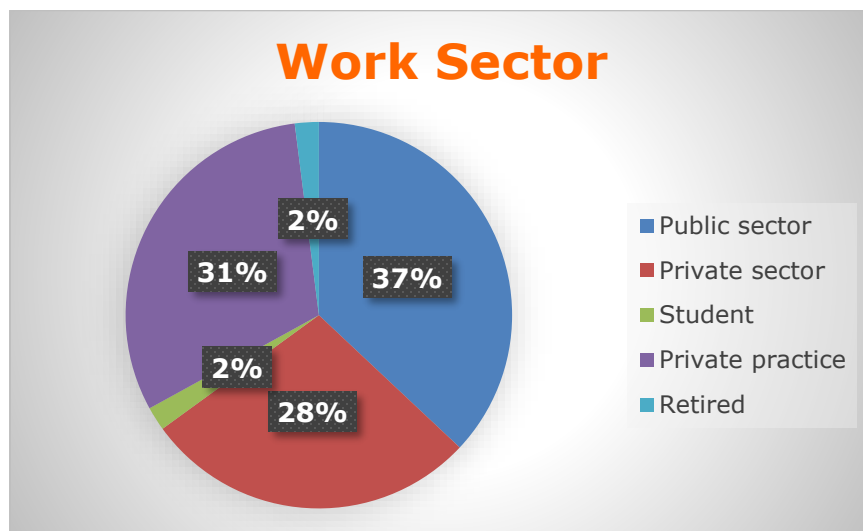
Workshop Statistics

The following statistics were derived from the Evaluation Forms handed out to participants at every Workshop. Not all were returned, which is reflected by some variable figures.

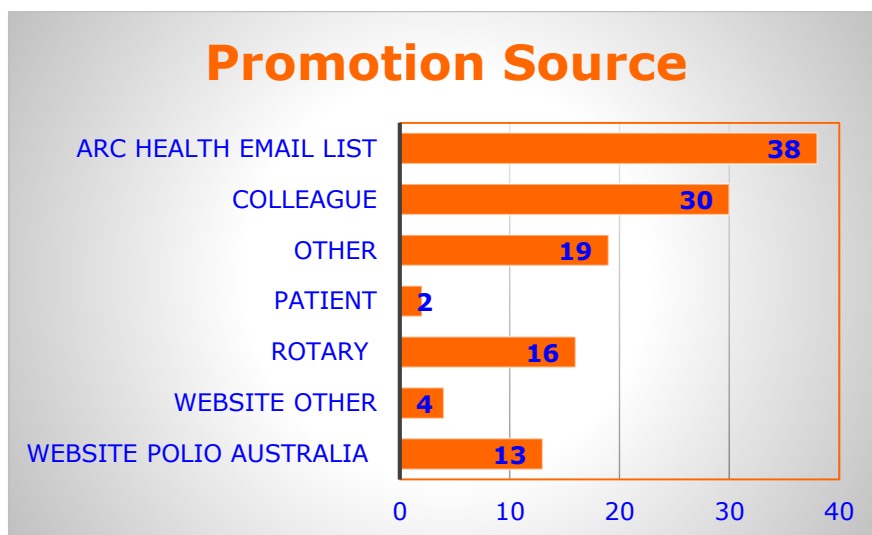
What type of profession/discipline best describes you?



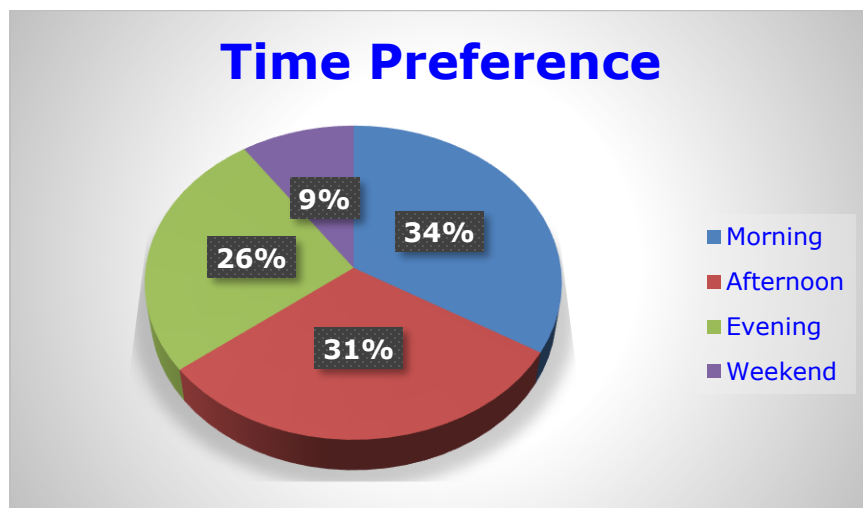
Which work sector do you represent?



