

Mike Adams 1953 – 2022

The PhysioNet family were shocked and saddened in February to learn of the untimely passing of our Chairman Mike Adams. Our thoughts are with Mike's family and particularly his wife Debbie who has kindly sent us this heartfelt obituary about a much liked and respected man.

Key to the life of Mike Adams was his commitment to community, wherever he felt he could make a difference. As a founder member of Horbury and Ossett Phoenix Rotary Club he met founder of PhysioNet, Peter Thompson, and immediately became involved with the charity.

Eventually as their Chairman he was often heard to say "Physionet may not be able to help everyone in the world but we can make a world of difference to one person". This principle drove him forward and he became a valued and well respected member of the volunteer team.

Mike summed up his life by his well used phrase:

***"Born in South Africa,
resident of Australia,
travelled on a British
passport, but call
myself an Irishman."***

Underpinning his globe-trotting lifestyle were strong and precious family values and when his Irish parents returned to Belfast when Mike was 10, they instilled in him the importance of his family, the ability to be kind and caring in difficult circumstances such as he experienced



during his teenage years in the troubles of Belfast and the encouragement to travel and enjoy new experiences in Australia and Indonesia as a mining engineer. Thus Mike became the man we knew; compassionate, respectful, fun loving and with the skills to lead a team of people to deliver good things - whether as the proprietor of a deli in his much loved home of Horbury, West Yorkshire or as the PhysioNet Chairman working with a great team of volunteers.

Mike's sudden and untimely death was a huge shock to everyone – his beloved family, his friends and fellow volunteers but there is one thing for sure – he would expect us all to carry on with our lives in the same way he conducted his – to be a well respected and caring person.

Valerie Thompson: Remembering a much treasured part of PhysioNet

In 2009 PhysioNet sent the first shipment to South Africa and Valerie Thompson served refreshments at all future loads until a year ago when she suffered poor health. Sadly Valerie died on the first of April peacefully at home with Peter, Caroline and David.



The 2009 pack with Peter and Valerie centre

Valerie lived a full and active life, building homes and memories with Peter across the world. Her charitable work was extensive as was her wise guidance and kind heart. She will be much missed; may she rest in peace.

On behalf of the PhysioNet family the Editor sends his sincere condolences to Peter, Chris, Caroline and David on their sad loss.

Therapy update

The therapy team has now increased to seven physios and one Occupational Therapist. Many of them manage to volunteer about once a month. We also have three husbands who have been lured in! Most of us deal with the children's equipment in the Yorkshire depot, and one physio is based at the Bristol hub. We just about manage to keep up with the flow of incoming equipment, but the storage area is now almost full because of the increase in shipping costs for recipient countries.

We are beginning to plan for travel again, starting in June with a trip to Kenya to make contact with four centres who have received small amounts of equipment through the generosity of the British Army based in Nanyuki. In the autumn two of the therapists will travel to Fiji to follow up on the vast amount that has been sent there over the years and also provide training in the use of equipment. They hope to visit some outlying islands to get an idea of their equipment needs.

A visit to Sri Lanka is planned in November to provide 'Train-the-Trainers' seminars. This will enable the recipient charity, which now provides therapy in 5 centres, to take on the responsibility of training new staff in the use of equipment. We are grateful for a recent development in support from Jenx. This is a children's equipment company, based in

Destination Syria

Samara Levy has received much praise for her charitable work in the war torn areas of the Middle East. In 2014 Samara was a stay at home mum with two young boys with no experience whatsoever. Following 'God's call' she's helped thousands in need with shipments of aid – most recently with the support of PhysioNet and the D3 Office Group.



D3 very kindly donated 25 cartons of masks (that's 50,000 items!). This formed part of a substantial load commissioned by Samara which was packed in Yorkshire in March. Our sincere thanks go to D3, and to Samara for getting PhysioNet involved.

*Samara's book:
Recommended reading for
anyone interested in sending
humanitarian aid to a
war torn country.*



Sheffield. For many years they been most generous with parts and discontinued stock. We are looking forward to exploring further support options with their therapists. A recent donation of two large reels of webbing from AAT means that we have a good stock for making straps and also plenty to send overseas. Thanks Gareth!

We still have a barn full of equipment which we need to send somewhere! IF you have any ideas do get in touch!

Heather



A 'barn full' of equipment

26 04 2022

Feedback from ...

...Fiji

From Joshco Wakaniyasi Pacific Disability Forum, Suva, Fiji:

Warm Pacific Greetings to PhysioNet. Fiji, through the support of PhysioNet received 3 x 40ft containers of much needed mobility aids and appliances including medical consumables. This was the most shipments in a single year, to the Spinal Injury Association, Fiji (SIA). The second consignment included over 200 boxes of linen and bedding for persons with disabilities affected by Tropical cyclone "Yasa". A team from SIA in partnership with other organizations toured the devastated areas and made sure that everything reached one of Fiji's most vulnerable and marginalize groups. Thank you, every time a container arrives, it is Christmas for us, and each distribution is a gift to the recipient and their families

Vinaka Vaka Levu and God Bless You All.

... South Africa

A 40 ft container was loaded in mid June 21 destined for the Rotary Club of Gately in East London, South Africa. Mostly wheelchairs and mobility/ amenity equipment, but also some computer tables and text/library books.

From Gordon Thompson a Past President of the Club:

The container finally arrived 30 August, delivered FOC from Port Elizabeth to East London by a local company MillTrans. There's a pic of Rtn Rajoo and me at the container. We have moved into a slightly larger warehouse and at a reduced rate. Rajoo plays

a massive part in maintaining the warehouse and delivery/ collection of heavy beds etc.



