

The Care Digest

"Improving the Quality of Your Life is Our Primary Concern."



Vol2. Issue 1 2008

The Care Digest ... keeping you informed about what's going on in the prosthetic and orthotic industry right here in St. Louis and around the world!

Breaking News....

The Prosthetic Parity House Bill No. 2100 is Officially Introduced!

Real prosthetic parity is within our grasp! We are excited to announce that Prosthetic Parity Bill (House Bill 2100) has been referred to the Special Committee on Health Insurance. It was read for the first time on Feb 12th and for the 2nd time on Feb 13th. House Bill 2100 requires health insurance companies that claim to cover prosthetics to pay Medicare allowable rates without capping coverage at their current low levels.

Thanks to the significant efforts of the Missouri Coalition for People with Limb Loss, this important proposed bill is moving forward and is gaining the important broad bi-partisan support in Missouri it deserves!

Dr. Wayne Cooper (R), Chairman of the Health Policy Committee, agreed to give the Prosthetic Parity Bill a hearing and Senator Griesheimer (R) said he will sponsor the bill and introduce it to his committee for Small Business and Insurance.

Traditionally, Republicans have a hard time with backing insurance mandates. However, this time they agree that prosthetic parity is not a traditional mandate. It simply requires insurance companies to cover what they claim to cover and stop taking advantage of employers and individuals who have no idea how much a prosthesis costs.



Jeff Damrall

Chairman of the Limb Loss Coalition



Well informed Senators and Representatives want working Missourians who tragically and suddenly lose limbs to be able to return to work instead of becoming dependent on Medicaid.

It is absolutely necessary that as many Missourians as possible contact the committee chair, Rep.

Wilson, as well as their own legislator, and ask for a hearing!

Rep. Kevin Wilson

Chair, Special Committee
on Health Insurance

Capitol Phone: 573-751-9781

E-mail:

Kevin.Wilson@house.mo.gov

Please call your State Representative and ask him or her to vote for House Bill 2100.

Quick Talking Points to Include in a Phone Call or Use in an E-Mail

- Employers, working Missourians, and amputees are being deceived into thinking that prosthetics are covered in their policies when, in fact, payment is capped at less than one-fourth to one-half the cost.
- Some working-age amputees have found it better to get on Medicaid or Disability instead of returning to their jobs because coverage is better than with private insurance.
- The cost of prosthetic parity laws on private health insurance is somewhere between 12 and 25 cents per member per month, or less than \$3.00 per year.

Be sure to include any personal information, especially if you are an amputee or have been affected by insurance caps on prosthetic coverage.

It's Official: Oscar Pistorius Barred from the 2008 Olympic Games



Oscar Pistorius, double amputee and champion sprinter, on his "Cheetahs" feet.

photo courtesy of www.ossur.com

Oscar Pistorius, has done much to raise awareness around the world about amputation, prosthetics and disabled sports in general.

Oscar's reputation as the "fastest thing on no legs" is well established. A double amputee, the 20-year-old South African phenomenon is the world record holder in his category for the 100, 200 and 400 meters sprints. The world champion sprinter who has broken his own world record 26 times.

Unfortunately, the IAAF recently ruled that Oscar Pistorius will not be allowed to run in the 2008 Beijing Olympics or in any other sanctioned track meet because his two carbon fiber prosthetic feet give him an unfair advantage over able-bodied athletes.

The official report issued by Professor Peter Bruggeman at the German Sport University in Cologne concluded that "Pistorius is able to run with his prosthetic blades at the same speed as the able-bodied sprinters with about 25 percent less energy expenditure." The same data also suggested that with his cardiovascular strength he could run faster than able-bodied athletes if he had their legs.

Pistorius is unable to produce the energy an able-bodied athlete produces with his or her calves and he must exert almost twice as much energy with his thighs, but it seems that his prosthetic feet lengthen his stride.



Oscar Pistorius springs off the starting line.

photo courtesy of www.ossur.com

It seems that the determining factor against Pistorius was that, in closely monitored trials, he used less oxygen than able-bodied runners at the same speed.

His J-shaped Flex Foot prosthetic sprinting foot, called the Cheetah, was inspired by the shape of a cheetah's rear leg. Made of carbon fiber, the foot was designed by Van Phillips, engineered by Hilary Pouchak and manufactured by Ossur North America. Cheetahs conserve 90% of the energy they receive on impact, much higher than the human foot by itself, but much lower than the 200% return the foot gets with the aid of the calf muscle.

We Want to Hear From You!

