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15 Bariatrics in Plain Sight
Bariatric clients need seating & wheeled mobility options with higher weight capacities — but those clients also present a range of unique clinical needs and challenges that impact equipment choices.

21 Best Picks 2015
ATPs and seating & wheeled mobility clinicians highlight and explain their technology choices. PLUS: On the Best Picks program’s fifth anniversary, a look back at past winners.
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Somewhere out there, someone very powerful thinks your job, your industry and the technology you work with every day are glamorous.


How else to explain the absolute blizzard of acquisitions in the complex rehab technology industry?

This year alone, we’ve seen Permobil acquire ROHO (after acquiring TiLite last year), Drive Medical acquire Columbia Medical, and Sunrise Medical acquire Switch-It in April, followed by RGK Wheelchairs in May.

And those are only the ones I can talk about. …wink, wink.

In stock terms, CRT is a buy. In Hollywood tabloid terms, CRT is the current It Girl. Investors are raving about CRT, and they’re putting their money where their raves are. Why?

Permobil, ROHO, TiLite, Drive Medical, Columbia Medical, Sunrise Medical, Switch-It, RGK Wheelchairs and all their boards of directors and investors did not invite me to their acquisition-themed meetings or let me listen in on their conference calls. (That’s surprising, right? What could go wrong with having a reporter eavesdrop on financial deals worth millions of dollars?)

But never mind them. I have my own proof in the form of intriguing, slightly secret agent-ish calls that regularly come across my phone line.

There is nothing strange about these calls. They’re usually from mainstream media reporters and business consultants, and very occasionally from research firms working for They Who Shall Not Be Named investors. I’ve fielded these types of calls for decades, in every industry I’ve covered as an editor. Heck, I make some of these calls, to editors in other industries I’m writing about and need background on. Callers think editors know things and are unbiased in their beliefs. So they call and ask: How’s the industry doing? What are the headlines? What current events or topics are exciting you? Worrying you? Causing you to issue extra newsletters on the fly? What’s up with Medicare?

Since I’ve cold-called my share of editors in other industries over the years, I feel obliged to be helpful in return. It’s not always invigorating to fill people in about competitive bidding or audits or Medicare vs. The SCOOTER Store, but I don’t mind. It’s nice to answer questions for a change instead of asking them.

But lately, these calls have become super fun. Because the people who call me have adopted a slightly breathy, sort of star-struck tone, as in You get to write about this industry! You know people in the industry! You know what they’re creating! You know about their innovations! Your industry is full of miracle workers! Tell me more!!!

You’ve always been heroes or movie stars or miracle workers to me, but it’s great that other people who are powerful and make things happen with just a stroke of the pen are also realizing the potential in complex rehab technology. That they’re investing. That they’re committing to this industry’s future.

From where you sit (and stand and measure and build and fight with funding sources), the industry probably doesn’t seem so glamorous. No industry is ever as glamorous as perhaps not glamorous in a Hollywood premiere sort of way (though who knows?), but exciting nonetheless. Intriguing. On the rise. Lucrative. I’m serious.

How else to explain the absolute blizzard of acquisitions in the complex rehab technology industry?
EasyStand Zing MPS

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LAS VEGAS — What happens in this bling-filled town is supposed to stay right here, but after this year’s Medtrade Spring event, attendees and event organizers probably wouldn’t mind if some of the trade-show’s good news crossed state borders.

Once again headquartered at the Mandalay Bay Hotel & Casino, Medtrade Spring welcomed attendees to three days of educational sessions and DME exhibits. While not considered a complex rehab show, Medtrade Spring did have mobility exhibitors, particularly in the consumer/senior portion of the demographic.

In fact, after the event, Medtrade Spring organizers announced several awards for mobility-related products and exhibitors.

The ‘TwoCan cane won the gold New Product Pavilion Providers’ Choice Award, while the Medtrade Spring award for Best Booth went Golden Technologies’ Golden Compass Sport features a Dynamic Linx controller that provides Dynamic Load Compensation technology to enable the electronics to control the speed of the power chair’s motors for a simplified, more intuitive driving experience.

Broda Seating’s Comfort-Tilt wheelchair has 45° of infinitely adjustable seat tilt, adjustable seat-to-floor height (14-19”) and an adjustable seat depth (16-20”). It’s available in 16” or 18” seat widths (you can also request a 20” width), and the armrests are easily removable to make transfers easier.

Maddak’s Sliding-Rotating transfer bench is designed to reduce shear forces in the bathroom. The blue swivel top makes it easy for the consumer to turn to reach for the shampoo and soap, or to facilitate a transfer.

The WHILL model A power wheelchair is not covered by Medicare, but the manufacturer is seeking FDA approval for a second WHILL model.

Just in time for summer travel! The Oasis SunShade is an asymmetrical umbrella for sun or rain that can be fastened to a wheelchair (such as on the push handle) and rotated as needed to provide the best protection for the wheelchair user.
Clients Love the Compass Sport’s Standard Features:

- Golden’s patented springless articulating chassis keeps all 6 wheels on the ground for the most stability in its class
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Medtrade Spring Heats Up

to Hurrycane Company, which the event lauded for an “eye-pleasing and logical layout…. The ongoing video demonstration, combined with an open and inviting layout, made for a particularly attractive and effective booth.”