How did you find out about the LEOp Clinical Practice Workshop?

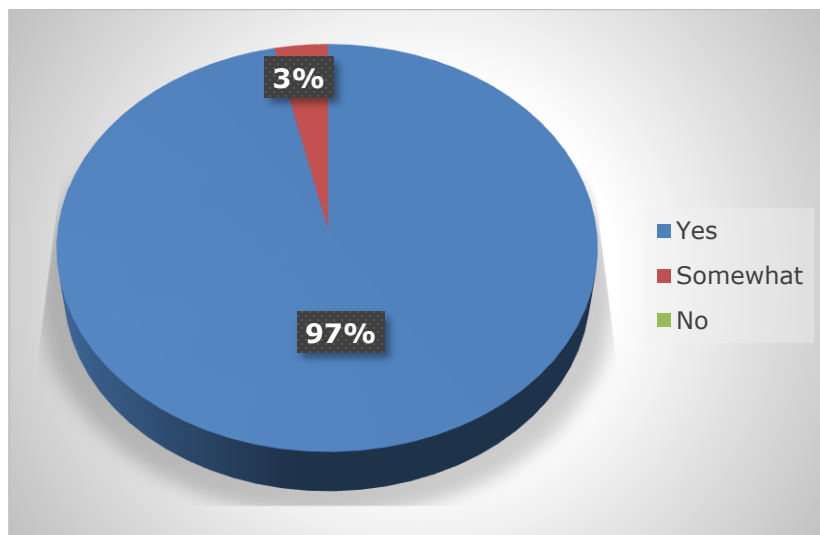


Time preference?

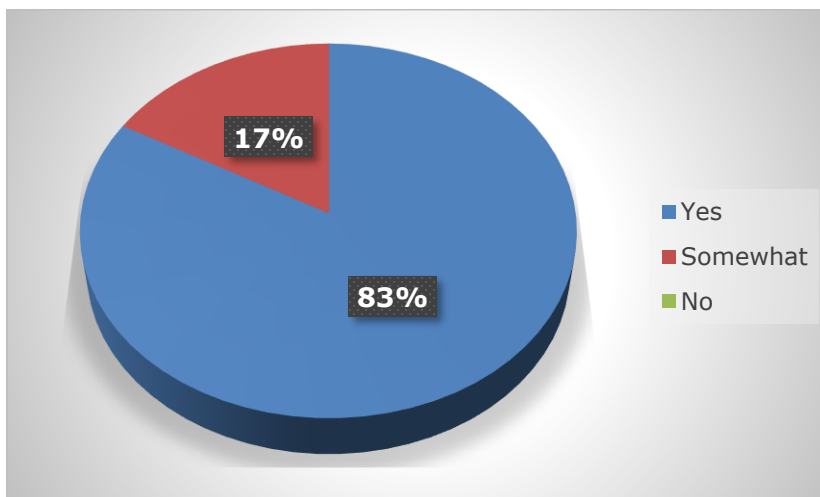


Has this LEOP Clinical Practice Workshop assisted you to:

