



12 March 2020

Australia - Japan Information Exchange on Innovative Allied Health Services and Research on People with Disabilities

Top Japanese researchers will attend a seminar at Multiple Sclerosis Limited (MSL) today to learn more about the innovative services developed by Australian allied health professionals to enhance the health and wellbeing of people living with multiple sclerosis (MS).

The leaders from the Department of Occupational Therapy, Tokyo University of Technology are visiting Australia for the first time as part of an international information exchange. Participating also in the seminar is Monash University.

The seminar is aimed at strengthening ties between the Japanese and Australian allied health communities through presentations and discussions on cutting-edge research in areas such as occupational therapy's role in community mental health and community mobility.

During the seminar, Associate Professor Kounsuke Tomori from the Department of Occupational Therapy at the Tokyo University of Technology will present the app he developed to support occupational therapy strategies.

The app has been used in Japan and other countries and allows both the client and the clinician to set functional goals to ensure occupational therapy interventions can be set up in a timely manner. The app is also being used to measure clients' satisfaction towards their achievements in the treatment, and ultimately increase their independence and quality of life.

MSL CEO John Blewonski welcomed the Tokyo team and said that there was much to gain for both countries from the cross-learning opportunity.

"Australia is leading the way in the region in delivering a range of services to support people with disabilities to live a meaningful life. This seminar is a great opportunity for allied health clinicians to come together to collaborate, exchange ideas, talk about their respective programs and explore research possibilities.

"Today we'll be discussing how people of all ages living with MS can maintain and improve their wellbeing whether through self-care, living in a safe environment, connecting with the community or increased participation in paid employment," said Mr Blewonski.

Mr Blewonski also said that allied health professionals are a vital part of our health service mix.

Associate Professors Pieter Van Dijk and Andrea Kirk-Brown from Monash Business School are attending the seminar and have praised MSL's commitment to conducting evidence-based multi-disciplinary research to evaluate their innovative allied health model of employment support service provision.

"When accessing MSL's allied health and employment support services, people living with MS can have confidence that these services are best practice because they are built upon evidence-based research," said Associate Professor Van Dijk.

This seminar highlights MSL's commitment to keep providing best-practice allied health and employment support services to help people living live well with MS.

(Ends)

About Multiple Sclerosis:

Multiple Sclerosis (MS) is a chronic, often disabling disease that randomly attacks the brain and spinal cord and for which there is no known cure. The average age of diagnosis is between 20 - 40 years of age, although children as

young as 10 have been diagnosed. Three out of four people diagnosed are women. One in 20 Australians will be touched by MS by a family member, friend or colleague who has the disease.

CONTACT FOR MEDIA ENQUIRIES:

For more information about the seminar and to arrange interviews, please contact:

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