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**Category:** Assistive Technology

**Workshop Title:** The Power of Assistive Technology: Clinical Application of AT for Power Wheelchair Users

**Organizer(s):** Jill Baldessari

**Speaker(s):** Lusto, Sarah PT, ATC, ATP Regional Clinical Educator Permobil  
McLachlan, Leslie PT, ATP Territory Sales Manager Permobil

**Workshop Time:** 13:45 - 15:15

**Attendee Engagement:** An introduction to the technology will be provided in a lecture format. Attendees will then have the opportunity to participate in discussion and hands on experiences with setting up the technology on the power wheelchairs.

**Abstract:** Power wheelchairs have long been essential mobility aids for individuals with disabilities, but advancements in assistive technology have expanded their functionality far beyond basic mobility. Today, assistive technology features embedded in power wheelchair electronics play a crucial role in communication, computer access, and control of the environment. While forms of this technology have been available for years (Cook & Polgar, 2015), the set up and application of these features continues to be underutilized.

Recent advancements in power wheelchair electronics and programming software have expanded the capabilities of the technology, offering improved access, configurability, and compatibility with consumer technologies, such as, mobile phones, computers, and communication devices. With these developments, integration of theory into practice has become even more essential for clinicians and wheelchair users.

This two-part workshop will incorporate lecture and hands-on experience of the assistive technology features on Power wheelchairs. Education will be provided on the clinical implications of power wheelchair selection, setup, and programming related to assistive technology. Hands on experience will include various drive control setups, with a focus on how the technology interacts with mobile devices, computer operating systems, and environmental controls. Through case studies and group discussion, participants will gain clinical insight into the application and integration of these features in a wide range of settings and for a variety of users. Clinical processes, how to utilize manufacturer and supplier representatives, tip sheets, and manufacturer resources will be shared.

Awareness of these power wheelchair assistive technology features will help break down barriers and promote increased comfort and utilization by clinicians. This will result in ensuring that wheelchair users can maximize their independence and lead fulfilling and autonomous lives.