1. Better understand the symptoms associated with the LEoP and/or Post-Polio Syndrome (PPS)?



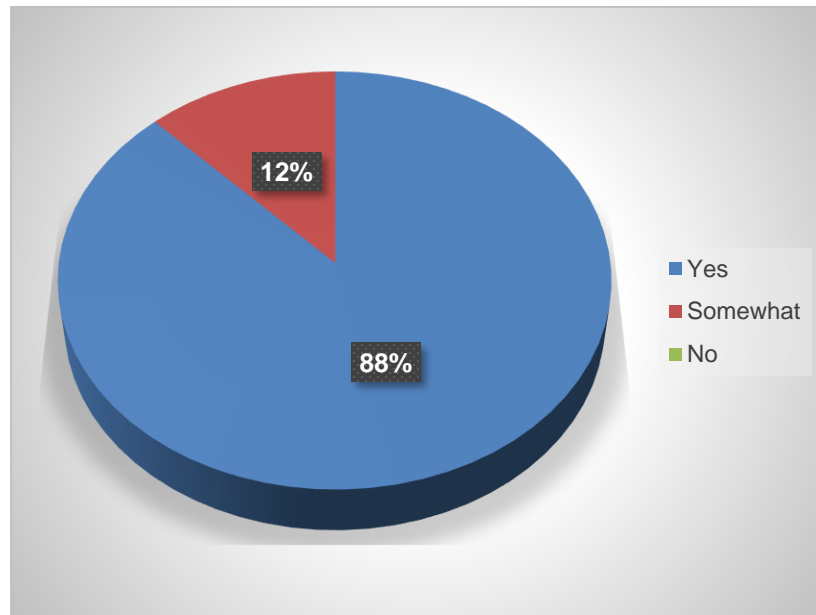
2. Be more confident in your ability to recognise the symptoms of the LEoP and/or PPS, or people who may be at risk of developing symptoms in the future?



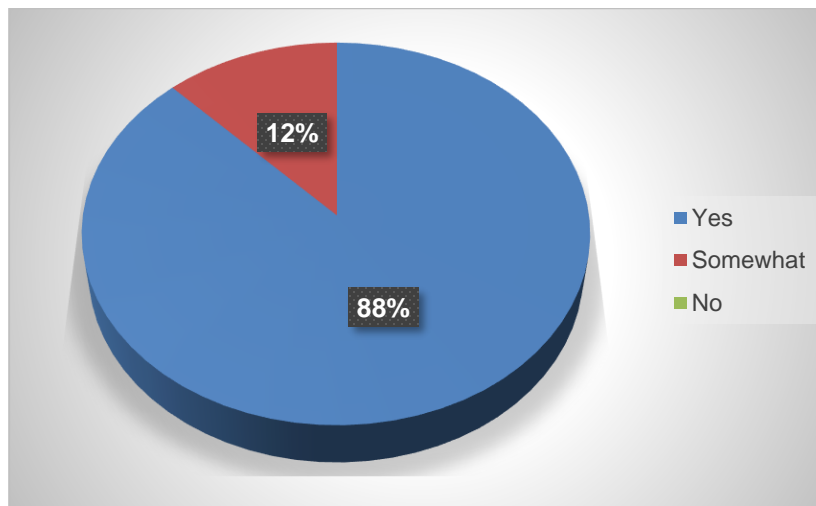
Ryde Workshop



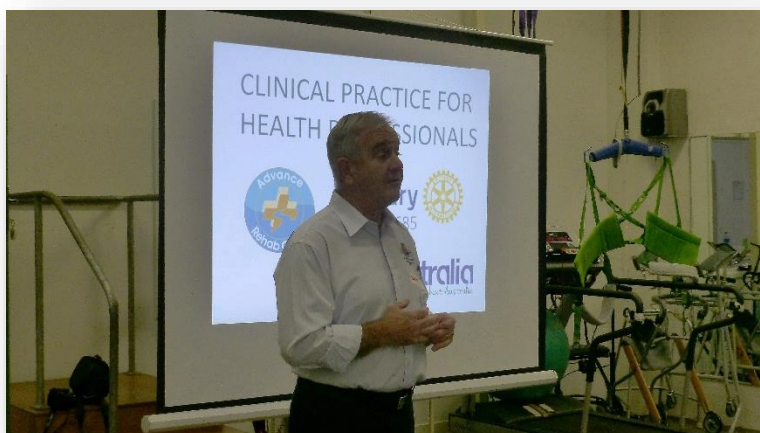
3. Be more aware of how exercise programs for people with LEOp and/or PPS differ from other neurological conditions and/or general ageing?



