



Dear People with a Spinal Cord Injury, Clinicians and Partners,

My colleagues at Neuroscience Research Australia and Prince of Wales Hospital appreciate the efforts of the SOS, SCIPT and other clinicians and consumer groups to promote Inspiratory Muscle Training (IMT) in the Spinal Cord Injured (SCI) population.

A double blind controlled study which we recently published: <http://thorax.bmj.com/cgi/content/full/thoraxjnl-2019-213917?ijkey=hwjScEDrp7sUL2o&keytype=ref>, although in a relatively small sample of 62, showed active IMT improved maximal inspiratory pressures and it was likely to reduce respiratory complications if training continued longer term.

Furthermore, there were fewer respiratory symptoms as measured by the St George Respiratory Questionnaire for the active training group.

With the growing challenges to people with SCI and clinicians, and with this new research evidence, we believe it would be great to recommend and encourage prophylactic IMT for people with tetraplegia and at-risk paraplegia. Although there is limited quality evidence to suggest that it prevents respiratory complications, it can certainly promote stronger respiratory muscles and improve lung function.

This along with promoting the Fluvax may assist respiratory health during the coming season.

We would encourage carers and patients to continue good hygiene and infection control practices (for person, assistant and device) while performing IMT, including washing hands before using the device, and not training if there is a current infection present.

We will be considering ways to make the respiratory muscle training easier to implement longer term. As these develop, we will provide further news.

Yours,

Bonne Lee, Claire Boswell-Ruys, Liz Bye, Fernanda DiNatal, Chaminda Lewis, Simon Gandevia and Jane Butler

Prince of Wales Hospital and Neuroscience Research Australia