

From Around the Network

Judith R. Fischer, IVUN Information Specialist, info@ventusers.org



Swift™ LT by ResMed

For more on this diaphragm pacing system, go to articles in past issues of *Ventilator-Assisted Living*:

www.ventusers.org/edu/valnews/val17-1.html
www.ventusers.org/edu/valnews/val20-3.html

New Products

Swift™ LT is a new nasal pillows interface in the Swift series from ResMed Corp. It features a patented rotating barrel and dual-wall pillows that can be adjusted for several nasal angles without affecting the seal. The pillows are designed to reduce nasal dryness. www.resmed.com

SNAPP 2.0 is a direct nasal interface from VIASYS Healthcare Inc. redesigned to be quieter and to offer a smoother seal. www.viasyshealthcare.com

NeuRx DPS™ Approved for SCI

The FDA recently approved Synapse Biomedical's NeuRx™ Diaphragm Pacing System (DPS) for use with individuals with high spinal cord injury. Clinical trials began in 2000, and 50 patients have received the implant.

The NeuRx device is implanted through minimally invasive laparoscopic surgery and provides electrical stimulation to the diaphragm, forcing it to contract to allow the lungs to expand and fill with air. It enables people with SCI to breathe for up to 24 hours per day without the use of a ventilator.

Developed by surgeon Raymond C. Onders, MD, at Cleveland's University Hospitals, the device is also in trials with individuals with ALS. Dr. Onders has also trained surgeons around the country, Canada and in Europe in the implantation of the device. www.synapsebiomedical.com



The External Pulse Generator (EPG) provides repetitive electrical stimulation to the implanted electrodes to cause the person's diaphragm to contract and cause him/her to draw breath in a manner similar to natural breathing.

Reuth Conference Abstracts

"Chronic Ventilated Patients: Multi-Disciplinary Management from ICU to Home." Abstracts and photos from this international conference held in June in Tel Aviv, Israel, are now available online: www.congress.co.il/ventilation-reuth08

Travel

The US Department of Transportation amended the 1986 Air Carrier Access Act with regard to "nondiscrimination on the basis of disability in air travel." Effective May 13, 2009, the final rule adds accommodations for travelers who use oxygen and other respiratory assistive devices (these must meet FAA requirements).

All airlines will be required to allow travelers using ventilators, CPAP units, and portable oxygen concentrators to be carried on board, stowed or used during flight. Passengers using oxygen devices will not be required to have attendant assistance, and they will be able to use their devices during all phases of a flight.

<http://airconsumer.ost.dot.gov/rules>

Competitive Bidding for Vent Equipment Delayed

In the last issue, *Ventilator-Assisted Living* reported on a Medicare competitive bidding system, effective July 1, 2008, and its potentially harmful effects for bilevel ventilator users. On July 15, 2008, Congress overrode President Bush's veto of the Medicare bill, H.R. 6331, the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008. This action terminates competitive bidding contracts under Round One and delays program implementation for 18 months. It also requires The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) to contact home health care companies to enable them to correct the paperwork discrepancies. All suppliers must be accredited by October 1, 2009. A separate ombudsman at CMS will deal with supplier and beneficiary issues related to competitive bidding.

Thanks to the delay in implementation, many flaws in the proposed system can be corrected so that Medicare recipients who need to begin using a bilevel unit can receive the appropriate equipment and services from an accredited home health care supplier.

Back story:

www.ventusers.org/edu/valnews/VAL_22-2su08p9.pdf

Tennessee Long-Term Care Community Choices Act

Effective July 1, 2008, Tennessee's long-term care act allows thousands of institutionalized individuals to choose to live in the community without jeopardizing the vital support services they need to lead independent lives. Before enactment of this act, Tennessee spent \$87.31 on nursing home services for every dollar spent on home and community-based services.

The legislation encourages TennCare (Tennessee's Medicaid program) to develop different systems to pay for personal assistants hired and managed directly by the consumer. These self-directed systems would pay for personal assistants hired and managed directly by the consumer.

TennCare is mandated to fund a relocation system to provide targeted case management for a minimum of 200 individuals over five years and contract with community-based organizations through grants, state contracts, or fee for services payment.

One of the main benefits for ventilator users is allowing non-nurses to perform services, such as trach and vent care.

The Memphis Center for Independent Living staff and Executive Director Deborah Cunningham (who uses a ventilator due to post-polio) are to be applauded for their hard work over many years to make this act a reality.

www.mcil.org/mcil/log/2008/052208s.asp

Pediatric Trach Website

Julie Leahy's daughter uses a trach due to Moebius syndrome. "I started my own support group in fall 2004 in Massachusetts for families of children with trachs and ventilators (www.trachcare.org). We have a website and meet regularly. I believe in helping others and making sure our children get the best care that they need."

Julie's email: jpl2002@verizon.net; www.moebiussyndrome.com ▲