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(54) Title of the Invention: **Apparatus and Method for User Exercise Monitoring**  
Abstract Title: **Apparatus and method for user exercise monitoring**

(57) An apparatus for user exercise monitoring is disclosed. The apparatus comprises a frame, a motion sensing unit and a user input unit supported by the frame, and a harness configured to secure the frame to a user body part. The user input unit comprises a continuous input device. Also disclosed is a method for monitoring user exercise via a monitoring apparatus secured to the user. The method comprises sensing user motion with the monitoring apparatus and receiving, via the monitoring apparatus, user input during exercise. The user input is received via a continuous input device, such as a rotary displacement measurement element, e.g. knob, on the monitoring apparatus. The user input may correspond to a level of pain experienced by the user during completion of an exercise. Sensed motion patterns corresponding to exercise stored in the apparatus may be identified. In a stored record of completed exercises, received user feedback may be associated with an exercise being completed at the time of receipt of the user feedback. A degree of accuracy with which an exercise is completed by the user may be stored.

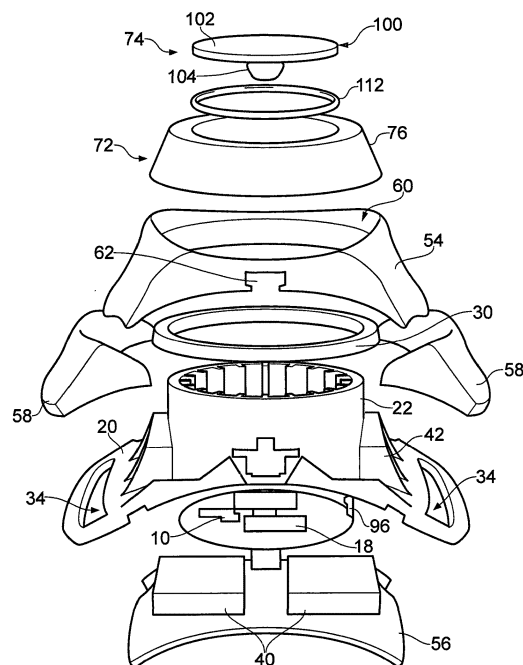


FIG. 2

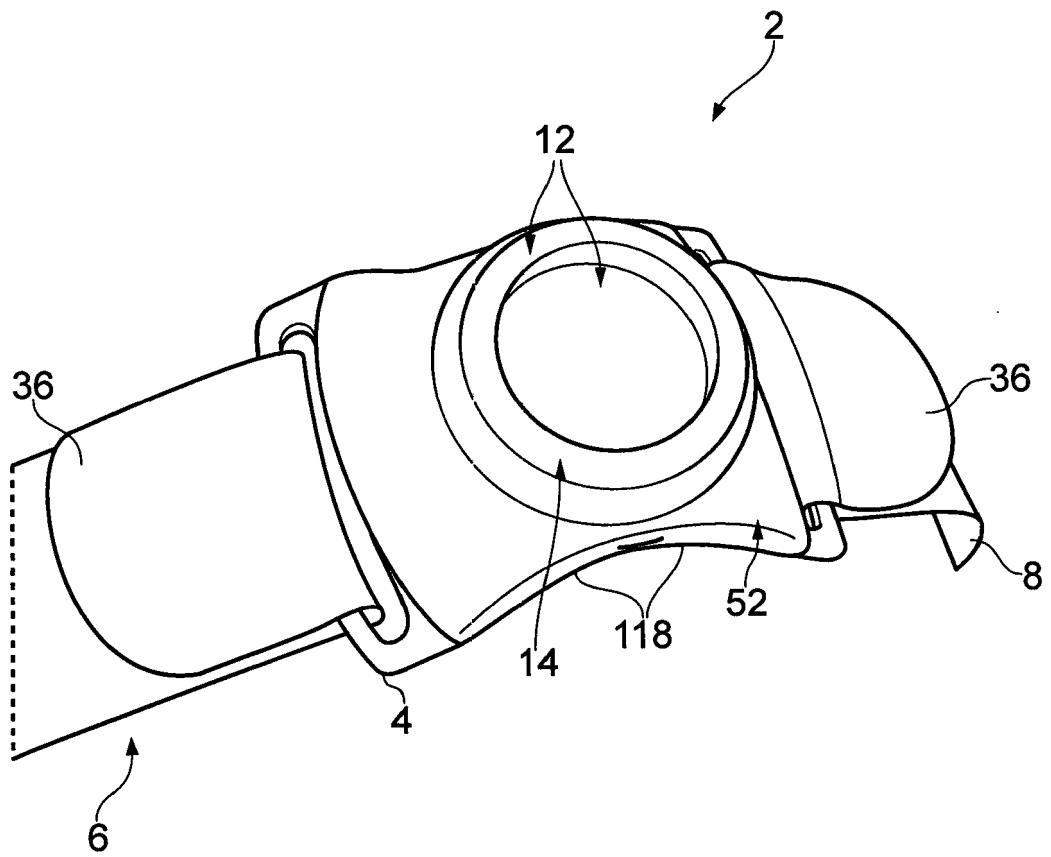


FIG. 1

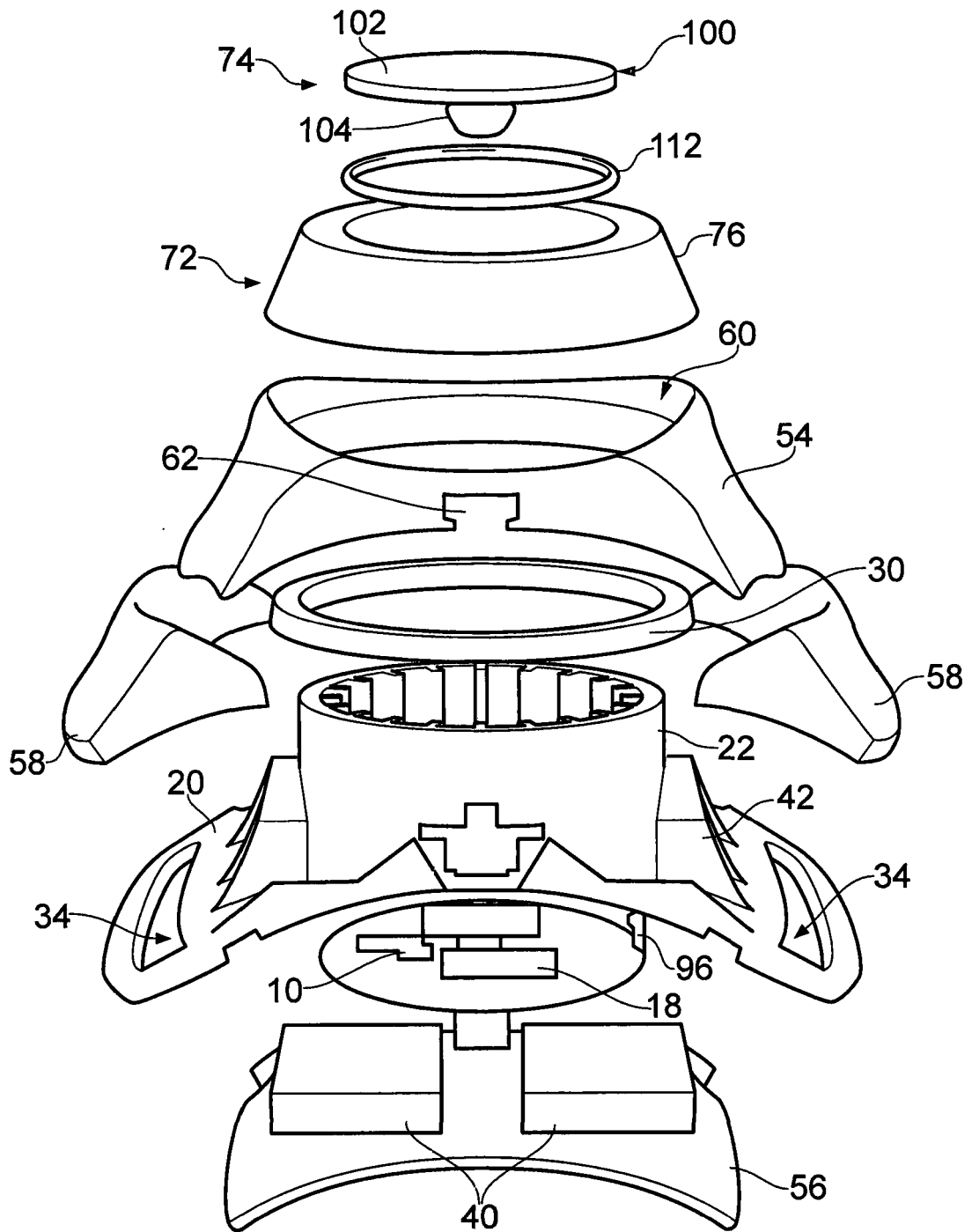


FIG. 2

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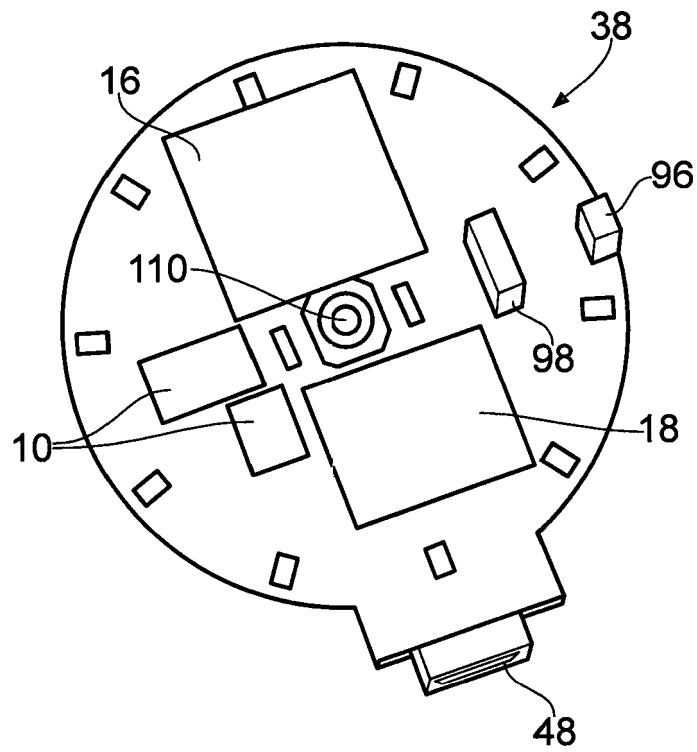