We at P&O Care are eager to hear from our patients and colleagues in health care. Anyone can leave a comment on our blog, either anonymously or with your name if you have a Google account.



www.CareDigest.Blogspot.com

Patricia Queen Shares Her Story

Patricia Queen has type one diabetes, but that isn't why she lost her leg below the knee last year. Nineteen years ago she ruptured a disk in her back that nearly severed her sciatic nerve, leaving her paralyzed below her left knee. Ms. Queen was able to remain healthy and active, wearing an orthotic brace.



Patricia Queen Standing for the first time in 5 months, 2/22/07.

On trip to Las Vegas October 4, 2006 a bone suddenly protruded from the bottom of Pat's left foot. She couldn't feel the pain, but saw the blood and went immediately to the emergency room where she was diagnosed with osteomyelitis (a dangerous infection of the bone) and treated with antibiotics.

After returning to St. Louis, Pat's temperature spiked and she ended up at Missouri Baptist Hospital being seen by vascular surgeon Dr. Ricardo Rao. Dr. Rao removed the dead tissue, but the foot failed to heal properly. Soon, she was told there was no way her foot ever heal.

On November 3, 2006, Pat Queen lost her left leg below the knee. But her amputation site began to develop gangrene because of her diabetes, and on January 3, 2007, she had a second amputation, this time just two-and-a-half inches below her knee. With such a short residual limb, it was a challenge for Manny Rivera, her prosthetist with P&O Care, to create a prosthesis that would protect her tibia or shin bone. (continued on back page)



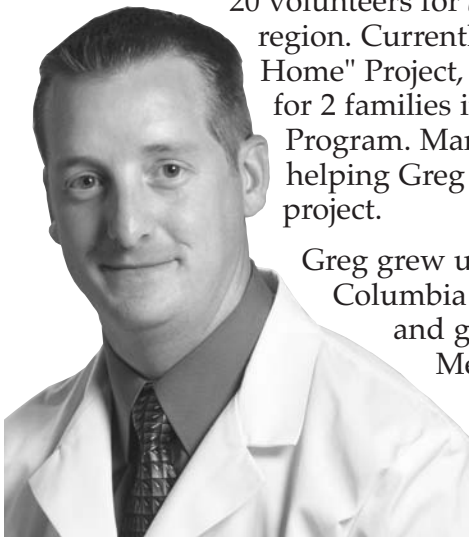
GC and Patricia Queen

Practitioner Profile.....

Greg Doerr, ABC Certified Prosthetist

Greg Doerr specializes in creating and fitting prosthetic limbs for pediatric amputees.

But what really makes Greg special is his volunteer work. He just received the 2007 Volunteer of the Year award from the St. Louis Big Brothers Big Sisters, and was nominated for the St. Louis Rams Community Quarterback Award, which certified him as one of the top 20 volunteers for *any* cause in the entire St. Louis region. Currently, Greg is co-chairing the "Making It Home" Project, an "extreme home make over" project for 2 families in the Big Brothers Big Sisters Program. Many of P&O Care's employees are helping Greg by volunteering their time with the project.



Greg Doerr
ABC Certified Prosthetist

Greg grew up in South County. After graduating from the University of Missouri - Columbia in 1997, Greg joined P&O Care as a prosthetic technician. He attended and graduated from the prosthetic program at Northwestern University Medical School and received his ABC certification in prosthetics in 1999.

Outside of work and volunteering, Greg spends time with his "Little Brother" Angelo and his nieces and nephews. "I spend most of my free time in the outdoors," Greg says. "I love to wakeboard and sail at my lake house in the summer and kayak in the winter. I am now training for my third marathon - the first time with my cohort, Manny Rivera!"

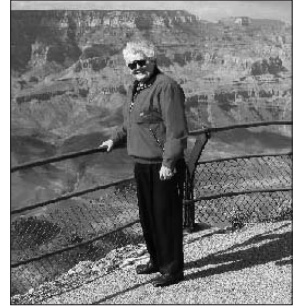


Greg Doerr and his Little Brother Anthony at a RAMs football game.

Patricia Queen, continued.

On February 22, 2007, Pat stood on both legs for the first time. After four weeks of therapy, she was able to walk on even ground without a cane or walker. Since leaving the hospital, Pat has gained even more strength and has been able to move into a new prosthetic socket that allows her to bend her knee more than at first.

Pat says the initial shock of amputation hit hard, and she definitely had to mourn her loss. "Getting used to not being able to do everything I wanted to do was the hardest," she says. "Talking with other amputees online at [the social networking site] Less Than Four has helped me more than anything else, and I love reading 'inMotion' a bi-monthly magazine just for amputees.



Patricia Queen



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