

NOTES AND NEWS

FIELD STUDY OF UPPER-EXTREMITY PROSTHETICS

The Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service of the Veterans Administration has launched a clinical application study of powered upper-extremity components involving, at the outset, the Veterans Administration Prosthetics Center and the Northwestern University powered systems. Some 130 subjects will be fitted by 14 VA clinics throughout the country. In addition a few cases will be fitted at Fitzsimons General Hospital and Valley Forge General Hospital. Personnel from these clinics as well as commercial prosthetists who provide services for these clinics participated in an orientation course held in Chicago in cooperation with Northwestern University during the week of April 5-9, 1971.

As other new components or complete prostheses are developed, they will be introduced into the study. It is intended to cover such data as prescription indications, fitting considerations, amputee reactions, maintenance problems, training requirements, and conformity of the manufactured device to establish standards and specifications.

At a later time a nationwide retrospective survey will be initiated to develop data on numbers of upper-extremity amputees, their levels of amputation, their prosthetics history, and their rehabilitation status.

"NEW CONCEPTS IN LOWER-EXTREMITY ORTHOTICS SEMINAR"

The first seminar to offer lectures and instructions in plastic below-knee, knee, and above-knee orthoses was given, April 28-30, 1971, by New York University Medical Center's Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine, of which Dr. Howard A. Rusk is chairman.

New design and alignment concepts for plastic orthoses, as well as a review of normal and pathological locomotion, were presented at the seminar. Biomechanics of the foot, ankle, and knee were discussed, and an explanation of prescription and checkout of plastic orthoses was given.

Although the seminar was open to individual physicians, surgeons, certified orthotists and prosthetists, and physical therapists, preference was given to those attending as a team.

MURPHY HONORED

From many nominations submitted by Federal agencies, Dr. Eugene F. Murphy, Chief, Research and Development Division, PSAS, was recently selected as one of ten finalists for the Outstanding Handicapped

Federal Employee of the Year Award. At a ceremony held in Washington, D.C., on March 25, 1971, Mrs. Richard M. Nixon presented plaques to each of the finalists. Miss Alice Chancellor, an electronics engineer employed by the U.S. Army, who is a bilateral leg amputee with vision in only one eye, was selected as top winner.

At a ceremony held later that day at the Veterans Administration Central Office, Dr. Murphy was presented with a Meritorious Service Award by Deputy Administrator Fred B. Rhodes (Fig. 1). The award read as follows:

MERITORIOUS SERVICE

This certificate is awarded to

EUGENE F. MURPHY, PH. D.

in recognition of his outstanding leadership of the Veterans Administration's program of research, development, evaluation and specialized education in the field of prosthetics and sensory aids. Although this program is conducted primarily for the benefit of disabled veterans, the knowledge gained from it has been disseminated throughout the world and has had enormous effect on the lives of handicapped persons because their employability and self-sufficiency have been enhanced by the new and improved devices developed through it. Severely handicapped himself, he has dedicated himself to helping others. An international leader in this field, his work reflects great credit on him, the VA, and the Federal Government.

Given at Washington, D.C.

This 25th day of March, 1971

DONALD E. JOHNSON

Administrator of Veterans Affairs



FIGURE 1.—Meritorious Service Award presented to Dr. Eugene F. Murphy, Chief, R&D Division, PSAS, by Mr. Fred B. Rhodes, Deputy Administrator, VA, Mr. Rufus H. Wilson, Associate Deputy Administrator, and Dr. Marc J. Musser, Chief Medical Director.

NEW PLASTIC DISK FOR "TALKING BOOKS" STUDIED BY AFB

Subscribers to the Talking Book program of the Library of Congress may soon benefit from a new procedure by which they would not have to return recorded periodicals to their regional libraries. It all depends on a 1-year, two-part study now being conducted by the American Foundation for the Blind for the Library's Division for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.

The Foundation is researching a process of a new lightweight plastic recording whose production cost and inexpensive mailing would obviate the submission of the records to more than one reader. The reader thus could listen to the publication at leisure, and could dispose of it or keep it.

The Foundation has been working on such a disk for some time, with a preliminary report having already been submitted to Washington, D.C. A final report will go to the Library in the late spring. The Library of Congress and the Foundation are looking forward to the possibility that a lightweight plastic disk, such as that currently being researched, would

save time, money, and effort, not only in production and mailing costs, but also in handling at the regional libraries.

There is also the long-range possibility that the plastic disk could ultimately be used in the production of Talking Books.

NYU STAFF OPERATE ORTHOTICS FACILITY ABOARD S.S. HOPE

Responsibility for the manning and operation of the orthotics facility aboard the S.S. HOPE, which is scheduled to remain in Jamaica for 10 months, has been taken over by Prosthetics and Orthotics, New York University, with the arrival of Bill Peters in Kingston, Jamaica, on January 15, 1971. As is well known, HOPE, staffed by U.S. personnel, participates in the development of emerging nations by elevating their health standards through education and by promoting friendship and understanding.

Dr. Sidney Fishman, Program Coordinator, announced that NYU will provide four faculty members for this joint effort, in addition to Mr. Peters, all of whom are on the full or part-time NYU prosthetics and orthotics staff. They are: Ivan Dillee, George Hartmann, Richard Hanak, and Clauson England. Each will serve a 2-month period, not only providing clinical orthotic services for patients aboard ship, but also spending about half-time instructing prosthetist trainees at the Mona Rehabilitation Center in Kingston, the only prosthetic and orthotic facility on the island.

The major goal of the program in Jamaica is the establishment of a permanent, well-organized, productive prosthetic service at the Mona Rehabilitation Center, which will make modern prostheses available on the island, eliminating the necessity for importing these appliances.

AGING BLIND SYMPOSIUM IN L.A. SPONSORED BY AFB

The urgent need to improve benefits for the nation's aging blind population was the keynote theme of a public symposium held in Los Angeles on April 23 under auspices of the American Foundation for the Blind. The symposium, which was held at the Ambassador Hotel, included as participants leaders in the fields of medicine, aging, health, social welfare, and government.

The theme of the symposium provided an opportunity for an exchange of ideas on the problems, progress, and prospects in planning services for the elderly blind and visually impaired.

The National Society for the Prevention of Blindness, according to its most recent figures, estimated that 47.2 percent of those declared legally blind were over the age of 65. The same estimates revealed a total of 435,000 legally blind in the United States.

AFB's public meeting was hosted by the AFB Los Angeles Area Committee, under the chairmanship of Miss Flora Marks.

For two days immediately preceding the symposium, on April 21 and 22, the Foundation's National Task Force on Geriatric Blindness held its third annual conference at the Los Angeles Ambassador. The task force heard progress reports from the Foundation on recommendations made by the advisory group relevant to national planning on services for elderly blind. Garson Meyer and Dr. Robert Morris, cochairmen of the task force, presided at the April 21-22 meetings.

**NEW PUBLICATION "THE GERIATRIC AMPUTEE—PRINCIPLES OF
MANAGEMENT" AVAILABLE**

"The Geriatric Amputee—Principles of Management" is a consolidation of papers developed from the proceedings of a Workshop on the Geriatric Amputee, held at the National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C. It represents the cooperative efforts of a panel of experts who support basic principles in the management of the geriatric amputee.

The publication cost is \$3.50, and the book may be purchased from:

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Payment must accompany orders that are \$5.00 and under.