

'Bionic hand' points way to beat back pain

THE first clinic in Scotland offering a revolutionary treatment for back pain is nearing its first anniversary.

21st Century Back Care opened in the New Town in August 2006 and is the only clinic in the country dedicated to the use of Technology Assisted Micro-Mobilisation and Reflex Stimulation (TAMARS).

Unlike other forms of treatment for back and neck problems, TAMARS administers a full spinal treatment that frees and straightens the spine.

Designed by Cornwall-based engineer Robert Taylor, the hand-held, computer console-controlled device acts like a "bionic hand". It administers a safe, drug-free and non-surgical full spinal treatment that frees and straightens the vertebrae.

It has three modes of treatment designed to restore elasticity, mobility and flexibility to the joints of the spine.

And according to the clinic, by straightening the spine, TAMARS is performing a process that had previously been deemed

medically impossible. Typically, patients need three to four treatments to notice results.

The clinic, in Mansfield Place, only came into existence because owner Jeff Knox, who himself suffered from severe back and neck pain, tried out the treatment. He found it so effective he decided to set up his own clinic in his native Ireland, in 2004, followed by the Edinburgh branch last year.

Mr Knox explained: "I had a lot of pain across the top of my shoulders and though I went for various treatments such as seeing a chiropractor, these would only help for a week or so.

"My father read about TAMARS in a newspaper, and I travelled to London to get the treatment. I noticed a big difference. The whole treatment is logical and very good, it really works so well. As a result I decided to set up a clinic with my father in Belfast."

Back pain is the second most common cause of long term sickness absences from work in the UK, while one in eight (13 per cent) of unemployed people say that back pain is the reason they are not working.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the Belfast clinic, also the first of its kind in Ireland, has proved to be a huge success since it opened three and a half years ago and now treats between 60 and 70 patients a week.

Mr Knox added: "I go between Edinburgh and Belfast but finally got a flat in Edinburgh at the beginning of this year and hope to get more settled here. I administer the treatment myself and also have a physiotherapist working here."

One client who uses the clinic is



TREATMENT: Jeff Knox uses Technology Assisted Micro-Mobilisation and Reflex Stimulation

Andrew Mackenzie, who had been suffering from back and groin pains for about four years. The problems started in the scrum whilst playing rugby – he has played for Heriot’s for about ten years– and the problem had got so bad that it was causing neck pain, headaches and dizzi-

ness, and he had to stop playing rugby as a result. Despite having ongoing physiotherapy and acupuncture, the problems continued. Andrew tried TAMARS at the end of last year and after four treatments, the original pains disappeared, he has more energy and the

headaches have reduced. He said: “I’d been for physiotherapy and so on in the past but found this is a completely different approach to back treatment. “I’d never seen anything like it. It really treats the original source of the problem and has made a massive difference.”