FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Otto Bock HealthCare Releases White Paper on Sensor Walk Microprocessor-Controlled Stance Control Orthosis

Developed by Otto Bock HealthCare in conjunction with Mayo Clinic, the Sensor Walk knee-ankle-foot orthosis (KAFO) is designed to improve quality of life for patients by making it easier and more secure to walk when the patient exhibits knee instability during weight bearing. An estimated 989,000 Americans wear a KAFO, according to a 1997 study. This includes people diagnosed with polio, stroke, neuropathies, spinal cord injuries, neurovascular trauma, spina bifida, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy and other neurological or development defects. Through state-of-the-art technology, Sensor Walk enhances stability during stance phase and provides stumble recovery by anticipating the need for stance stability even before the foot is in contact with the ground during the swing phase of gait.

As the report points out, the introduction of stance control orthoses is the first significant advance in KAFOs since braces switched from metal and leather to thermoplastics in the 1970s, and Sensor Walk is the only stance control orthotic with all of the following:

Stance control release as the foot unloads, allowing a more natural gait because knee extension is not required to unlock the joint;

Initiation of stance control in mid-swing, before contact with the ground, to make walking more secure and to provide stumble recovery;

A heavy-duty design for a weight limit up to 300 pounds;

Capability to manage knee flexion up to 15°.

To test the Sensor Walk prototype, Mayo Clinic's Motion Analysis Laboratory conducted several studies, all but one involving actual KAFO users. Five articles based on

Mayo Clinic research document the device's performance and the real-life advantages it offers to patients who need a KAFO.

Research highlights detailed in the white paper include the instant improvement for new KAFO users, more normal knee motion, accommodation of more patients and significant gait benefits including a more energy-efficient gait. Mayo Clinic research also indicates that the Sensor Walk prototype instilled increased patient satisfaction through performance on KAFO users' three most important criteria of effectiveness, operability and reliability.

The full text of the Sensor Walk white paper is available for review online at http://www.stancecontrolorthotics.com.

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Minnesota-based Otto Bock HealthCare LP was established in 1958 as the Americas corporate headquarters of Otto Bock HealthCare, GmbH, based in Duderstadt, Germany. Otto Bock has more than 3,800 employees worldwide and produces over 25,000 types of prosthetic and orthotic components, mobility and rehabilitation products, and is the U.S. leader in delivering continuous passive motion (CPM) services and related therapies. (www.ottobockus.com)