The iWalk 2.0 Hands-Free Crutch took first-place honors in the Innovative HME Retail Product Awards competition. Pride Mobility Products’ LC-358 Lift Chair with FirstUp Technology came in fourth.

Medtrade’s fall event will take place Oct. 26-29 at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta. If you want to build on your Medtrade Spring success — or if you skipped Medtrade Spring, but want to take advantage of the networking and educational opportunities in Atlanta — go to medtrade.com for details. Registration opened in late June.

— Laurie Watanabe

Blue Chip Medical Products offered multiple seating & positioning solutions focused on providing effective pressure management.

Quantum Rehab showed off its iLevel seat elevation system (on the new Q6 Edge 2.0 power base). iLevel can be used as the chair moves at walking speed.

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briefly…

Palliative care is now officially recognized as a term by Merriam-Webster’s unabridged online dictionary. It’s defined as “Medical and related care provided to a patient with a serious, life-threatening or terminal illness that is not intended to provide curative treatment but rather to manage symptoms, relieve pain and discomfort, improve quality of life, and meet the emotional, social and spiritual needs of the patient.” Merriam-Webster says the phrase was first used in 1949. … Rush University Medical Center in Chicago has a new weekly e-newsletter for patients and healthcare professionals that focuses on “advances in treatments, research, education and community service.” You can sign up for a free subscription to Inside Health by going to rush.edu and signing up on the mailing list page. … HASCO Medical has moved its headquarters from Addison, Texas, to Dallas. The new address is 16800 Dallas Parkway, Suite 200, Dallas, TX 75248, and a news announcement noted that the new offices — needed due to company growth — are more than twice the size of the former ones. HASCO comprises the Mobility Freedom, Ride-Away and Wheelchair Vans of America brands…. Savaria Corp. has announced that its first quarter of 2015 boasted the highest revenue of any first quarter in the company’s history. Savaria’s revenue of $20.2 million was up 14.4 percent compared to the same time period last year. Based in Ontario, Canada, Savaria manufactures accessibility products including home elevators, stairlifts and vertical platform lifts. … If you work with National Government Services, Medicare’s Jurisdiction B DME MAC, note there are new hours for speaking with a customer service representative at the Provider Contact Center. Starting June 1, operating hours changed to 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Eastern time on weekdays. And as of June 5, the Provider Contact Center and the Telephone Reopening Unit lines will be closed every Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Eastern time so call center training can be conducted. The DME MAC’s NGSConnex and Interactive Voice Response line (877-299-7900) will remain operational for providers to use during training closures. …

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Sunrise Medical Acquires “Bespoke” RGK Wheelchairs

Sunrise Medical has acquired RGK Wheelchairs Ltd., a manufacturer based in the United Kingdom and known for its custom manual wheelchairs for wheelchair athletes and active everyday users.

RGK’s co-founders, Russel Simms and Greg Eden, were wheelchair basketball fanatics back in 1988, when they started their company. In a company profile for RGK, Simms, the company’s commercial director, noted that at the time, rigid-frame designs had entered the high-performance manual wheelchair market in Great Britain, but “there was nothing of a really bespoke design available. And our idea was born.”

Bespoke is a common British term meaning an item custom made to its user.

Simms says in the RGK video that the goal of RGK was to build “the world’s finest hand-built wheelchairs,” a task that got its start in Simms’s kitchen.

In a news announcement released by Equistone Partners Europe, one of Sunrise Medical’s owners, Sunrise CEO/President Thomas Rossnagel said, “RGK is a great addition to our family of brands! Personally, I am very excited about the prospect of a united RGK and Sunrise Medical, especially leading up to the Rio 2016 Paralympics.”

The RGK acquisition comes just weeks after Sunrise announced it had acquired Switch-It, manufacturer of alternative driving controls for power wheelchairs.

“After Switch-It in March, RGK is our second acquisition this year, and we continue to be on the lookout for exciting acquisition opportunities in product lines and technology that further add to the strong growth of our core business,” Rosnagel said.

NSM Opens Branches in Cleveland & Northern California

National Seating & Mobility (NSM) is still expanding with the announcement of two new locations — and a new address for a third.

The complex rehab technology provider has opened a fourth Ohio branch at 6773 Industrial Parkway in the city of North Olmsted. The office, which will serve the Cleveland area, opened for business May 1.

Dawn Havrilla, CRTS, is the Cleveland office’s branch manager. Other Cleveland staffers include Sean Kiepert, ATP, and Tim Weist, rehab technician.

NSM opened a new branch office in Redding, Calif., in April. This location, NSM’s 14th in California, will serve the Redding and Chico areas.

Cassi Richardson, ATP, CRTS, is the branch manager, with John Day, RTS, Mark Webb, Mike Fithian and Jayleen Burden rounding out the Redding staff. The office is located at 1240 Redwood Blvd., Redding.

The need for more space has resulted in a new address for NSM’s Iowa City branch office.

Its new address is 4172 Alyssa Court, Unit A, Iowa City. The location opened for business on May 1.

General Manager Loretta A. Pender said in a news announcement, “With the continued success of our ALS loan closet, we needed more space to accommodate products. We had also outgrown our current building due to the volume of business increasing.”

