

## Self Care Forum Self Care Innovations Award 2023

### Award Application Form and Eligibility

*The Self Care Forum is inviting applications of good practise and innovations in self care, personalised care, and social prescribing that have made a difference to individuals, groups, or organisations.*

#### Who can apply?

This invitation is open to everyone, whether you are an individual, a community champion, an employer, GP practice, Local Authority, school, college, business, or services organisation (public, private, or charitable). For a guide, see examples table below.

#### £500 bursary

The winner will receive a £500 bursary to spend on a self care related initiative and the top entries will be included on the Self Care Forum website to share best self care practise and excellence. The winners will be announced during the UK's National Self Care Week (13 – 19 November) as part of its launch and promotional activity.

Closing date for admissions: **31<sup>st</sup> July 2023.**

Examples of possible initiatives	If specific health-related conditions were targeted, they might include
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2022's Self Care Week activities</li> <li>• Signposting to services</li> <li>• Protecting mental health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Promoting self care to the shielded population</li> <li>• Self care for the elderly or other specific groups</li> <li>• Self care introduced by employers</li> <li>• Local authority population or community initiatives</li> <li>• Pharmacy initiatives</li> <li>• GP initiatives</li> <li>• Self care education by schools, universities, or community groups such as Scouts, Guides etc</li> <li>• Empowering vulnerable groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Long-term conditions</li> <li>• Obesity</li> <li>• Diabetes</li> <li>• General health</li> <li>• Nutrition</li> <li>• Exercise</li> <li>• Mental Health</li> <li>• Self-treatable conditions/minor illness</li> </ul>

Please use the form below to tell us about your self care initiative.

If you are typing directly into the form, do not worry if the box extends beyond the page – it will continue onto the next one.

#### Title and contact details.

Title of Initiative (the import and supply of the Deep Oscillation Personal Basic for self care of Lymphoedema)

Name of Organisation and Region (please state context, ie general practice, community care etc)
PhysioPod UK Ltd
Name of person/team/individual being nominated Mary Fickling and Julie Soroczyn (Sisters and Directors)
Contact name for entry Mary Fickling
Contact email for entry info@physiopod.co.uk
Timeframe and dates of initiative July 2007 to April 2023
Date of submission 21st April 2023

### Problem(s) and how you tackled them.

<p>What was the problem you were trying to tackle? (max 200 words)</p> <p>When we became the sole distributors for the UK in 2007 and Ireland in 2009 we realised that our therapy DEEP OSCILLATION® was perfect for reducing oedema, fibrosis and pain in Lymphoedema patients . Aside from multi-layer bandaging,compression garments and IPC Pumps there was nothing to help patients with this chronic condition, which affects 400,000 in the UK alone which could be used in their own home and abroad. It is also a treatment that a supportive other or carer can provide saving resources in the NHS lymphoedema clinic who also have this therapy.</p> <p>Target Patient Population: • Patients with Primary Lymphoedema and with cancer-related Secondary lymphoedema</p> <p>Lymphoedema is a chronic (long-term) condition that causes swelling in the body's tissue. This can lead to pain and a loss of mobility. Lymphoedema usually affects the breasts, arms or legs, although in some cases there may be swelling in the: trunk, head or genitals.</p> <p>Lymphoedema is caused by damage or disruption to the lymphatic system. One function of the lymphatic system is to drain excess fluid from tissues. If the lymphatic system is disrupted or damaged, it can lose this ability and the excess fluid will cause the tissue to swell.</p>
<p>Please give a brief description of your self-care innovation (max 250 words)</p> <p>We are the UK and Ireland exclusive distributors for Physiomed Elektromedizin AG. They hold the patent for DEEP OSCILLATION® and products. The DEEP OSCILLATION® Personal Basic which we supply to patients for self-treatment at home and abroad. The electrostatic electro-</p>

mechanical therapy is biologically effective to a depth of 8cm, breaking down protein solids and moving them to the lymph system for removal. This reduces swelling and improve skin quality so there are less recurrent bouts of cellulitis. It is applied to self through applicator/s in all areas of the body, including head and neck lymphoedema, limbs, breast, torso and genitalia. It is also used in NHS Lymphoedema Clinics and we are NHS approved suppliers for this product since 2012.

What challenges or barriers were you faced with and how did you solve the problems or overcome the barriers? (max 250 words)

When we brought this product in to the UK in 2007, no one knew about this therapy and we faced many doubting Thomas's ☹. We did not let this stop us. Our passion to help those living with Lymphoedema was always at the forefront of our minds.

