

## CLINICIAN INFORMATION STATEMENT

### Research Project: HELLEN: A robot to assist patients to stand and exercise

#### Investigators:

Jodie Marquez  
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Nicola Postol



**Purpose of the project:** We hope to learn whether we can use a robotic exoskeleton to help people who have severe disability, as a result of an acquired brain injury, to stand and exercise and improve their function, quality of life and health.

**Explanation of the procedures:** This study will be conducted in the Hunter Building at the University of Newcastle. A researcher/physiotherapist, Nicola Postol, will obtain past medical history and take measurements of the participant's legs to make sure they are suitable for exercise in the robotic device (HELLEN). They will be put on a waiting list for 12 weeks so that we know what their baseline level of function is, then they will be in the study for 12 weeks. Participants will be required to travel to the University of Newcastle twice a week for 12 weeks. Each session will last for one hour. The amount of time they are in the robotic device will vary but may be up to 30 minutes each session. The robot is designed to help the participant stand and exercise in standing. They will also be given an individualised home exercise program to do in between sessions. They are encouraged to bring a family member/carer to accompany them. Outcome measures will be taken at the start of the study, after 6 weeks of the program, after the final session, and then again 12 weeks later.

**Risks and Discomforts:** There should only be minimal risks and discomfort associated with this research. During the therapy the participant will be strapped into HELLEN and there is a mild risk that they may experience skin reddening or areas of pressure under the straps. The researchers will check participants' skin regularly to make sure there is no skin irritation. Blood pressure will be monitored and an investigator will be in close attendance at all times.

**Costs:** There is no financial compensation for participation in this research. Tea and coffee will be provided for participants and their carers.

**Benefits:** We cannot guarantee that participants will receive any benefits from this study. However, we anticipate that by assisting them to exercise in standing they will gain some health benefits that are known to be associated with this type of activity.

**Referring participants to the study:** If you would like to refer a patient to the trial please contact our research assistant, Trish Leonard: phone - 0498479422.

To be eligible patients must reside in the Hunter region and score less than 4 on the walking item of the Motor Assessment Scale. Other criteria will be discussed on referral.

**Questions:** If you have any questions about the research at any time, you can contact the principal investigator: Jodie Marquez: 49212041.