



Polio Australia Incorporated

Representing polio survivors throughout Australia



www.polioaustralia.org.au

Reflections

Special Edition September/October 2012

“We’re Still Here!” Campaign

Polio Australia has been very busy planning our **“We’re Still Here!”** campaign this year and we now have around fifty polio survivors, their family and friends planning to join us at Parliament House in Canberra on Wednesday 31st October, most of whom are meeting with their local Federal MPs to deliver their message. You can see some of our ‘Campaign Heroes’ on Polio Australia’s website [here](#), send them your message of support [here](#), or read other people’s comments [here](#). We have also been encouraging as many Australians as possible to sign up to our online Petition [here](#) asking for urgent Federal Government funding for post-polio services, which we will be delivering on the day. So if you live in Australia and want to show your support, please sign up today, and ask everyone you can think of to do the same. (*Take precautions to protect yourself from any unwanted emails by unticking the box located under the ‘Postcode’ window.*) This will definitely be a Polio Awareness Month to remember!

“In any grass-roots campaign, building an ongoing base of support is as important as winning the ultimate goal.”
~ **Patricia Ireland**

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“Late Effects of Polio: Introduction to Clinical Practice”

To further mark our historic visit to Parliament House, Canberra, Polio Australia will be launching a new resource for healthcare professionals entitled the *“Late Effects of Polio: Introduction to Clinical Practice”*.

The resource will be launched at 10:30 am by the Hon [Catherine King](#) MP, Parliamentary Secretary, Health and Ageing (*and one of Polio Australia’s four [Parliamentary Patrons](#)*), with the invited audience comprising the fifty **“We’re Still Here!”** campaigners, Parliamentary Patrons, Parliamentary Friends of Polio Survivors, and senior staff from the Department of Health and Ageing.

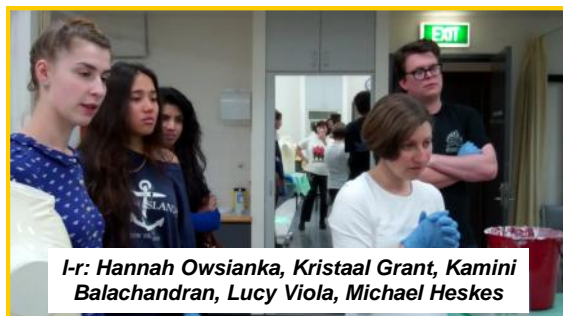
This new resource is designed to be an online Module and will be accessible to all health professionals, initially through Polio Australia’s website, but with the intention of promoting it to other health-specific websites in the near future. Being an electronic resource means this Module can be updated as required.

The *“Late Effects of Polio: Introduction to Clinical Practice”* has been developed in collaboration with volunteers from GlaxoSmithKline’s Medical Team through their corporate volunteering program. The Module was also reviewed by members of Polio Australia’s multidisciplinary Clinical Advisory Group, as well as the Committee of Management who represent the six state-based Polio Networks. It is intended that this resource be the first in a series of Clinical Practice Modules for managing various aspects of the Late Effects of Polio.

Resources like *“Late Effects of Polio: Introduction to Clinical Practice”* and the intended subsequent series of Clinical Practice Modules, are vital in assisting health professionals to access concise, well researched, best practice information in the diagnosis and management of polio’s late effects. However, it should be noted that Polio Australia received absolutely no funding for this Module - although an untold number of funding applications were submitted to both the Federal Government and philanthropic organisations over a three year period. Without the dedication of a suitably qualified, professional team of volunteers, this valuable resource would still be on the drawing board.

It is hoped that the *Late Effects of Polio: Introduction to Clinical Practice”* will provide an effective catalyst to generate funding for the subsequent series.

Touched By Polio Art Exhibition



l-r: Hannah Owsianka, Kristaal Grant, Kamini Balachandran, Lucy Viola, Michael Heskes



Anthony Francis

Angela Bull



Tommy and Steph Barnard

Polio Australia was delighted with the contribution provided by a dedicated group of La Trobe University's Prosthetics and Orthotics lecturers and 1st year students who got together during their term break to create 15 leg and 16 torso casts for Polio Australia's proposed "Touched By Polio" Art/Fundraising Exhibition.

Lecturers Stephanie and Anthony brought along their children Tommy and James Barnard and Noah Francis, and student Lucy also enlisted her children, Amy and Adam, who kindly offered their legs for casting. A fun day was had by all.

