

PROSTHETISTS/ORTHOTISTS:

Ian Spencer: Morning Mr Dawney, come on in and take a seat

Patient: Thank you

Ian: I'm Ian Spencer, I'm head of Orthotics for Knowsley PCT. We provide spinal braces for people who've had back injuries or we provide simple knee braces for people who have sport injuries and they want to return to playing sport.

Ian Spencer to patient: We're here today to have a look at your feet and get some shoes made for you.

Ian: On more complex footwear, where it's affecting their life, they can't walk so we provide them with footwear which then allows them to return to daily work

Patient: My name is Bill Clarey, about six years of age I suffered from Polio and this left me with problems with my left leg and I've been wearing callipers ever since.

Ian: They're heavy to wear and people knew they had them on and other people could also see someone was wearing an orthotic or a calliper or a back brace even.

Patient: We came in 2007 to try a brand new pair of boots with Ian, and we must have been back to the manufacturers at least three times and it was in early December I came back in desperation really to say look, there's no way that these are going to fit me and I'm in trouble with them, they are totally uncomfortable, and Ian then suggested, would you be part of a pilot scheme to pioneer this new system of footwear.

Ian: I went out to look for new technologies that use CAD/CAM systems to provide perfectly fitting orthotics.

Patient: We stood on the bed that had the cameras, one on each corner, and one underneath as well, and the process to take photographs from all angles and then do complex measurements of the foot as well. Far more detail was taken to map out my foot and ankle area.

Ian: The technology now allows me to see a patient for initial consultation of 20 minutes, during that consultation they are measured and scanned for the footwear; they are then emailed off to a company that manufactures in Europe.

Ian Spencer to patient: These shoes will be ready for you in three to four weeks; we'll send you an appointment when they are ready for you.

Ian: To triaging referrals we are able to pass on some of the more routine referrals to the assistant practitioner. Also doing this, I'm using the new technology we're able to allow them to assess the patient, take the measurements necessary. It gives them greater job satisfaction; it gives them more of a care pathway to the patients, instead of just more clerical work they were used to beforehand. It brings more into their daily work; they really enjoy what they do. It means more clinical time for me, it means a greater clinical throughput and better quality of service at the end of the day.

Ian Spencer to patient: Your here today to have your new boot fitted.

Patient: Hopefully

Ian Spencer: OK, It's different from your other boot because the insole inside is more supportive and is made to fit your foot. We can see straight away it is a better fit.

Ian: And that is where the skill of the orthotist comes in, they know that they need more support in certain areas so we've built that into the footwear and that is hidden inside the shoes.

Patient (Don Allerston): Oh, the quality is excellent and it allows me to do more with my life now, I'm hoping I won't feel any pain. Once I've got used to it I'm hoping I won't feel any pain when I'm walking as I've have done in the past.

Patient (Bill Clarey): When Ian said you'll be able to walk without a calliper, quite honestly I didn't believe him, because I've been wearing a calliper for 66 years, either doubles or singles or other combinations of calliper. I was very hesitant.

Ian: Using the scanner is such an innovative new technology that has changed my daily life, I'm able to see more patients in the clinic, able to reduce my waiting times and see more patients on a whole. Also increase the capacity of the service by seeing more patients through outpatients.

Patient: To be able to walk without putting a calliper on every day is absolutely amazing and I'm truly grateful.