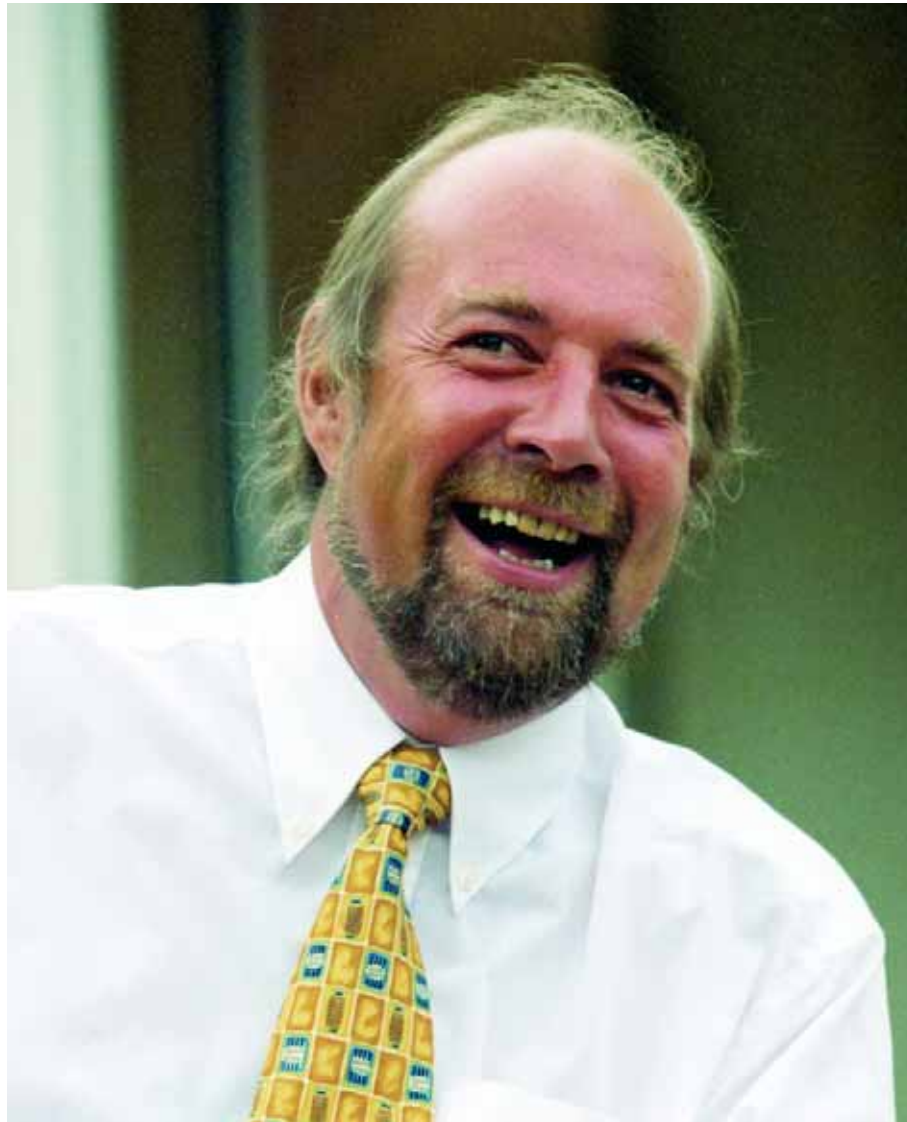


UK News

Momentum's new chairman is a real achiever with significant strategic and leadership skills



Jim Adamson: As well as bringing vital strategic and leadership skills, Jim also has personal experience of disability and of the issues which face clients.

Momentum Chairman

Jim Adamson has been appointed chairman of Rehab's Scottish division, Momentum, following the retirement of Eric Taylor from the post.

A member of the Momentum Board for the last four years, Mr Adamson is the managing director of the independent Scottish television production company, Speakeasy Productions Ltd.

He has been in a wheelchair since he was accidentally shot during a Territorial Army exercise in 1966, which left him paralysed from the chest down.

Subsequent to this, Mr Adamson - who

left school with no formal qualifications - returned to university and went on to found Speakeasy Productions Ltd, which has steadily grown to become one of the biggest TV and multimedia companies in Scotland.

His achievements in building Speakeasy following his spinal injury led to him winning the title of Great Scot of the Year at the Momentum award ceremony in 1998.

Ian Welsh, chief executive of Momentum said: "Jim Adamson has been a committed and energetic board

member for four years and our organisation has benefited enormously from his support and his energy.