The Iowa City branch office staff includes Jeff Bozarth, ATP, and Brad Peterson, technician and warehouse manager.
Seating & Mobility with Higher Weight Capacities, Plus Special Considerations for These Clients

The statistics are sobering: The Centers for Disease Control (CDC), citing the Journal of American Medicine, says more than a third of adults living in the United States are obese and at risk for a number of related conditions, including heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and some forms of cancer—which are some of the most common causes of preventable deaths.

Obesity is also costly financially. The CDC reports that in 2008, the annual cost of obesity-related medical care was $147 billion.

Of course, most people who are overweight, even by significant amounts, do not end up as your seating & wheeled mobility clients. The bariatric clients you see likely have multiple clinical conditions that need to be taken into account as you assess which seating, positioning and mobility products are the best answers.

In other words, like all the clients you serve, bariatric consumers have complex needs that might require customization and creative thinking on your part.

Many Different Challenges
When working with bariatric patients, it’s easy for healthcare professionals to focus on their patients’ weights. But the successful seating & mobility assessment requires a far more in-depth evaluation.

Jay Doherty, OTR, ATP/SMS, senior clinical education manager of the eastern United States for Quantum Rehab, says a patient’s weight is only one part of the overall seating & mobility equation.

“This population that we work with has many different challenges that must be overcome well beyond their higher weight capacity that must be accommodated for,” Doherty says. “They have significant redundant tissue that must be accommodated for. This often requires customization of the seating system.”

With bariatric patients, collecting accurate measurements can be
Bariatrics in Plain Sight

difficult — but very necessary for a successful end result.

“These custom modifications require very exact measurements on how the seating must be set up,” Doherty says. “For example, a large gap or pocket may be needed between the seat and the backrest in order to make allowances for redundant tissue. In addition, [bariatric clients] often have other medical complications, such as circulatory issues. Diabetes can contribute to pressure sores developing and not healing. Function in the seated position can be its own challenge when dealing with a very large individual. So as you can see, there are many different complications that can arise during a seating evaluation beyond just the seating system.”

**How Weight Impacts Decisions**

In more mainstream healthcare segments, obesity can be dealt with in a straightforward manner, such as by choosing a heavy-duty standard manual wheelchair that has a higher weight capacity.

But with some bariatric clients, the situation is more complex and requires a more complex answer.

For instance, in a standard mobility client with a higher body weight, we think of a person whose weight is distributed evenly throughout his/her body. A complex rehab client might have a comparable body weight, but that weight might be distributed very differently. Think of a patient with lymphedema whose extra weight is almost entirely in his legs. What will that mean when it’s time to choose a wheelchair?

“The location of the person’s weight and where it is mainly distributed impact the setup of a wheelchair significantly,” Doherty says. “If the weight is distributed forward, it can impact the wear and tear on the wheelchair and the performance of the wheelchair, whether manual or power. Weight that is distributed forward or is carried in the legs or lower abdomen can wear down the front end of a seat cushion and front load a wheelchair. A front-loaded wheelchair will perform poorly because the caster wheels will be carrying more weight than they are supposed to. This will wear the caster wheels out quicker, make it harder for the wheelchair to turn, and affect even a power wheelchair’s

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The number of obese adults has tripled in the last 20 years - more than one-third of U.S. adults (35.7%) are obese. Proper positioning is important for these patients. It can help improve areas such as lung function and blood circulation. This also has positive benefits for combating immobility and providing opportunities for social interaction, which enhance quality of life.

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grahamfield.com

"Clinically, I have a preference towards front-wheel drive for this population," Doherty says. "There are a multitude of reasons that front-wheel drive is a better choice. A good majority of people who require a bariatric power base carry their weight forward in the seating system, for this reason, having a drive wheel in the front leads to better overall performance."

**Facilitating Other Activities**

In addition, the complex rehab team needs to consider other mobility-related activities that can be a real challenge for bariatric clients. "Many of these individuals cannot ambulate functionally, but still perform a stand-pivot transfer," Doherty points out. "And for that reason, having the large drive wheel up front prevents caster wheels from interfering with a stand-pivot transfer."

Being able to safely and efficiently lift and move their own body weight can be a considerable challenge for this patient population. "The individual who is larger often has a difficult time with transfers because of the weight they must lift to get into a standing position for a stand-pivot transfer," Doherty says. "An elevated seat is often a benefit because it helps to reduce the levers they must overcome by placing them in a partially standing position already to start. Unfortunately, there are not many power adjustable elevating seats that can handle weight capacities above 300 lbs."

Doherty also explains that moving within the wheelchair can be very difficult. "When getting up out of the wheelchair or getting properly positioned or repositioned in the wheelchair seating, they must shift their weight, and this often can be a big challenge for these individuals," he says. "A slick, low-shear seat cover material can assist with this weight shifting that may be required. However, that slick material may also impact their ability to remain seated back in the seating system, so the overall effects should be considered."
It was a simple question: What seating & wheeled mobility products would ATPs and clinicians select if they were completely free to choose? If they weren’t being boxed in by inadequate allowables or someone else’s formularies?

Five years ago, we started asking. And we got answers. But what was as interesting as the technology selected were the reasons they were mentioned. Of course, the product needs to work well — but that can mean different things to different people. Durability is universally admired. So is adjustability. Ease of use, for both the seating & mobility professional and the client learning to master it, is critical.