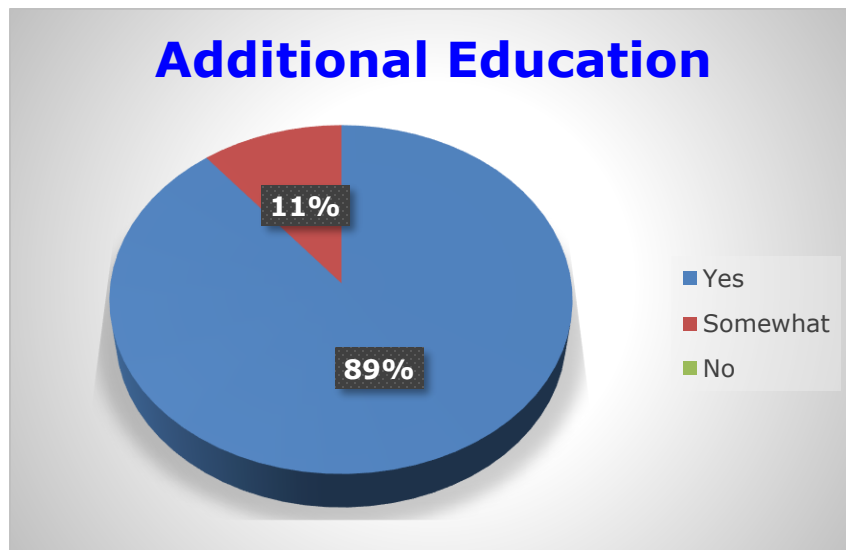
4. Be more aware of other clinical management options/interventions for people with LEOp and/or PPS?



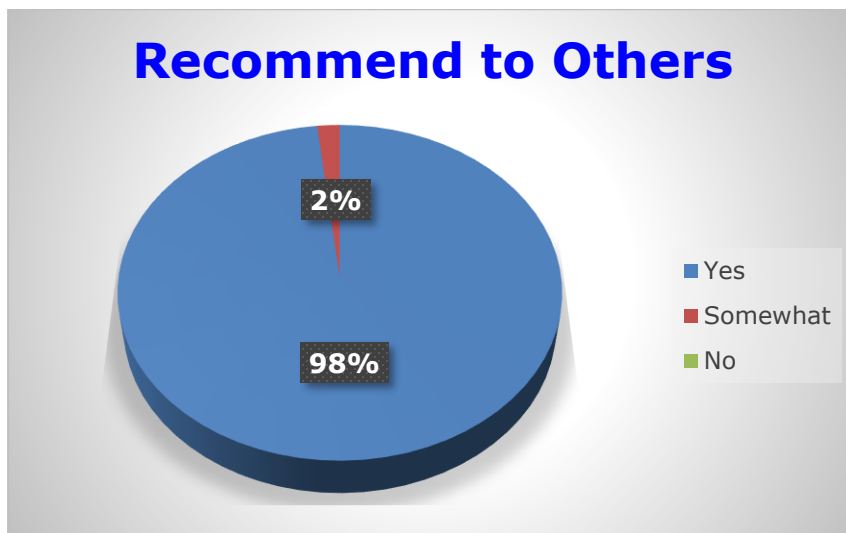
St Leonards Workshop Support Team



Do you believe there is a need for additional education for health practitioners on the LEOp and/or PPS?



Would you recommend the LEOp Clinical Practice Workshop to other health practitioners?

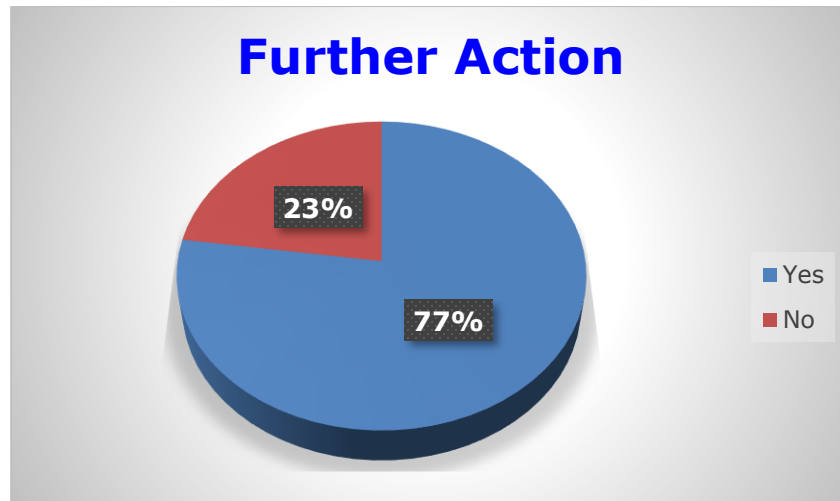


Hornsby Workshop Participants and Post-Polio Volunteers



Learning Outcomes

Will you be taking follow-up action after hearing today's information?