We became NHS approved suppliers and attended many, many, conferences and meetings and trainings,. We became a trademarked company for supply and education.. We became corporate members of private groups of therapists to spread word of the therapy and showcased the therapy in many exhibitions and patient groups.

Therapists now use on their patients and patients have got to learn about the therapy, buying units for themselves. It has changed the quality of lives of those living with Lymphoedema. Julie (My sister) MIL had Lymphoedema and received no treatment whatsoever and died with a condition that no one treated. We were determined to get this therapy to the people who needed it and we have. We produce a free digital monthly newsmagazine where we keep therapists and patients informed of any new developments and we share self care stories of those using the therapy.

Did you collaborate with other partners or organisations, if so, who were they?  
Physiomed Elektromedizin AG, Germany (the manufacturers).

## Impact and outcomes

Who was the initiative directed at and what were the benefits to the targeted group or individuals? (max 250 words)

Lymphoedema – benefits, reduce volume, oedema, fibrosis, improve skin quality, reduce need for pain medication

Were there further benefits to you, your colleagues, your organisation or to a wider area such as the NHS? If so, what were they? (e.g improved job satisfaction, smoother running of facility, happier service users, better use of scarce resources, cost saving)

- Better treatment outcomes and the ability to self treat with the DEEP OSCILLATION ® Personal means reduced treatment times/reduced trips to the hospital/reduced hospital stays for intensive treatment if regular maintenance programmes are introduced.

- Lymphoedema sufferers can get back into better fitting clothes and footwear. In head and neck patients, a large swollen neck and face can drastically reduce confidence. DEEP OSCILLATION® reduces oedema quickly, promoting a patients confidence to the outside world. Reduced symptoms improve mood, lighter limbs promote mobility. Daily/social and leisure activities can increase and improve, with less dependence on others providing a better quality of life.
- Patient partners can get involved in the management of their partners condition. They can be taught easily the gloved hands application method or the applicators method . We know from patient feedback that this can bring couples closer together.
- Flights can exacerbate Lymphoedema, if self treating, patients can maintain their condition whilst away which would subsequently reduce urgent visits to outpatient clinics on return. With regular treatment DEEP OSCILLATION treatment skin conditions are maintained, and there is less likelihood of developing ulcers and cellulitis
- SOCIAL FACTOR - Staff Care: When available, Manual Lymphatic Drainage (when applied without DEEP OSCILLATION®) is physically demanding on the nurse to carry out and can result in back and arm/wrist pain. DEEP OSCILLATION® is effective to an 8cm depth through very gentle application, thereby saving any physical exertion and ultimately improving staff attendance with less sickness absence.
- ECONOMIC FACTOR - When installing DEEP OSCILLATION® into hospitals it facilitates the option of patient self treatment, so less time needs to be spent on one-to-one nurse to patient treatment. Units can also be loaned out for home treatment as mentioned above. Regular treatment and improved conditions could mean less admissions with Cellulitis - common with Lymphoedema patients with many cases requiring hospital admission for treatment with intravenous antibiotics
- ETHICAL FACTOR: More patients can be seen with more time spent providing the other essential elements of treatment: bandaging, measuring, advising on skin care, exercise and diet which can vastly improve and maintain patients conditions (Lymphoedema is a life long condition, so patient education is key, if the condition is to be managed correctly and be less of a drain on future resources with less hospital admissions).
- ENVIROMENTAL FACTOR: All DEEP OSCILLATION® products are made of nonpolluting and recyclable material helping to maintain NHS Enviromental Policy

## Evidence

- Please quantify the benefits of your initiative. (e.g. cost improvement, numbers of people helped, time saved)
- REDUCED NHS Guidelines on INTENSIVE THERAPY TIMES from 6 WEEKS TO 2/3 WEEKS

Current NHS guidelines indicate that a patient may receive intense MLD therapy sessions (every day for six weeks) - we believe this could be halved if DEEP OSCILLATION® was utilised at every hospital/Lymphoedema Clinic within the NHS framework vastly

reducing NHS resources. More regular outpatient self treatment /loan units to patients could even lead to the abolishment of intensive inpatient yearly treatment.

