Students work out kinks with new machine

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A new spinal therapy machine, designed to help treat patients after surgery, was tested last week by Sacramento State physical therapy students.

The Spine Six Biomotion Spinal System was made to help improve the care of patients coming from spinal surgery by moving and exercising the spine without stressing any other parts of the body, said Clare Lewis, assistant professor in the Department of Physical Therapy.

"Movement is important for a patient in the recovery process," Lewis said.

The free, student-run health clinic, organized by Lewis, operates in Solano Hall, Room 3003, and the students were given the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the system.

It's important that physical therapy students know how to use the machine because MediCepts, Inc., the company that developed the system, is planning to place them in hospitals throughout California, said Susan McGinty, director of the
Students are given the opportunity to experience the machine in case they are required to operate it during internships, and also lets the university determine if the machine can benefit patients, McGinty said.

Sarah Krogh, a physical therapy graduate student and health clinic employee, sat in the system and used it herself. Krogh said it was a device that is for someone in a lot of pain whose movement is very limited.

"(It's) relevant to someone with a lot more acute pain," Krogh said

Priscilla Lamb, a physical therapy student and health clinic employee, had the chance to examine the system, and later on in the week used the machine on one of her patients.

"It has a good range of motion and is really good for post-surgical patients where their movement is limited," Lamb said.

One of the patients that used the system, Anne Cheng, the administrative support coordinator for the Educational Opportunity Program, was in a car accident in January and was referred to the health clinic after her previous therapy wasn't helping.

After using the system, Cheng said her muscles felt tired but not sore, and that the movements of the machine felt the same as some of the lower back exercises she was given at the health clinic.

Pacific Surgical and Rehabilitation, the company who owns the right to the Spine Six system on the West Coast, wanted to get feedback from students regarding how to incorporate the machine in their physical therapy practice, said Mike Simon, distributor for Pacific Surgical and Rehabilitation.

The system has certain advantages, providing consistent movement of the back that doesn't aggravate the patient, Simon said.

"The Spine Six has certain movements that you can't do with normal physical therapy," Simon said.

The system has been sold to Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles and Scripps General Hospital in La Jolla.

Pacific Surgical is working to distribute the system to major hospitals in California within this year, and to the university for educational purposes, Simon said.

The demonstration of the system ended on Wednesday and is continuing its demonstration tour in the Bay Area and parts of Nevada.


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