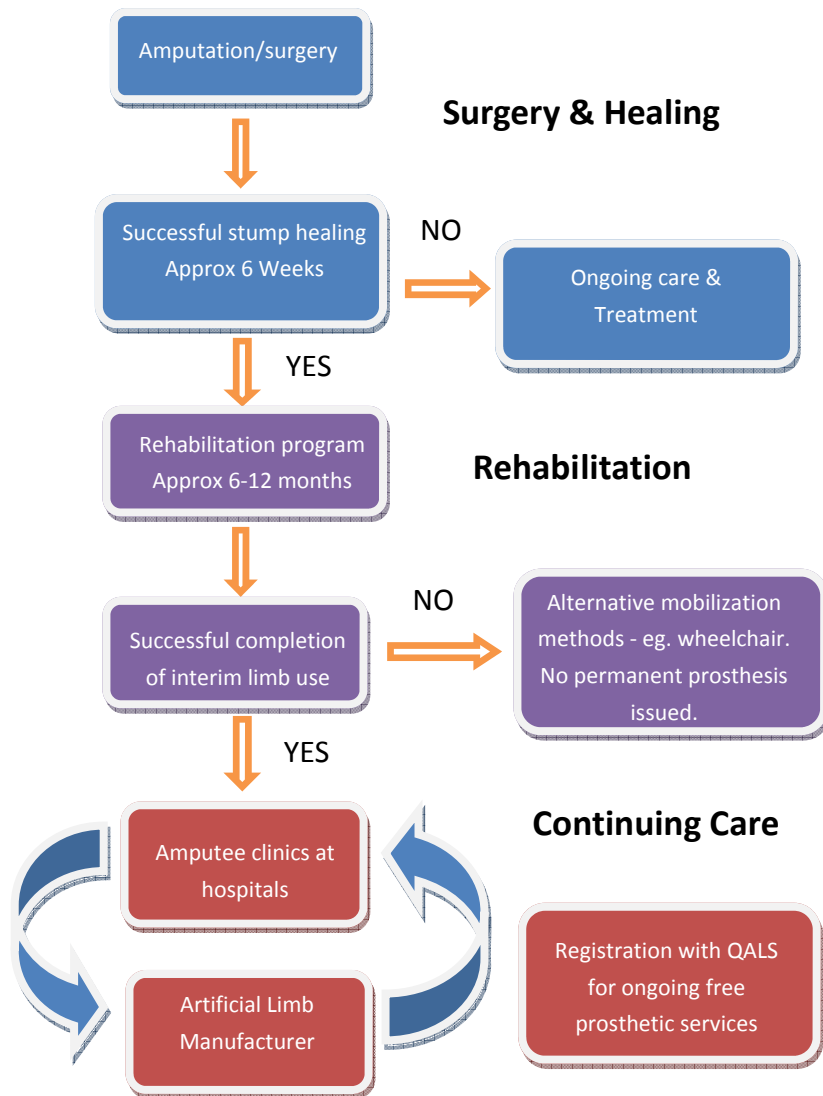


# Amputee Rehabilitation Journey



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“Surviving limb loss”, Landmine Survivors Network is acknowledged as the source of diagram and additional information.

ANNUAL NATIONAL AMPUTEE AWARENESS DAY - 11 JUNE

# WALKING AGAIN

Presentation by Shaun McKay

Senior Prosthetist

Prosthetics, Orthotics and Podiatry Services

to

Amputee Discussion Group

Bunya Ward

Geriatric and Aged Care Rehabilitation Unit

Princess Alexandra Hospital

# PROSTHETIST



# Interim Prosthesis

### What is a Prosthetist?

A Prosthetist is the health professional who designs, manufacturers and fits your prosthesis (artificial limb).

### What are the aims of a Prosthetist?

To assist you with your rehabilitation aims, such as independent mobility and ability to return to the normal activities of daily life.

## REHABILITATION - WHAT TO EXPECT ?

At the beginning of your rehabilitation you will need to use a walking aid eg: walking sticks or hopper. As your walking improves with a prosthesis you may be able to walk without any walking aids for extended periods of time.

Numerous adjustments to the interim prosthesis to optimise the fit of the socket will be required as your stump heals and reduces in size and your walking improves.

You will be shown how to care for your stump with massage and skin moisturising aids.

The correct use of a shrinker sock will assist with swelling and pain management.

Daily exercise will be necessary to strengthen your muscles and endurance levels.

You may require assistance with pain management or experience phantom pain sensations.

The Prosthetist will design a prosthesis based on your age, weight, fitness level, work commitments and lifestyle needs.

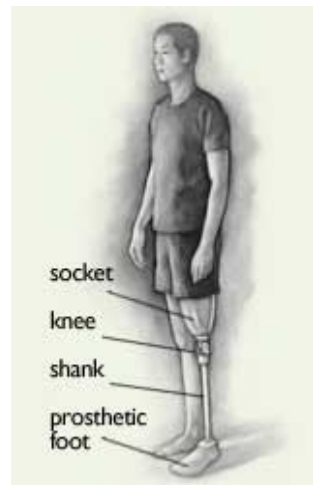
### Basic Parts of a Prosthesis

**Socket:** Your residual limb (stump) fits inside this.

**Knee:** For above knee amputees only. This allows you to sit with a bent knee and may also bend when you swing your leg.

**Shank:** Replaces the shin and connects the socket or knee to the prosthetic foot.

**Prosthetic foot:** Normally covered by a shoe or sandal, this transfers your weight to the ground.



## The Interim Prosthesis

### Q: WHEN IS A PROSTHESIS SUPPLIED?

The use of an interim prosthesis is usually discussed 5-6 weeks following surgery. Once the wound is healed and the stump is prepared by exercise and compression, the Prosthetist will design an interim prosthesis suitable for your needs.

### Q: HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?

You will use an interim prosthesis for 6-12 months while your stump heals. The interim prosthesis may require several socket replacements and adjustments as the stump stabilises in size and shape.

### Q: IS IT EASY TO USE A PROSTHESIS?

Learning to use a prosthesis takes time, great effort, strength, patience and perseverance. Skills to be learnt include: how to manage the changing shape of your stump, fitting and removing the prosthesis, dressing & walking over different types of terrain.

### Q: ONGOING CARE - WHAT NEXT?

Regular visits to your Prosthetist will be necessary. Small problems, if ignored, may stop you from walking and full use of your prosthesis. Learning how to fall, and raise from a fall, safely will assist you during your rehabilitation.

### Q: RED MARKS ON SKIN- WHAT TO DO?

Adjust the socket fit using different numbers of socks. Ensure there are no wrinkles in the socks when putting them on. Impaired sensation is common in amputees and wrinkles may cause a lot of damage before they are discovered.

What an amputee can do with a prosthesis depends largely on the level of amputation.

A below knee amputee uses about 25 - 40% more energy than a non-amputee while for an above knee amputee it is between 70 - and 80% more.

For this reason health, strength and determination are essential to achieve goals such as walking, going to the shops, driving a car or even playing sports.

The most important member of your rehabilitation team is you.