"As well as bringing vital strategic and leadership skills, Jim also has personal experience of disability and of the issues which face our clients. Momentum is about assisting clients to move forward with energy and purpose and as a successful businessman, who also happens to be disabled, Jim is an inspiration to our clients and to all at Momentum who are working to build more equal futures for disabled and excluded people in Scotland."

UK News

Antoinette D. Anthony-Pillai talks about her experiences at Rehab UK's London Brain Injury Centre.

Antonia Pillai: "the struggle of resuming my education has taught me patience and determination and given me the chance to gain new skills."

I had my injury in 1995 when I was fulfilling my lifelong ambition to become a doctor, studying at one of London's best teaching hospitals.

In the second year of my studies, whilst undergoing a routine operation, I was given a drug to which I became allergic. After a number of hospital blunders, I suffered anoxic brain damage – a lack of oxygen to the brain. I remained in a coma for three weeks.

The journey through my early stages of rehab included time at the National, Northwick Park and Unsted Park in Godalming. I then moved as an outpatient to Garston Manor (NHS). Here I regained some confidence and began to plan my return to study. Cognitive psychologists thought this to be an unrealistic goal, however, not heeding the advice of experts I did return to medical school. I had to try it, otherwise I would have always say 'if only...'

My education restarted in earnest. Having studied at Imperial College, I am now at university exactly halfway



More relaxed more positive

through a BSc, Hons in Pharmacology.

With hindsight I can say that the struggle of resuming my education has taught me patience and determination and given me the chance to gain new skills. At present I have suspended my studies in order to attend Rehab UK's vocational programme. I am finding this both challenging and rewarding. I am feeling more relaxed as I meet fellow students who actually share some of my deficits. When starting at Rehab UK, I thought

this would be another course that I would not succeed in or complete. However, the staff here are patient with me and always encouraging towards me. I feel as though I am getting my identity or a new identity back.

My confidence also seems to be growing as I tackle issues and exercises, complete them and get feedback. At present I am on Module 2 and about to go onto my work placement. This fills me with apprehension as all I have ever been is a

UK News



Shivakuru Selvathurai being presented with the Outstanding Adult Learners Week Award for London by the Sheriff of the City of London, Alderman David Brewer at the Barbican Centre, London.

student! However, I am excited about this new stage of my life. Due to their research, I'm sure the staff here will pick a job that I'll feel comfortable with, though it is still a daunting prospect.

Family members and Rehab UK staff here have noticed a positive change in me. I have more of a positive outlook on life and I am gaining in confidence. However, I feel no change as this is my view of how I have always been, but I suppose I have now learnt to express myself better. I have been able to establish friendships for which I am thankful to Rehab UK's staff and other clients who are now my friends.

Because of what I am learning within the programme, my ideas for the future are more realistic and more positive.

TBG comes to Shivakuru's aid

TBG Learning has enabled a man fleeing from peril in Sri Lanka to gain a foothold on life in Britain for himself and his family, which includes a severely disabled daughter needing around-the-clock care.

To mark his and TBG Learning's achievement, 57-year-old Shivakuru Selvathurai was honoured by the Sheriff of the City of London, Alderman David Brewer when he presented him with the Outstanding Adult Learners Week Award for London at the Barbican Centre, London.

"With his daughter severely disabled, Shivakuru realised that he need-

ed to learn the English language to give her and the rest of the family the best possible life in Britain," said Martin Cassidy, of TBG Learning South London, where Mr. Selvathurai did his training.

"He has successfully completed three ESOL courses and also gained Pitman certificates for spoken and general English. His learning has been an essential part of starting a new life in Britain.

"It has meant that he has been able to communicate with Social Services to gain assistance for his daughter. Determined to contribute to the society which has helped him, Shivakuru now works as a volunteer at the Refugee Council, and he is also a St John Ambulance volunteer.

UK News

Research to develop a standardised measure to assess the effects of traumatic brain injury on personality has been carried out by Rehab's Scottish division, Momentum.



The results of a ground-breaking research project that will help health professionals assess the rehabilitation needs of people with brain injuries have been announced by Momentum – formerly Rehab Scotland.

The organisation - which pioneered the UK's first vocational rehabilitation service for people with traumatic brain injury in 1993 – commissioned the research to develop a standardised assessment measure into the effects of traumatic brain injury on personality.

International experts in the field of brain injury rehabilitation heard the results at a two-day seminar in Glasgow, hosted by Momentum in conjunction with the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR).

Focusing on supporting people with brain injuries to return to work, the seminar

Momentum Research

attracted top specialists from around the world, such as Dr Laura Taylor, of Virginia Commonwealth University, USA, and Professor Graham Teasdale, Professor of Neurosurgery at Glasgow University, to share international research and best practice.