And then there were the intangibles, the things you don’t see on an order form or during a product demonstration. Customer service from the manufacturer is probably the biggest intangible for today’s hard-pressed, always-moving clinician or ATP. How easy are the manufacturers to work with? If you need a custom build, a unique adjustment, a tweak here or there — will they accommodate you? Will they do so cheerfully? Quickly?

It seems the best-case scenario makes ATPs and clinicians feel that sales reps and manufacturers are an extension of the seating & mobility team. That everyone is on the same side with the same goal: Optimal mobility and independence for the consumer, and as quickly as possible.

This year, we mark the fifth anniversary of our ATP & Clinician Best Picks program by not only highlighting this year’s winners, but recalling past winners as well. Congratulations to five years’ worth of Best Picks, and thank you to the ATPs and clinicians who wrote in with their choices to make the program possible.

— Ed.

By Laurie Watanabe

ATPs & Clinicians Highlight Their Seating & Wheeled Mobility Favorites

 mobilitymgmt.com
ATP Series

Best Picks 2015

Rear View Mirror

[This] rear view mirror [is] extremely adjustable and fits on almost anything. As you know, many power wheelchair users have trouble backing up, and this solves the problem. It can be mounted within the footprint of the chair if needed. If it can save money down the line, it’s worth it.

— Ellen Russell, ATP, CRTS, Matheny Rehab, Peapack, N.J.

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Zing MPS

EasyStand has always led the industry when it comes to separate standing devices. Not only is the EasyStand Zing MPS a great-looking stander… it offers so much flexibility that many users will be able to benefit from its fantastic, well-thought-out features. One of my favorite things about this stander is that it allows the client to stand in up to 30° of hip abduction, which is supported in the research to promote hip alignment, stability and health. All adjustments are unilateral and can accommodate asymmetries in the client’s lower-extremity range of motion as well. This stander can also be used as a supine, upright or prone stander without any cumbersome and time-consuming adjustment to the stander. It is an ideal solution for small children who need to stand for health and function, as the size 1 unit can support children from infancy up to 44” and 70 lbs. Way to go, EasyStand… this stander is a slam dunk!

— Amy Morgan, PT, ATP, Permobil, Lebanon, Tenn.

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ATOM Head Array

I really like ASL’s new ATOM head array. The fact that standard in the head array is a system that allows the user to interface with a computer or AAC device makes it a less expensive option and negates needing to order products that frequently are not funded by payor sources. With this head array, the user can actually truly turn the chair on and off instead of having to go into sleep or idle mode, which is great for the client, too. The clear connection port is also great because it makes it easy to know whether the user is operating the chair or in the alternative mode.

— Lauren Rosen, PT, MPT, MSMS, ATP/SMS, St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital of Tampa (Fla.)

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Cushion
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Carrot III Car Seat
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Pronto M51
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— Sharon Frant Brooks, MA, OTR/L, ATP/MS, CR茨, Acclaimed Healthcare, Lakewood, N.J.

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— Lauren Rosen, PT, MPT, MSMS, ATP/SMS, St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital of Tampa (Fla.)

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— Sharon Frant Brooks, MA, OTR/L, ATP/MS, CR茨, Acclaimed Healthcare, Lakewood, N.J.

Action Controls
(800) 324-1527
activecontrols.com

Anterior Tilt (F3/F5 Power Bases)
Anterior tilt as a power seat function has had limited availability in the industry and is not currently coded under the PDAC coding system. Despite these things, anterior tilt can provide exceptional benefits to wheelchair users both functionally and physiologically. For some, just a small change in orientation anteriorly can effectively manage tone and abnormal reflexes, which can often interfere with function. In addition, small amounts of anterior tilt lowers front seat-to-floor height and can be the difference between getting under a table/desk or being limited by the lower extremities. Many power wheelchair users would be able to use anterior tilt to assist with functional reach, making the user independent with performing mobility-related ADLs including self-care, hygiene, cooking, cleaning, laundry and much more! It is amazing how much access is improved with just 20° of anterior tilt! Even further, there are individuals who need to transfer out of their power wheelchair, but just don’t have the strength to do so. The 45° stand-pivot transfer package is ideal to assist with this task — making transfers much easier and allowing them to be performed independently.

Permobil
(800) 736-0925
permobilus.com
Stealth Products
Beyond Expectations

+1(512) 715-9995 • 104 John Kelly Dr, Burnet TX 78611
Your best pick is our best pick!
Stealth is proud to welcome ADI into our family.

+1(800) 965-9229 • www.stealthproducts.com
Best Picks 2015

Golden Compass Sport GP605CC
This is a K0823 power wheelchair that comes with a Dynamic Linx controller that has the ability to communicate wirelessly with an iPhone or iPad through the Linx access key or “dongle.” The access key plugs directly into the controller on the power wheelchair to perform programming and diagnostic tasks. I like it because I can perform instant wireless programming and diagnostics. Not only is this great for setting up the wheelchair, it is excellent for the technicians. This is a great tool for therapists, ATPs and technicians. Golden Technologies’ representation is excellent in our market, too, and for that reason and this technology, this is my Best Pick.

