

# THE USE OF BASIC BEAT BOX TECHNIQUES IN SPEECH FOLLOWING LARYNGECTOMY.

Moors T. <sup>1</sup>, Himonides E. <sup>2</sup>, Silva S. <sup>3</sup>, Maraschin D <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Independent Physician, <sup>2</sup> Music and Technology Department; University College London, <sup>3</sup> Milton Keynes University Hospital, <sup>4</sup> Video, Media and Journalism Department; London Southbank University

e-mail: [drtmoors@shoutatcancer.org](mailto:drtmoors@shoutatcancer.org)

Laryngectomy is the surgical removal of the voice box, usually performed in patients with highly developed stages of throat cancer. The psychosocial impact of losing the voice is significant, affecting a person's professional and social life in a devastating way.

The physiological changes to anatomical structures involved in voicing and articulation, which is a result of surgery, radiotherapy and/or chemotherapy, are challenges faced in speech rehabilitation and voice outcome.

Indeed articulation and tongue movement are major components in restoring communication following laryngectomy, regardless of the applied speech technique (lip speech, electrolaryngeal speech, oesophageal speech or tracheo-oesophageal speech).

Regular exercise is important in controlling these structures and keeping them supple. It is however a difficult task for a speech therapist to keep the patient engaged and motivated to practise.

We have adopted a multidisciplinary approach, centered on the patients' input, and have explored the use of basic beat boxing techniques to create a wide variety of exercises that are fun, interactive and maximize the use of the structures important in voicing. In collaboration with a beatbox expert (Marv Radio) we have produced video material targeting patients and speech therapists.

Should you wish, we have a video of *the world premiere of beatboxing without a voice box*, a collaboration between Laryngectomy patients, Beatboxer Marv Radio and Opera Singer La Verne Williams,

A project funded by UCL Culture and Shout at Cancer, 8 April 2017, Olympic Village, London.