The £150,000 research project – funded by the National Lottery Charities Board Community Fund – was carried out in conjunction with Dr Marc Obonsawin of Strathclyde University's

Psychology Department.

Dr Obonsawin said: "A brain injury can bring many changes to an individual's life but for many the change in personality that follows is a major obstacle to re-entry into the community. Current assessment tools are inadequate, a factor which has proved a major barrier to rehabilitation and reintegration."

The research was carried out at six centres in the UK – Glasgow, Aberdeen, Kirkcaldy, Manchester, Birmingham and

UK News



Jan Spooren, general secretary, EPR, Margaret Rose, senior psychologist for Brain Injury Services, Momentum, Professor Graham Teasdale, professor of neurosurgery, Glasgow University, Lesley Kragt, director of Service Development, Momentum, Dr Laura Taylor, Virginia Commonwealth University, USA, Dr Wilbert Bakx, senior consultant in rehabilitation medicine, Hoensbroeck Rehabilitation Centre, Netherlands, Dr Marc Obonsawin, Strathclyde University.

London - and has resulted in the formation of a new assessment tool, the Brain Injury Personality Scale (BIPS).

Adopting techniques like interviewing the partner or a close relative of a person who has sustained a brain injury will allow Momentum to tailor its rehabilitation programmes to work more effectively.

Without specialist support such as that offered by Momentum, only 30 percent of people with brain injuries will return to employment. Currently more than 80 percent of Momentum's project participants enter employment or go on to further education and training.

Dr Obonsawin added: "By working with carers and people who knew clients before their injuries, we can build up a realistic picture which will allow Momentum to monitor the effect that

their programme is having and give a clearer indication of when clients are ready to enter the workplace."

Also speaking at the seminar, were Dr Wilbert Bakx, senior consultant in rehabilitation medicine at the renowned Hoensbroeck Rehabilitation Centre in the Netherlands, and Dr Andy Tyerman, consultant clinical neuro-psychologist for the Community Head Injury Service in the UK. Delegates were welcomed by Bill Miller MEP.

Lesley Kragt, director of service development at Momentum said: "Assisting people to return to work after brain injury is our area of expertise and hosting this event allowed us to learn from and share knowledge with our international colleagues.

"By bringing together the leading specialists in the brain injury rehabilitation

field, as well as service users, we were able to exchange good practice and identify models of excellence, which will help us to continuously improve our services.

"The development of the BIPS assessment tool will allow us to ensure that clients' needs are appropriately identified and realistic rehabilitation plans developed."

Also speaking at the seminar was Garry Ryan, an information technology trainer and assessor with Momentum, who has first-hand experience of personality changes following brain injury.

Garry sustained a brain injury in a road traffic accident five years ago and secured employment with Momentum after completing a tailored programme with the organisation's Brain Injury Service in Glasgow.

crc/rtb promotions pays tribute to two of its longest serving collectors who have recently retired.



Ned Whitely, centre, with Liz Cunningham, sales and marketing manager, CRC/RTB Promotions, and Catherine Canavan, regional sales manager, North East.

Thank you Ned, Margaret

Ned Whitely and Margaret Brickley have hung up their well worn boots after clocking up a combined total of 62 years as tireless collectors for crc/rtb promotions.

They both retired recently from the ranks of the 700 agents nationwide who collect for the company which is part-owned by the Rehab Group, at homes and businesses the length and breadth of Ireland.

Ned, who lives in Newbridge, began collecting for Rehab in 1963, the year that President Kennedy was assassinated, following in the footsteps of his father, who had also been an agent for the RTB (Rehabilitation of the Tuberculous) pools, as it was then called.

He has become a familiar and well-respected figure in the Newbridge area over the last 40 years, during which he has raised many thousands of pounds which have



Margaret Brickley

helped to fund a variety of essential services for people with disabilities.

Margaret, who hails from Clane, started collecting for crc/rtb promotions twenty-two years ago. "It's only now that I realise what a huge commitment it was. I used to go out

collecting every Monday evening and during the day each Tuesday without fail. But I thoroughly enjoyed it and I do miss the social element of collecting. I loved going out every week and meeting people. It's amazing how many people still recognise me when I'm walking around Clane. I guess I'm quite famous in the town!"

According to Catherine Canavan, crc/rtb regional sales manager for the north east, collectors such as Ned and Margaret are very much the backbone of the organisation.

"It's so important to get the right person to collect for you. Both Ned and Margaret were exceptional. Over the years they built up a strong relationship with the people they collected from. They were well-known and trusted in their localities. We will really miss having them on the beat – but wish them both a long and happy retirement."