

## DVD TO HELP YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

Physiotherapists at La Trobe University have produced a DVD to help young people with cerebral palsy.

The DVD helps young people with cerebral palsy and their families, health professionals and fitness specialists, to use strength training with weights to overcome muscle weakness.

The DVD puts into every-day practice the results of research carried out over the past four years by a team which included the Head of La Trobe's School of Physiotherapy, Professor Karen Dodd and senior lecturer, Dr Nicholas Taylor.

Research by Professor Dodd and Dr Taylor led to the development and successful testing of a home exercise program using simple equipment for young people with cerebral palsy.

They worked with Professor Kerr Graham, Director of the Hugh Williamson Gait Laboratory at the Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne to demonstrate for the first time the beneficial effects of strength training. Previously, physiotherapists had believed such treatment had no benefits.

They published 15 research papers on various aspects of the research in peer-reviewed journals around the world. The new treatment significantly changed thinking about the management of cerebral palsy.

'This DVD is an example of translating basic research into every day practice,' said Professor Dodd, a world authority on exercise treatment of people with injuries or sickness resulting from brain damage.

'The results of our research now have practical application in the real world—which should be the ultimate aim of all medical research.

'Our DVD provides instructions about simple, effective workouts and valuable information which shows how strength training fits with current management of cerebral palsy,' she said.

The DVD was produced by La Trobe University with support from the Australian Barbell Company and the Clinical Centre for Research Excellence in Gait Rehabilitation, and was made by the University's multimedia production unit, COMET.

Now on the market, the DVD has received recognition both in Australia and abroad. It was a finalist in the Victorian State Department of Sport and Recreation's Go for

Your Life awards. It has also been nominated for the prize for the best audiovisual product at the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine 6th Annual Meeting in Boston, USA in September his year.

Further information on how to order a copy of the DVD can be obtained from [denise@australianbarbell.com.au](mailto:denise@australianbarbell.com.au)

ends

Further information: Professor Karen Dodd, tel.: +61 3 9479 5723 or La Trobe University Marketing and Communications, tel.: +61 3 7479 2316.