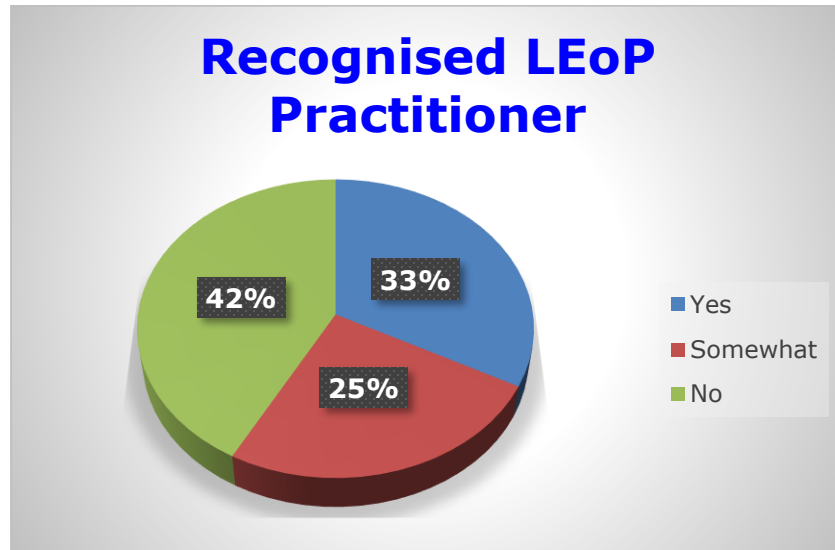
What Action will you take? *(sample representing duplicate comments)*

- Further research, education, regularly visit PA website.
- Tell other colleagues about PA and what I have learned.
- Apply learning on the later effects to current and new patients.
- Ask about potential polio exposure and relationship to new symptoms.
- Referral to appropriate practitioners.
- Spread the word about the in-services.
- Attend Post-Polio Conference this year.
- Increase awareness of orthotic designs looking at ischia, weight bearing, etc.
- Begin NZ education with Polio New Zealand.
- Interested in educating our surgeons on dangers of anesthetics.
- Improve exercise programs.
- Improve client screening in target population regarding polio history.
- Ensure that community OT asks about polio during initial screening.
- Contact PA for brochures for OT department.
- Advocate for Post-Polio Support Group to use Woy Woy hospital.

Gosford Workshop



Are you interested in becoming recognised as an informed/experienced LEOp and/or PPS practitioner? (See **Summary** for more information.)



What aspect/s of the Workshop were most useful? (sample representing duplicate comments)

- All very comprehensive, useful, informative, practical and understandable to different disciplines.
- Good balance of theory, practice, and hearing how polio survivors manage.
- Theory and understanding pathophysiology.
- The client panel at the end was most helpful.
- Understanding reasons, complexities, impacts and management of LEOp and PPS.
- Exercise prescription for polio survivors versus healthy/aged populations, testing multiple times.
- Improved health assessments of polio patients.
- Well delivered PowerPoint presentation and information from Melissa.
- Learning when to refer to other health professionals and how they assist post-polio management.
- Accessing polio information, talking with carers, post-operative complications and use of orthotics.
- Synopsis of normal ageing to PPS.
- Realisation that someone who had non-paralytic polio can still develop the late effects.
- Research statistics.
- Understanding symptoms/signs and issues with fatigue.
- Information on falls and pain topics.

Rotarians in Action



What other information would you have liked presented? *(sample representing duplicate comments)*

- More of theory, orthotic options, who else to refer to, vaccine acquired polio, translate acronyms.
- A little more detail on specific interventions for particular individuals.
- More Case Studies and time to talk to survivors.
- Strategies to allow patients to accept new treatments.
- More pictures/videos of polio movements, exercise programs, home/lifestyle modifications.
- More on nutritional recommendations for exercise/activity.
- More on impact of swallowing and speech function.
- More specific on exercise and pain management.
- Information on how to best promote in the community.
- Include swallowing difficulties panel survivor.
- Types of swallowing therapy found useful in this population.

Additional Comments *(sample representing duplicate comments)*

- Now getting a broader picture of the treatments available.
- There is the difficulty of pitching at a health worker and general public level at the same time.
- It is wonderful to see such a range of disciplines attending.
- Thank you Polio Australia and Rotary for a very informative session.
- Concept of adapting a health professional's skills to meet the polio survivor's needs.
- Further training/webinar presentation would be great.
- Invite NSW Health Department senior officials to the Workshops.
- I work in aged care facilities and we often have polio survivors.
- Attending on day off, time for shift work difficult to accommodate.