Golden Technologies
(800) 624-6374
goldentech.com

Adjustable-Angle Gel-Padded Footboxes
Much better construction than previous angle-adjustable footboxes and with a very nice interior padded system of SynerGel.
— Sharon Frant Brooks, MA, OTR/L, ATP/SMS, CRTS, Acclaimed Healthcare, Lakewood, N.J.

Gel Ovations
(888) 435-6828
gelovations.net

FlexRims
They are amazing saviors for the wrists, shoulders and elbows by reducing the cumulative stress that propulsion can cause.
— Sharon Frant Brooks, MA, OTR/L, ATP/SMS, CRTS, Acclaimed Healthcare, Lakewood, N.J.

Spinergy
(760) 496-2121
spinergy.com

Best Picks 2013
Micro Mini
Adaptive Switch Laboratories
Evolux, PivotFit
Bodypoint
Swing-Away Amputee Support
Comfort Company
Rodeo
Corvaid
Planar Seating
Freedom Designs
Matrix MX-1
Invacare Corp.
Rogue
Ki Mobility
SmartDrive
MAX Mobility
F-Series
Motion Concepts
Q-Grip
Out-Front
HeadPod
Pacific Rehab
M300, M300 HD
Permobil
TRU-Balance 3
Quantum Rehab
FlexLoc
Ride Designs
TRAM
Rifton
Agility Back, Quadtro
Select High-Profile
ROHO Inc.
Lower-Extremity Components
Seating Dynamics
Quickie QM-710, Quickie Q7
Sunrise Medical
TouchDrive 2
Switch-It
Aero T
TiLite

High Tower
As an ATP that is also a CDRS (Certified Driver Rehabilitation Specialist), I deal a lot with wheelchair transportation and occupied wheelchair transit. B&D Independence has rolled out a new electric wheelchair docking system that I think many of the seating folks will be interested in. I like it because it removes the problems encountered with ground clearance for docking brackets, and it is more stable since it is mounted with a higher center of gravity. It does not increase width dimension.
— C. Dan Allison Jr., MS, OTR/L, ATP, CDRS, Shepherd Center, Atlanta

B&D Independence Inc.
(800) 292-7117
hightowerdocking.com

mobilitymgmt.com
QM-710

The QM-710 is made by Sunrise Medical and up until its introduction, patients did not have a good center-wheel-drive option, one that would handle well outdoors and still climb their ramps and lifts without needing to have some momentum behind it. That is because of the SpiderTrac suspension that it has — as the front wheels raise up to meet the new terrain, the drive wheels are forced down to keep good traction. The chair has a great turning radius for indoor mobility and great outdoor capability.

— Jeff Bour, BA, ATP, CRTS, Carelinc, Grandville, Mich.
Sunrise Medical
(800) 333-4000
sunrisemedical.com

Modular Hose Peripheral Attachment System

Here is one of my favorite AT picks to assist with positioning switches, AAC devices and iPads.

ModularHose.com/EDM Zap
(800) 759-2839
modularhose.com

QM-710

Columbia Medical Acquired by Drive Medical

Expands our presence in the pediatric market.

For more product information visit www.columbiamedical.com and to order call toll-free 800.454.6612 or visit www.drivemedical.com and to order call toll-free at 800.371.2266.

Visit Us at the National Seating & Mobility Annual Seating Symposium, July 12, 2015, Booth 1+2

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(800) 759-2839
modularhose.com
ATP Series

Best Picks 2015

Vector X with Glide Wear

I love the Glide Wear technology. When chosen for the right individual, it’s great to reduce the amount of shear force in the transfer, and I have found it to help the “active” crowd who continually moves and shifts in the chair without pressure relieving. Great cushion, great covers.

— Rob Lins, ATP, RTS, Home MediService Inc., Havre de Grace, Md.

M300

Used consistently while covering the ALS clinic in Atlanta (Emory University).

— Brock Beasley, ATP, CRTS, National Seating & Mobility, Atlanta

Permobil

(800) 736-0925
permobilus.com

Seating & Positioning

They will work with you to find any solution possible for power wheelchair seating.

— Brock Beasley, ATP, CRTS,  CDSS, National Seating & Mobility, Atlanta

Motion Concepts

(888) 433-6818
motionconcepts.com

Evoflex

The Evoflex Pelvic Stabilizer is a great solution for pelvic positioning belts that are consistently falling down and getting lost in the wheelchair frame/base. If a belt gets caught in the wheel of a manual or power wheelchair, it can be problematic for the chair itself or even worse, a safety issue for the wheelchair user. The Evoflex ensures that the belt is accessible to the user and is protected from damaging the wheelchair by using stiffened end straps to keep the belt in place. The straps can also rotate down and out of the way (to be parallel to the seat rail) for people who perform lateral transfers. Additionally, the stiffened ends allow users with less manual dexterity to be able to independently don the pelvic belt. This concept is genius and alleviates many frustrations both in manual and power wheelchairs.

— Amy Morgan, PT, ATP, Permobil, Lebanon, Tenn.