We are also very grateful to Bunnings, Hawthorn, who provided packaging material for the casts. Members of their staff have also offered to mount the leg casts before they are sent to the artists to be worked up into individual creations for exhibition and sale.

We would be very interested in hearing about any sponsorship arrangements that could assist with transporting these casts to and from the respective artists and to exhibition venues between Melbourne and Sydney. **Please contact Mary-ann on Ph: 03 9016 7678 / Email: mary-ann@polioaustralia.org.au with any information.**

Walk With Me

On Sunday, 9 September, Polio Australia teamed up with Scope at Federation Square, Melbourne to participate in Ability First Australia's annual [Walk with Me](#) awareness and fundraising activity. Polio Australia's National Patron, Dr John Tierney, was in Melbourne on the day to do the walk, and polio veteran, Fran Henke completed a 4 km 'walk' on her scooter around the foreshore in Hastings (Victoria), along with her two dogs. Between them, John and Fran raised a healthy \$3,670.00, which is a fantastic effort!

We are very grateful to John and Fran, and our heartfelt thanks go to everyone who has generously donated to support John, Fran and Polio Australia as we work on behalf of Australia's many tens of thousands of polio survivors.



Red Shoes Walking

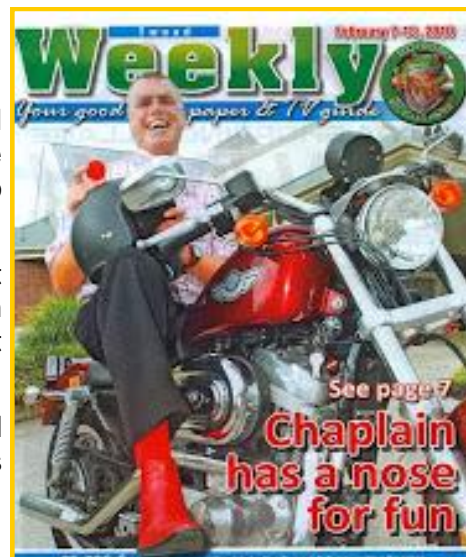
by Glenn Loughrey

In the shadow of Mt Kinabalu dominating the Sabah skyline, I and a small group of young people, parents and teachers, walked some 90 kms in the footsteps of the Australian soldiers who perished on the Sandakan to Ranau death marches at the end of WWII.

This is the second time I have taken part in this trek (walked in 2010) but the first time I completed the march as a polio victim, the first such person to do so. That is strange, you may say to yourself, surely you haven't just contracted polio in the last 2 years?

No, I haven't. But the answer is I only just realised I had polio as a child and no one told me that I did. Unbelievable? No. There are many others like me for whom this is their experience. I will tell you my story.

Read more here: www.redshoeswalking.com



Rehabilitation Research and Practice

Source: Email from Peter Willcocks - 24 September 2012

"Dear all,

I am sure that you would like to know [about] and congratulate Natasha Layton on her article "Rehabilitation Research and Practice" now available as open access on the [Hindawi Publishing Corp website](http://www.hindawi.com):

Natasha has worked hard over a long time to achieve what she has and I am proud to have been one of the many that she has inspired along the way."

[Natasha Layton](http://www.natashalayton.com) is also a member of Polio Australia's Clinical Advisory Group.

Polio Network Victoria

Source: Email from Frances Henke - 4 September 2012

"Hi everyone, please note the new web address for the Polio Network Victoria. Unfortunately we were unable to retain the old one so need to spread this one far and wide. It will be most important as a communication point for new people trying to find out about their condition, as well as health professionals, friends and families: <http://www.independenceaustralia.com/polio/>"

DisabiliTEA 2012

Source: [Every Australian Counts](http://www.everyaustraliancounts.com)

We're getting ready for DisabiliTEA 2012 where people come together, have a cuppa and support the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Register to host your DisabiliTEA on the website and receive an exclusive recipe from Julia Taylor, runner up MasterChef 2012!

You'll also receive a supporter pack in the post with invites, posters and other materials to help you organise your DisabiliTEA.

See you on October 26!



Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Australia: UN Reviewing Compliance

Source: DLA Piper - 7 September 2012

DLA Piper has provided pro bono support to a coalition of leading disability, human rights and community organisations to prepare a landmark report on the lived experience of people with disability in Australia.

For the first time ever, the United Nations is reviewing Australia's compliance with its [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](http://www.un.org/disabilities). The Disability Rights Now report follows three years of community consultation and research and makes 130 recommendations to the United Nations Disability Committee.

