

Niamh



Niamh is raring to go in her Kidwalk!

Niamh is a five year old little girl with a diagnosis of global developmental delay and severe epilepsy. She loves to move around on her knees, but is unable to take steps without support.

Clinical History

Niamh was born at full term by normal delivery. However she was an unresponsive baby, and after tests, at nine months she was discovered to have epilepsy. Between the ages of one and two years, Niamh had many severe seizures, and was failing to meet her milestones. Following initial difficulties with her medication, Niamh seemed seizure free for over a year, but unfortunately this was not the case. Her father took her to an international epilepsy specialist in Chicago, where it was discovered that during her seizure-free time, Niamh had in fact, been having constant unseen seizure activity. Niamh's medication was reviewed and she remains under the care of this specialist through Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Approach



Niamh, despite her developmental delay, is an active and responsive little girl who loves to throw a ball, look at picture books, interact with others, and investigate her environment. The delay in her physical development means that her muscle tone is low and she moves around on her knees, but she can make stepping movements when supported. Because of her low muscle tone, Niamh fatigues easily.

Niamh was first assessed for a Kidwalk in December 2009, but she was unable to co-ordinate the required movements at that stage. She had a period of intensive physiotherapy during the summer of 2010, and made such an improvement that she was subsequently reassessed for a Kidwalk.

Outcome

The Kidwalk provides Niamh with the physical support she requires to stay upright against gravity, while allowing her to use her newly acquired stepping skills to move freely. The combination of seat, pelvic and chest support allows Niamh to maintain her upright posture, yet leave her hands free to play. While still early days for Niamh in her Kidwalk, she is able to move forwards and backwards at will, chasing a ball and investigating the playground at her after-school nursery. Niamh is certainly raring to go!