Bodypoint

(800) 547-5716
bodypoint.com

Best Picks 2014

AirLogic Trunk Support
Adaptive Engineering Lab
Micro Mini Joystick
Adaptive Switch Laboratories
AllTrack R3
Amysystems
Acta Back
Comfort Company
ContourU, Generation NXT
Freedom Designs
Accu-Fit Back
Innovative Concepts
Rogue
Ki Mobility
Matrix Easy Fit
Matrix Seating USA
SmartDrive
MAX Mobility
Door Opening System
Open Sesame Door Systems Inc.
Natural-Fit Handrim
Out-Front
C300 Corpus 3G, M300 with Corpus 3G
Permobil
Custom Molded Seating
Prairie Seating Corp.

Pacer Gait Trainer
Rifton Equipment
Quadro Select Low Profile
ROHO Inc.
Q6 Edge, Q-Logic 2 with SCIM Module,
TRU-Balance 3
Quantum Rehab
Marathon
Schwalbe
Mustang Gait Trainer, Pilot
Car Seat
Snug Seat
LX
Spinergy
i-Drive Head Array
Stealth Products
Adjust-a-Plush, JAY Fusion
with Air Insert, JAY GS,
JAY Zip, Zippie Voyage
Sunrise Medical
Aero T, TWIST
TiLite

Bodypoint

(800) 547-5716
bodypoint.com
Brock’s Best Picks

In addition to specific remarks on several Best Pick products, Brock Beasley, ATP, CRTS, CDSS, with National Seating & Mobility’s Atlanta office offered comments about other complex rehab manufacturers and their technology. A seating & mobility consumer as well as an ATP, Beasley has a dual perspective, and his favorites are worth sharing… which we do here. — Ed.

Brock’s Favorites:

**TiLite:** “I use one, and that says a lot.” (800) 545-2266, tilite.com

**MAX Mobility’s Smart Drive:** “I also use one.” (800) 637-2980, maxmobility.com

**Ride Designs,** for both cushions and backs: “Best for custom-molded systems.” (866) 781-1633, javacushion.com

**Accessible Designs Inc.** for wheelchair backrests. (888) 684-2234, adirides.com

**Easystand** for standers. (800) 342-8968, easystand.com

**Snug Seat** for pediatric mobility. (800) 336-7684, snugseat.com

**Stealth Products:** “It’s their people.” (800) 965-9229, stealthproducts.com

**TiLite:** “I use one, and that says a lot.” (800) 545-2266, tilite.com

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**As easystand Bantam**

**Ride Designs Java**

**Accessible Designs Inc. backrests**

**Snug Seat X-Panda**

**Stealth Products i-Fit**

Adaptive Switch Laboratories, Inc.

www.asl-inc.com

**ASL 104 ATOM**

Introducing our NEW ASL 104 ATOM ELECTRONIC HEAD ARRAY!

With enhanced features, the ATOM makes it possible for clients to have easier access to their environment in a more compact way.

The INTERFACE on the back of the ATOM Head Array can work with MK6, RNet, and Curtis platforms.

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ATOM Wireless Dual Switch Receiver

ASL 557-3
ATOM Wireless Triple Switch Receiver

ASL 558
ATOM Wireless Mouse Emulator

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ATOM Interface with PROTECTIVE COVER

ONGOING DEDICATION WITH OUR CLIENTS IN MIND

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2015 Clinicians & ATPs BEST PICKS

Brock’s Best Picks

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ATOM Interface with PROTECTIVE COVER

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CALL: 800-626-8698
ATP Series

Best Picks 2015

Elevation Ultralight Chair
The Elevation ultralightweight manual wheelchair provides access to seat elevation and anterior tilting to manual wheelchair users. Previously, this technology was only available on power wheelchair platforms. The Elevation provides improved functional reach (both vertically and anteriorly) to significantly improve independence with mobility-related ADLs. Having this functionality available in an ultralightweight wheelchair is incredible. PDG has raised the bar for manual wheelchair design with this chair.

— Amy Morgan, PT, ATP, Permobil, Lebanon, Tenn.

Smart Drive
A wonderful alternative to power wheels, lighter and easier for many users who need to take the power-assist on and off, like folks who use cars, not vans.

— Sharon Frant Brooks, MA, OTR/L, ATP/SMS, CRTS, Acclaimed Healthcare, Lakewood, N.J.

Loving the new version of the Smart Drive. It’s so simple to operate and much easier now that less has to be mounted to the wheelchair and there isn’t a separate battery. My clients appreciate the light weight and ease of loading into their vehicles.

— Lauren Rosen, PT, MPT, MSMS, ATP/SMS, St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital of Tampa (Fla.)

Smart Check
Smart Check makes it easy to ensure ROHO single-valve cushions are maintained and set up for maximum skin protection. Not only does this technology use a pre-set range for safe inflation (which was determined by collecting and analyzing data on hundreds of wheelchair users), but it also allows the clinical team to dial in a more precise safe range for individual users.

Having this available brings peace of mind to the wheelchair user and also gives clinicians more confidence in prescribing a ROHO cushion — knowing that SmartCheck is taking the guesswork out of achieving proper inflation and immersion.

— Lauren Rosen, PT, MPT, MSMS, ATP/SMS, St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital of Tampa (Fla.)

F3 & F5 Power Bases
I have to give it to Permobil for their new F5 and F3 platforms. The new system really is well done. I think the fact that all configurations will eventually be done off of the same platform is pretty impressive. My clients who have seen the bases are impressed by the styling as well. I can’t wait to have them try it out in the clinic.

