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Physiotherapist for people with cerebral palsy a finalist in national primary health awards

A physiotherapist who works with children and adults living with cerebral palsy has been named a finalist in the 2013 HESTA Primary Health Care Awards.

Dayna Pool — of The Centre for Cerebral Palsy in Coolbinia, Western Australia — has been recognised as one of four finalists in the Young Leader category, for providing specialist clinical support in movement analysis and supporting staff with their professional development.

The awards recognise the dedication and professionalism of those working in primary health care, including physiotherapists, dentists, pharmacists, therapists, GPs, rehabilitation professionals, health educators and medical practice managers.

Ms Pool works across all therapy programs at the Centre, including the Early Intervention, School Age and Adult Independent Living Programs, as well as at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children.

She has developed expertise across a broad range of physiotherapy interventions for children and adults with cerebral palsy and similar conditions, including strength training, equipment prescription, gait analysis, treadmill training, electrical stimulation and spine management. She has used her knowledge and skills to provide training for therapists in Australia and when volunteering in Malaysia.

Ms Pool is currently conducting scientific research on a new physiotherapy intervention tool: the *Walk Aide*[®] functional electrical stimulation device, which uses electrical stimulation to activate muscles to improve the walking ability of children with hemiplegia. This research is part of her PhD studies through the University of Western Australia.

Ms Pool strongly believes in continuing training and education. She initiated, and continues to run, tutorials for staff to ensure they have the knowledge and skills required to do their job effectively. In 2011, Ms Pool helped organise a professional development course for therapists — the Bobath Neuro Development Foundation Course — with lecturers from the UK, New Zealand and across Australia. Since then, she has coordinated other professional development events for therapists in Western Australia.

The judges commended the nomination, described Ms Pool as an intelligent and caring practitioner with a selfless attitude.

Ms Pool and the other finalists will be flown to Melbourne for an awards dinner on 6 June 2013, when the winners will be revealed.

A \$30,000 prize pool will be shared among the winners, courtesy of long-term HESTA awards sponsor, ME Bank. The Young Leader and the Individual Distinction Award winners will each receive a \$5,000 ME Bank *EveryDay* Transaction Account and a \$5,000 education grant. The Team Excellence Award winner will receive a \$10,000 development grant to put towards the implementation of their program or initiative.

HESTA is the leading super fund for health and community services, with more than 750,000 members and \$22 billion in assets. More people in health and community services choose HESTA for their super.

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