Summary

Very positive written feedback was received from the majority of health professionals who took part in the Workshops and it is hoped that a number of the participants will also attend Polio Australia's *Australasian-Pacific Post-Polio Conference* in Sydney in September 2016.

Polio Australia is in the process of creating an online register of health professionals (www.poliohealth.org.au) who are informed about the Late Effects of Polio, and interested in working with polio survivors. This Workshop series has revealed a number of clinicians who will, no doubt, add their details to the Register for quick and easy access by polio survivors seeking assistance in the management of their condition.

In her own feedback of the Workshops, Melissa McConaghy reported that she had found it difficult to set up for the presentation, talk with the delegates, and attend to the administration such as ticking people off as they arrive, distributing the handouts, collecting evaluation forms, and dealing with book sales. She recommended a designated 'welcome person', perhaps one of the polio survivors attending as the 'lived experience expert'. She also believed it may have added to the presentation to have more demonstration of amazing ways people are still independent. This was also reflected in the participant feedback, some asking for relevant video footage.

Discussions are now under way for a similar program of Workshops to be facilitated in New Zealand by Julie Rope, a Neurological Physiotherapist who runs her own rehabilitation clinic in Auckland. Julie is working together with Polio NZ, and is being funded by the Duncan Trust to educate NZ health professionals in the LEOp.

Polio Australia was very appreciative of the opportunity to work with Rotary District 9685 to deliver this Late Effects of Polio Clinical Practice Workshop series. However, there are a number of mitigating factors that must be addressed if these Workshops are to become a successful, ongoing training program for Polio Australia:

- A regular and reliable income source needs to be established to employ dedicated program staff and cover associated costs: Physiotherapist/Facilitator; Administration Assistant; travel; accommodation; program development; printed resources; online resources; promotion and marketing; technology/equipment.

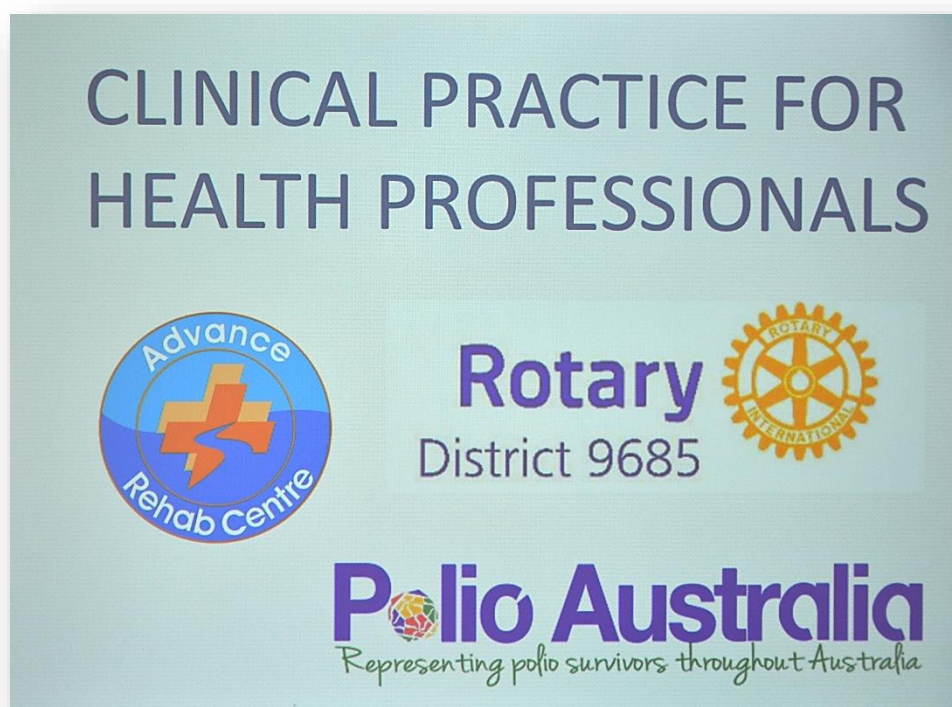
Dedicated staff would provide the flexibility to schedule Workshops when and where required, rather than relying on the good will of presenters like Melissa, Anna, and Catriona to make themselves available whilst managing competing interests. This is compounded by the fact that 'peer' health professionals with the appropriate knowledge and skills to present this very specific training are not plentiful.