— Lauren Rosen, PT, MPT, MSMS, ATP/SMS, St. Joseph’s Children’s Hospital of Tampa (Fla.)

Permobil
(800) 736-0925
permobilus.com

ROHO Inc.
(800) 851-3449
roho.com

MAX Mobility
(800) 637-2980
maxmobility.com

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Aquila’s SofTech: It’s What’s Inside that Counts

Today’s consumer products — from smartphones to GPS — have raised the bar not only for function, but also for convenience. A huge array of TV channels is not enough; we also want to decide when and how we watch.

Complex rehab technology, of course, is bound by different goals and clinical realities. Yet consumers — and the ATPs and clinicians they work with — carry expectations from a more straightforward retail realm, where consumers expect and often can have the best of both worlds.

Enter the new SofTech cushion from Aquila Corp., a product that bends the boundaries of what you might expect from high-end custom seating for your most at-risk wheelchair clients.

Familiar Functionality
If you know Aquila’s Airpulse PK2 (APK2) wheelchair seat cushion, many of SofTech’s functions will be familiar. The APK2’s main goal, and SofTech’s as well, is to keep wheelchair users active in their chairs even if they have a history of skin breakdown — and even if they have current pressure ulcers. Aquila accomplishes that by offloading weight from the injured area, while simultaneously inflating and deflating alternating air bladders inside the cushion.

As with the APK2, President Steve Kohlman says Aquila custom fabricates its new SofTech cushion.

“We do the same hand built customization as with the APK2,” he says. “Any shape can be built, and we can make any size [of] internal air bladders. We use a variety of foam densities to build the framework, and we have the ability to offload full time under the injury area, while simultaneously inflating and deflating alternating air bladders inside the cushion.”

And like the APK2, SofTech can be built in sizes from pediatric through bariatric. “There are no limitations,” Kohlman says, recalling a client who accustomed to sitting on a certain sofa. “We made a cushion for her that replaced one of the sofa sections — 32” wide by 24” deep.”

Raising the Bar for Convenience
Why introduce SofTech? Because it eliminates the external control module. SofTech’s electronic components, including batteries and pump, are entirely contained within the cushion.

“I’ve been trying to figure out a way to eliminate that second component because it’s a little bit bulky,” Kohlman says. “It adds several pounds to the chair, and you’ve got to have a place to mount it. It can be difficult reaching the controller to turn it off — and on, and to check settings. I thought, ‘There’s got to be a way to incorporate those components into the cushion.’ Kohlman says users can’t feel the components when they sit on the SofTech.

There are more improvements as well. “We have a feature called a moisture control unit,” Kohlman says. “It’s an electric fan that in the past had been attached to the front of the cushion. It would send a high volume of air across the upper surface of the cushion through air channels. What we’ve done is eliminated the separate external fan. It’s now embedded inside the cushion as well.”

Of the fan itself, Kohlman adds, “It’s smaller, lighter, more powerful and quieter than the previous version. It comes on automatically every time the pump turns on to inflate either of the two groups of air bladders of the cushion.”

Despite the internalization, SofTech is surprisingly lightweight — about 5 lbs. for an 18x18” cushion — and easy to maintain. It comes with a remote control for operating the cushion.

“The battery run time is 40-plus hours on a charge,” Kohlman says. “There is a receptacle on the remote for conveniently charging the battery, and there is an indicator light to show the status of the battery. The client sits on the cushion, presses the power switch on the remote, and the green indicator light on the remote tells them the battery is fine. The light changes color as the battery voltage drops.”

Thanks to a quick-charge feature, a fully depleted battery will take on enough juice in about 20 minutes to get its user through most of the next day. Consumers who get into the habit of charging their batteries every night won’t have to deal with low battery issues at all.

In keeping with the theme of consumer choice, the SofTech comes with a four-way-stretch anti-microbial cover, or an incontinence version that’s anti-microbial and anti-odor.

Ever the inventor, Kohlman is working on another SofTech option — an audible reminder to turn the SofTech off when the client transfers off. Consumers, after all, expect constant evolution, even from proven products. As can be seen from the SofTech’s added benefits, that evolution is a very good thing for wheelchair users and their seating & mobility teams. 📂

— Laurie Watanabe

mobilitymgmt.com
Scout 2
The new Scout 2 pool and spa lift features an adjustable seat pole, updated base and upgraded electronics to accommodate a higher weight capacity (up to 375 lbs.). The adjustable seat pole allows up to 25” of wall clearance on a 16” wide profile when using the pull-out legrest. The ADA-compliant Scout 2 has 360° of rotation for easier transfers.

Aqua Creek Products
(888) 687-3552
aquacreek.com

IGAT-180
This ADA-compliant pool lift uses water pressure power for easy functioning and reliable, low-cost operations. Water is recycled into the pool to replace evaporation. No batteries needed. Just connect a garden hose or plumbed-in line, and the lift is ready to use. The iGAT-180 lift has a 400-lb. weight capacity and offers a smooth, stable ride.

Aquatic Access
(502) 425-5817
aquaticaccess.com

Gel Pro Elite
A combination of fluidized gel and foam, the Gel Pro Elite car cushion helps to stabilize its user and maintain a proper seated position. The shell is made of high-density foam surrounding a segmented aqueous gel bladder. The bladder’s fluidized gel provides comfort and optimal pressure redistribution, including in areas where skin is close to the bone.