Rajoo and Gordon

A local newspaper printed a short story and immediately a number of desperate people contacted us for assistance. Thank you and your PhysioNet team for the ongoing invaluable support and allowing us to partner you in bringing some relief to the destitute in this way.

From Carol Waddell of Hope Schools:

Thanks for the email received. Sorry for the delay in getting back to you to say that we received the desks and books. Thanks so much for these items. The library books are fantastic and I know will be enjoyed by the students. I am attaching some photos of the library books. Thanks again for thinking of us at Hope Schools.



Hope Schools' library

Shipments

Oct 21–Mar 22

The following shipments were made between October 2021 and the end of March 2022. Over the 6 month period a total of 3,810 items including 558 wheelchairs and 394 items of therapy equipment were loaded into six 40 ft containers.



Zambia. This, only the second consignment to Zambia was loaded on 9th October. About a third of the shipping costs were met by the UK based sponsors, with the balance being provided by a Scottish funding charity.



South Africa. This consignment was loaded on 30th October for the Rotary Club of Durban Reservoir Hills. Funding to Durban port came from The Wheelchair Foundation (UK), with the main recipient being a large care home.



Gambia. Loaded on 4th December, the consignment helped to kit out a small new-build hospital in Banjul. Shipping costs were met by the recipient.



Fiji. This consignment was loaded from Exeter by PhysioNet (South West) on 4th December for the Spinal Injuries Assn. (SIA) in Suva. It was the twentieth consignment to Fiji since 2009 and the shipping costs were met by an Australian Aid grant.



Sri Lanka The consignment was loaded on 29th January for a C P children's facility in Colombo. Shipping costs were paid by the MJF Charitable Foundation, the charitable arm of the Dilmah Tea Company.



Syria. Loaded on 12th March, this shipment was commissioned by the Samara Aid Appeal and was the first consignment to Syria since 2018. More information about this appears elsewhere in this Newsletter

Third party shipments. Four collections totalling 160 items. Jubilee Outreach Yorkshire (JOY) took 42 wheelchairs for Yemen plus 85 items for Zimbabwe and 33 items of therapy equipment for Ghana,

...Zimbabwe

From Viola Dondo, Rotary Club of Harare Dawn:

I am happy to report that the container has finally arrived. Our club is grateful for the 40 wheelchairs that we received. We have had a lot of requests for wheelchairs from many needy people in an around Harare.

We are planning on having a get together to celebrate the 1,500th wheelchair at the end of the month.



Viola Dondo and Greg Pozzo, Rotary Club of Harare Dawn

News from Scotland

I know that I speak for everyone in Inverness Culloden Rotary Club in expressing our huge sadness at the loss of Mike Adams in February. Probably the best way of demonstrating our high regard for Mike is to give you an insight into how he introduced us to PhysioNet and the ensuing enormous amount of hospital related items we have delivered to York.

As a former fellow Rotarian at Mike's club (Horbury & Ossett Phoenix), I was contacted by him in 2019 to see if we in Inverness could help out by picking up, storing and transporting to York, up to 1,000 wheelchairs per year which were to be discarded by NHS Highland.

Since then we have collected hundreds of wheelchairs along with dozens of children's support frames and specialist wheelchairs from NHS Highland. The wheelchairs, where necessary, are refurbished at HM Prison in Inverness.

In addition, our dedicated 40ft storage container acts as the delivery point for MedAid in Aberdeen a charity run by medical students at Aberdeen University. They operate to ensure that any medical equipment which is surplus to requirements and which would otherwise be thrown out, is passed on to PhysioNet. We have handled many boxes of PPE and other such items from various sources in Scotland. After discussion with MedAid it was decided that several Emergency Kits received from a hospital in Orkney, would be sent to The Ukraine.



Wheelchairs and children's support frames collected by Culloden Rotary Club

In 2021 we assisted in an appeal for hospital bedding which PhysioNet were sending to Fiji and were fortunate to collect dozens of sheets and duvet covers from the local military barracks in Inverness, which they were planning to dispose of.

So as you will see, Mike's legacy just in the north of Scotland is enormous and we are proud to have worked with him and his team. His work will continue here for a long time to come.

Derek McRae.



PhysioNet SW has moved

All of the equipment held in temporary storage in Bristol has now been moved to the new storage facility at Brinkley.

Sarah Cowlam says: *"We have just moved into our new storage facility on the site of a decommissioned nuclear power station. There is plenty of space here and loading a container should be straight forward. There is a café on site with fantastic views down the Severn. We are going to be happy here."*

"Since moving I have made contact with The Cotswold Men's Shed who disassemble prosthetic limbs for Legs4Africa. They have agreed to support us by mending wheelchairs, and four wheeled walkers etc. That's two pieces of good news!"

Appointments

David Kaye was the PhysioNet Chairman from 2015-18 and has stepped in as Interim Chairman after the sad and sudden loss of Mike Adams.

Nigel Lyon was appointed a Trustee on 19 May 2021 (Editor: apologies for the lateness of this news.)



Judith Lyon was appointed Minutes Secretary on 19 August 2021. Welcome Judith.

DONATE or GET INVOLVED

Individual donations are very important to us. Our HSBC bank details are: **Sort code: 40-23-12. Account no: 72496194.** Alternatively donate via **Now Donate** using the link on our website. If you would like to get involved email Peter Thompson at peter.thompson@physionet.org.uk.

physionet.org.uk