Read more [here](#).

Mobility Scooters

Source: [Product Safety Australia website](#)



Mobility scooters usually have three or four wheels attached to a frame supporting a chair and a steering wheel. People who are mobile enough to operate mobility scooters but are challenged when walking distances generally use these products. Mobility scooters are also known as motorised wheelchairs, motor chairs, buggies or gophers.

Most mobility scooters are safe if used appropriately. But there is an emerging trend in Australia of death and serious injury associated with the use of mobility scooters, particularly among older people. Death and serious injury can occur when users do not have the necessary strength, physical ability and understanding to operate and

manoeuvre mobility scooters safely, including:

- enough hand strength and movement to use the controls, steer and turn the scooter
- the ability to turn their head to look to the side and behind
- balance when riding on bumpy or rough ground
- the ability to sit for periods of time and change the position of their body when going up and down inclines
- sound vision and hearing to notice vehicles and pedestrians approaching and to judge distances
- the ability to concentrate for the entire period of the journey and to react quickly enough to stop and turn suddenly if necessary
- knowledge of safety procedures and the ability to exercise patience in crowded areas such as shopping centres.

Follow this [link](#) to the ACCC-NRMA report on mobility scooter usage in Australia (released on 6 September 2012).

Qantas airline introduces assistive booking app

Source: [Access Tourism](#) - September 19 2012

In a first, Australian airline [Qantas](#) has partnered with eSSENTIAL Accessibility™, a free assistive technology app that helps customers with physical disabilities book flights and other travel products. Anyone who has difficulty typing, moving a mouse or reading can now navigate the Qantas web site more easily with a range of free online tools such as a hands-free movement tracking system, onscreen keyboard with word prediction and page reader.

Find out more about [eSSENTIAL Accessibility™](#) or [download the app](#) now.

Too Early for Flowers: The Story of a Polio Mother

by [Kurt Sipolski](#)

Source: [Smashwords ebooks](#)

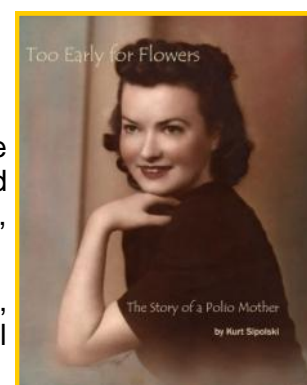
It was 1940. Too ambitious for her small Illinois town, Iris was determined to see the world with Washington, DC as the first stop. Her plans were curtailed when she married a handsome young soldier, and they had two boys. Tragically widowed and back home, her younger in braces from polio, Iris prepared herself for the challenges ahead.

Her girlish ambitions faded as she raised her boys. Jimmy was an accomplished athlete, and jealous of the attention his brother got. Gray was envious of his brother's physical abilities.

Distracting Gray during his nightly leg exercises, Iris fired his imagination with tales of world travel, the world she had missed seeing.

Years later, Gray was living in Australia, his braces long gone when the call came. Iris had a stroke, and no one but he can help her walk again.

Sassy Book Lover review: *“What a beautiful, touching story. Now I usually don't read books like this but I am so glad I read this one. Based on the true life events of Iris Sipolski and her family, Too Early For Flowers takes us on a journey of courage, love, heartache and determination. What touched me the most while reading Too Early For Flowers was the love and admiration Iris had for her sons. While raising them to be strong willed, independent young boys, she also managed to learn a few things from them too. I was glued to the book from the moment I started it and didn't stop until I was finished.”*



Polio This Week

Source: [Polio Global Eradication Initiative](#) - as of Wednesday 17 October 2012

Wild Poliovirus (WPV) cases

Total cases	Year-to-date 2012	Year-to-date 2011	Total in 2011*
Globally	171	467	650
- in endemic countries	166	96	341
- in non-endemic countries	5	207	309