Blue Chip Medical Products
(800) 795-6115
bluechipmedical.com

Safety Glo
Thanks to a subtle glow-in-the-dark feature, the Safety Glo is easy to locate at night. Any time of the day, the bedrail helps users to reposistion or transfer into and out of bed, or to stand. It fits single to king-sized mattresses, and installs without needing tools. The glow feature reccharges via room or window light, but isn’t bright enough to disturb sleep.

Clarke Health Care Products
(888) 347-4537
clarkehealthcare.com

Halo ALC
The patented Halo ALC prevents lateral mattress movement and dangerous gap spaces that can cause entrainment. It also promotes mobility and increases environmental independence for consumers using bed sizes up to queen size. A universal height adjustment system accommodates different mattress and box spring heights; 500-lb. weight capacity.

Comfort Company
(800) 564-9248
comfortcompany.com

Cruiser X4
This K0004 wheelchair has a 300-lb. weight capacity and is available in 16”, 18” and 20” seat widths. The adjustable-depth seat can be changed from “16” to “18”, while 24” mag wheels on quick-release rear axles allow for 17”, 18” and 19” seat-to-floor heights. With swingaway footrests or elevating legrests, height-adjustable or flip-back arms in desk or full lengths.

Drive Medical
(877) 224-0946
drivemedical.com

Passport VPL
All-aluminum construction and powdercoated steel support legs make the Passport vertical platform lift lightweight (380 lbs.), but strong enough to handle up to 750 lbs. It offers 52” or 72” of lift and has a self-activating 24” entry ramp that automatically folds upward for safety when the VPL rises. Plug-and-play installation means no electrician is needed.

EZ-ACCESS
(800) 451-1903
ezaccess.com

Catalyst
The Catalyst lineup has five models in the K0004 and K0005 classes, with all featuring 7000 series aluminum for durability and lighter vibration dampening. The Catalyst has a transit weight of 21-24 lbs. and is available in seat widths of 14” to 22”. Seat depths range from 14” to 20”, with camber of 0°, 2° or 4°. Weight capacity is 250 or 350 (heavy-duty) lbs.

Ki Mobility
(800) 981-1540
kimobility.com
Multifold Ramp
Easy to handle and set up, this ramp unfolds to create a solid platform, then folds to be carried like a suitcase. An edge-to-edge traction tape surface works well with any drive configuration of power chair or scooter. The ramp is available in 5’, 6’, 7’, 8’, 10’ or 12’ lengths with a maximum rise accommodation of 14” (occupied vehicle) or 21” (unoccupied).

Prairie View Industries
(800) 554-7267
pviramps.com

Go-Go Folding Scooter
Ready to accommodate active lifestyles, this Go-Go folds easily for transport while still offering great indoor performance, a top speed of 4 mph and a 12.5-mile charge range. The Go-Go folding scooter has a weight capacity of 250 lbs. and fits well into closets or vehicle trunks.

Pride Mobility Products
(800) 800-8586
pridemobility.com

Forward Cushion
The Forward cushion features supportive contours surrounding the pelvis while reducing the pressure around at-risk bony prominences. A top visco elastic layer provides protection and comfort while conforming to the body’s shape. The contour, a spacer fabric outer cover, and an inner incontinence-resistant cover work to keep both cushion and user dry.

Ride Designs
(866) 781-1633
ridedesigns.com

Stimulite Silver
For users at lower risk for pressure sores, the ventilated, double-layered Stimulite Silver cushion can be used on a wheelchair, recliner or stadium seat to provide comfort, stability and support. It self adjusts by contouring to the user’s anatomy while equalizing pressure across the surface. Perforated honeycomb cells circulate air and evaporate moisture.

Supracor
(800) 787-7226
supracor.com

Mobile Home Accessibility
EZ Lift with optional surface mount anchor pictured.

EZ & Power EZ Lifts from Aqua Creek Products!
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The Total Solution for Pool and Spa Access
(888) 687-3552
www.aquacreek.com

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www.opensesamedoor.com

senior mobility marketplace
Roofer Ball
Walker Glides

These walker glides move smoothly over indoor surfaces like linoleum and wood floors, as well as rough, uneven surfaces outside. Molded internal stabilizers enable gliders to attach securely to walker legs while guarding them from sharp edges. Fits standard walkers with 1" tubing.
Therafin Corp.
(800) 845-734
therafin.com

TX Series 2
TiLite’s new TX ultralightweight wheelchair maintains optimal performance capabilities, but presents them in a folding platform. With a compact side profile for convenient transportation, the new TX seeks to make life easier for consumers who prefer a folding design, but it maintains a custom fit that’s unique to each user’s specifications.
TiLite
(800) 545-2266
telite.com

Reflex Cushion
A non-adjustable cushion for clients at moderate risk of skin breakdown, the Reflex features airfoam flotation and never needs adjustment. When the client sits, the Reflex’s built-in air-release device lets out a portion of air; it automatically reinflates when the user transfers off. The fixed amount of immersion prevents bottoming out.
VARILITE
(800) 363-7739
varilite.com

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True or False?
The clinical term for an ice cream headache (aka, brain freeze) is sphenopalatine ganglioneuralgia.

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