#### **PATIENT SELF TREATMENT COULD ALLOW BETTER USE OF THERAPIST TIME MEANING MORE PATIENTS COULD BE SEEN - BETTER USE OF RESOURCES**

Currently the majority of patients are given MLD by the therapist. However, some patients, depending on the severity of the condition and their mobility, could actually easily self treat with DEEP OSCILLATION® in a set aside therapy room or GP surgery treatment room, using hand held applicators. The Therapist time would be saved could be better utilised with seeing more patients; bandaging, measuring for compression garments, advising on diet and exercise, on skin care, checking any noted changes in condition and treating any other aspects arising from the condition and evaluating the patients general wellbeing both physically and mentally.

- **STUBBORN FIBROSIS CAN NOW BE TACKLED EFFECTIVELY**

From our dealings in hospitals and privately, stubborn fibrosis is a major problem for MLD therapists and Lymphoedema Nurse Specialists to tackle and in some cases they do not make any inroads into the problem in the time they have available (usually an hour) or in some cases, ever having an effect. Healthcare professionals now report making a difference within 20 minutes to solid, fibrotic limbs.

#### **PROACTIVE TREATMENT RATHER THAN REACTIVE TREATMENT FOR LYMPHOEDEMA**

If DEEP OSCILLATION® treatment could commence day one post cancer surgery there is evidence that secondary lymphoedema may not occur promoting NHS resource releasing for the long term.

See below:

**CONSERVATIVE THERAPY FOR A CARCINOMA OF THE BREAST FOLLOWED BY EARLY TREATMENT WITH DEEP OSCILLATION® THERAPY - Authors: Schönfelder G., Berg. D. (1991): Publication: Gynäkol. Prax. 15, 109-122. Results & Conclusions: The authors conclude that MLD assisted by DEEP OSCILLATION® has significant better results than MLD alone. As the therapy can be applied from the first day after surgery a prophylactic neofacilitation and neof ormation of lymph pathways seems to be possible. This can have effects on the prevention of a secondary lymphoedema. A follow-up of the working group proved a lower rate of secondary lymphoedemas in the group treated with DEEP OSCILLATION®.**

Do you have formal or anecdotal evidence of success? (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, informal feedback?)

<https://www.physiopod.co.uk/references.shtml> and <https://www.physiopod.co.uk/long-term-condition-testimonials.shtml>

What was the cost of this initiative in terms of time, money, and/or other resources? Please be as specific as you can

We have to be insured to bring this therapy into the NHS. We pay an annual premium of over £1000. We have had to attend many events/exhibitions/trainings since 2007, I would anticipate this at £4000 per year. We have created a website which is maintained monthly and we have website hosting. We basically have all the running costs of a small business 😊

### And, finally...

Are there any lessons you learned or top tips that you would like to share? (max 200 words)

Listen to everyone along the way but don't heed the advice of anyone who tries to stop you on your mission to help others.

Did you use any of the Self Care Forum's resources? If so, please specify.

I wasn't a member then

Please provide the social media addresses of all those who were involved in the initiative.

<https://www.facebook.com/physiopod> <https://www.physiopod.co.uk/>

Why do you think this initiative deserves to win the award? (Max 100 words)

Because it has actively changed the lives of those living with lymphoedema on a daily basis. They don't have to wait for anyone, they can reduce swelling and fibrotic build up/tightness in 20 mins or less of application. Partners can also get involved with treatment.

Do you have an image, materials or weblinks to supplement your application? Please supply no more than 2 images which may also be used to promote your application if successful. Ensure images are square (ie height/width dimensions are the same). Image of unit attached and our logo.

Your application may be chosen to be uploaded to the "best practise" page of the Self Care Forum website to share self care excellence so that others might use the learnings in your application. We will also include your email address so that people may get in touch with you. If you would prefer that your application and/or email address was NOT chosen then please make it clear in the box provided below.

We look forward to receiving your application. Please email your completed form to:

[selfcare@selfcareforum.org](mailto:selfcare@selfcareforum.org)

### About the Self Care Forum

The Self Care Forum supports organisations in helping their communities and service users better understand how to self care. It is the leading independent provider of best practice around self care and the 'go-to' place for top quality resources, current opinion, and self care interventions in the UK.



It is a charity and aims to improve public health by promoting self care at national policy level. It creates resources, runs the UK-wide National Self Care Week, and supports robust research evidence.

For more information about the Self Care Forum please go to the website. [www.selfcareforum.org](http://www.selfcareforum.org).