Case breakdown by country

Countries	Year-to-date 2012				Year-to-date 2011				Total in 2011*	Date of most recent case
	WPV1	WPV3	W1W3	Total	WPV1	WPV3	W1W3	Total		
Afghanistan	25			25	40			40	80	01-Oct-12
Pakistan	41	2	1	44	116	2		118	198	25-Sep-12
Nigeria	80	17		97	28	9		37	62	22-Sep-12
India					1			1	1	13-Jan-11
Chad	5			5	111	3		114	132	14-Jun-12
DR Congo					84			84	93	20-Dec-11
Angola					4			4	5	07-Jul-11
Niger					1	1		2	5	22-Dec-11
CAR					1			1	4	08-Dec-11
China					17			17	21	09-Oct-11
Guinea						3		3	3	03-Aug-11
Kenya					1			1	1	30-Jul-11
Côte d'Ivoire						36		36	36	24-Jul-11
Mali						7		7	7	23-Jun-11
Congo					1			1	1	22-Jan-11
Gabon					1			1	1	15-Jan-11
Total	151	19	1	171	406	61	0	467	650	
Total in endemic countries	146	19	1	166	185	11	0	196	341	
Total outbreak	5	0	0	5	221	50	0	271	309	

Data in WHO as of 18 Oct 2011 for 2011 data and 16 Oct 2012 for 2012 data.

World Polio Day, October 24

Polio eradication partners around the world are marking the first World Polio Day since India was removed from the list of countries with active transmission of wild poliovirus. This development opened up a historic opportunity to complete polio eradication in the remaining endemic countries, powered by the World Health Assembly declaration of an 'emergency for global public health' and implemented through national emergency programmes run by the governments of Afghanistan, Nigeria and Pakistan.

Since World Polio Day last year, the number of new cases of polio has declined (from 467 at this time last year to 171 this year).



Photo: A young boy at school in Jigawa State receives an additional dose of oral polio vaccine during a September vaccination campaign targeting children in areas at highest risk of continued polio transmission - WHO/T. Moran

First suspected polio case in 21 months in India

Source: [Deccan Herald](#), New Delhi - October 11 2012

After remaining polio-free for 21 months now, India reported a suspected case in Bihar's Darbhanga district.

Sources say that the 18-month-old child is under detailed investigation and the results will come only after a week's time. The boy child has reportedly been immunised for polio 13 times and authorities are investigating the reason for the infection, sources told PTI.

"The case is under detailed investigation. It will take about a week to get the results. As a measure of abundant precaution, an immunisation drive is being carried out in 28 districts of Bihar early next week," an official of the Health Ministry said.

The case is suspected to be of wild poliovirus type 3 (WPV3) and Bihar has not had any case of WPV3 since January 2010. The WPV3 polio strain is found in Nigeria and Pakistan.

Sources said that the child is reported to have nutrition deficiency and further investigations are on.

Gunmen kill polio vaccinator in Pakistan

Source: *AFP* - October 17 2012

Unknown gunmen have killed a polio vaccinator in Pakistan's restive southwestern province of Baluchistan, highlighting resistance to the country's immunisation campaign after a Pakistani doctor was jailed for helping the CIA track down Osama bin Laden using a hepatitis vaccination program.

The shooting happened in the Killi Jeo area of provincial capital Quetta a day after a three-day campaign kicked off across the country, senior government official Tariq Mengal said.

The Taliban have banned immunisations in some areas, condemning the campaign as a cover for espionage since a Pakistani doctor was jailed after helping the CIA track down al-Qa'ida chief Osama bin Laden using a hepatitis vaccination program.

In yesterday's incident, a team of male and female vaccinators was engaged in a door-to-door campaign to administer polio drops to children below five years old when unknown gunmen on a motorbike shot dead a male volunteer, Mr Mengal said. Read the full article [here](#).

Ghanaian Polio Survivors Pioneer Skate Soccer in 'Rollaball' Documentary (Video)

by [Marcus Kwesi O'Mard](#) - Monday September 17 2012



If you've never heard of skate soccer, that could soon change. Skate soccer has taken hold in parts of West Africa, but a new documentary, *Rollaball*, is in the works that aims to elevate the sport and its participants to paralympic status.

Skate soccer is a fast and physical team sport which combines soccer, skating and handball. It is played by people with physical disabilities, who roll around the field (a concrete surface) on homemade skateboards, trying to put the ball in the back of the net.

Rollaball tells the story of the Rolling Rockets - a team of Ghanaian polio survivors - who find a new sense of purpose and dignity playing the sport. During the games, these skate soccer pioneers become sports heroes in their communities, despite living with the stigmas of polio and homelessness.



POLIO AUSTRALIA INCORPORATED

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Please pass this e-Bulletin on to friends and colleagues who have an interest in the late effects of polio

- ◆ If you are not the original recipient of this e-Bulletin and would like to receive it directly in future, please email us [here](#).
- ◆ If you do not wish to receive any further communication from Polio Australia, please email us [here](#).

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