Flexible and broad-based scheduling would avoid exhausting the interest of health professionals attending the Workshops in any given area due to clustering the Workshops, both time-wise and geographically.

- The Workshops should be fee-based, providing an ongoing income stream for additional resource development and to support Polio Australia's greater work.

Recommendation

A possible recommendation for addressing these issues is for Rotary International and Polio Australia to form an official partnership to deliver Late Effects of Polio Clinical Practice Workshops across Australia. This could be funded through Australia's 21 Rotary Districts each committing an annual amount of \$8,000 to a 'Post-Polio Trust' (*working title*), providing a Program budget of \$168,000 per annum.



- ~ Earn 2.5 CPD hours
- ~ Receive a Certificate of Attendance
- ~ Free PDF of 100 page resource "Managing Muscles and Mobility", and more . . .
- ~ Refreshments provided

The Late Effects of Polio

FREE Clinical Practice Workshop Series

POLIO: IT'S NOT OVER

Decades after the poliomyelitis epidemics in Australia, the aftermath of the disease is now becoming evident in our ageing 'polio population'. An estimated 400,000 people may be suffering the Late Effects of Polio (LEoP) or Post-Polio Syndrome (PPS). Do you know how to recognise these conditions in your practice?

CHRONIC ILLNESS WITH A DIFFERENCE

There are many cross-overs in the treatment and management of other chronic diseases and LEoP/PPS, and there are also some very significant differences. If LEoP is not identified, the client can experience rapidly worsening symptoms due to inadvertently incorrect care.

YOU CAN IMPROVE THEIR FUTURE

For many LEoP/PPS clients, biomedical and pharmaceutical treatments have limited efficacy. Polio survivors are turning their attention and hopes to allied health practitioners to help them improve their quality of life, and prolong their daily functional ability as they age. With a holistic approach to care and increased awareness within the greater health sector, LEoP/PPS clients can manage their symptoms, live better, and age well.

Registration: www.poliohealth.org.au/workshops
Email: workshops@poliohealth.org.au

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | Ryde Royal Rehab 235 Morrison Rd | Thursday 26 November 2015 1.00 – 4.00pm |
| 2 | St Leonards ARC Health 3/41 Herbert St | Tuesday 8 December 2015 5.30 – 8.30pm |
| 3 | Katoomba Blue Mountains District ANZAC Memorial Hospital Great Western Hwy & Woodlands Rd | Saturday 6 February 2016 9.30am - 12.30pm |
| 4 | Wyong Wyong Golf Course 319 Pacific Hwy | Saturday 27 February 2016 9.30am - 12.30pm |
| 5 | North Rocks Forsight Foundation 241 North Rocks Rd | Thursday 10 March 2016 9.30am - 12.30pm |

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Rotary District 9685 partnering with Polio Australia to deliver

3 hour Workshop Topics

- ☐ **Why We Vaccinate:** a brief history of polio in Australia
- ☐ **What is polio?:** The pathophysiology of poliomyelitis
- ☐ **Demystifying Late Effects of Polio and Post-Polio Syndrome:** what's the difference?
- ☐ **The Aging Polio Population:** joining the dots of problems experienced in LEoP / PPS clients
- ☐ **"Did You Have Polio?":** identifying people who may be experiencing LEoP / PPS
- ☐ **Practical strategies** used by physiotherapists, orthotists, and various other allied health professionals to address key concerns such as managing pain and fatigue, and help with stability and avoiding falls
- ☐ **A Late Effects of Polio Case Study:** Q&A with local polio survivors and team care simulation

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| 6 | Penrith Penrith RSL Club 8 Tindale St | Thursday 24 March 2016 1.00 – 4.00pm |
| 7 | Hornsby Mt Wilga Private Hospital 66 Rosamond St | Thursday 7 April 2016 1.00 – 4.00pm |
| 8 | Windsor Hawkesbury District Hospital 2 Day St | Saturday 16 April 2016 9.30am - 12.30pm |
| 9 | Gosford Gosford Hospital Holden St | Thursday 28 April 2016 1.00 – 4.00pm |
| 10 | Narrabeen The Tramshed Hall 1395a Pittwater Rd | Thursday 5 May 2016 1.00 – 4.00pm |