FIG. 3

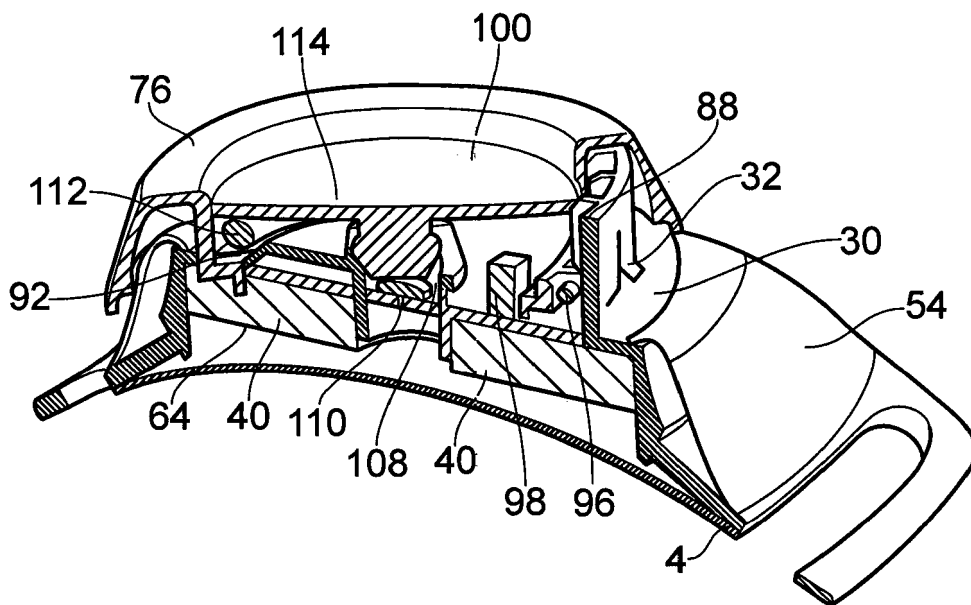


FIG. 4

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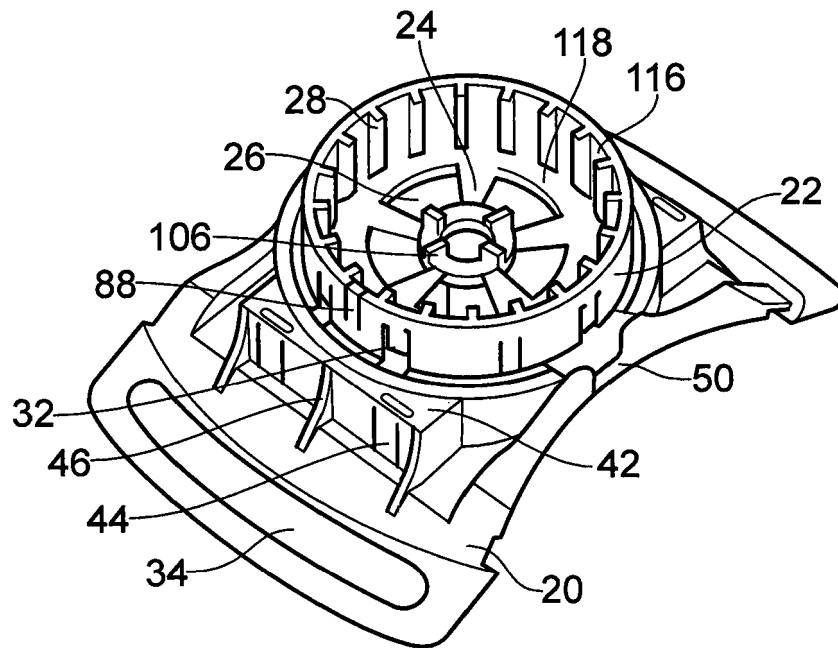


FIG. 5

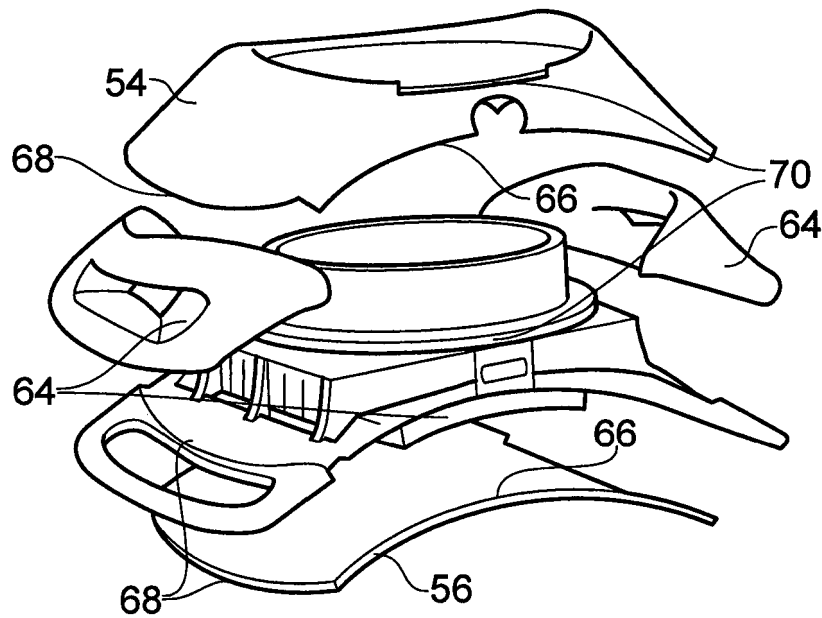


FIG. 6

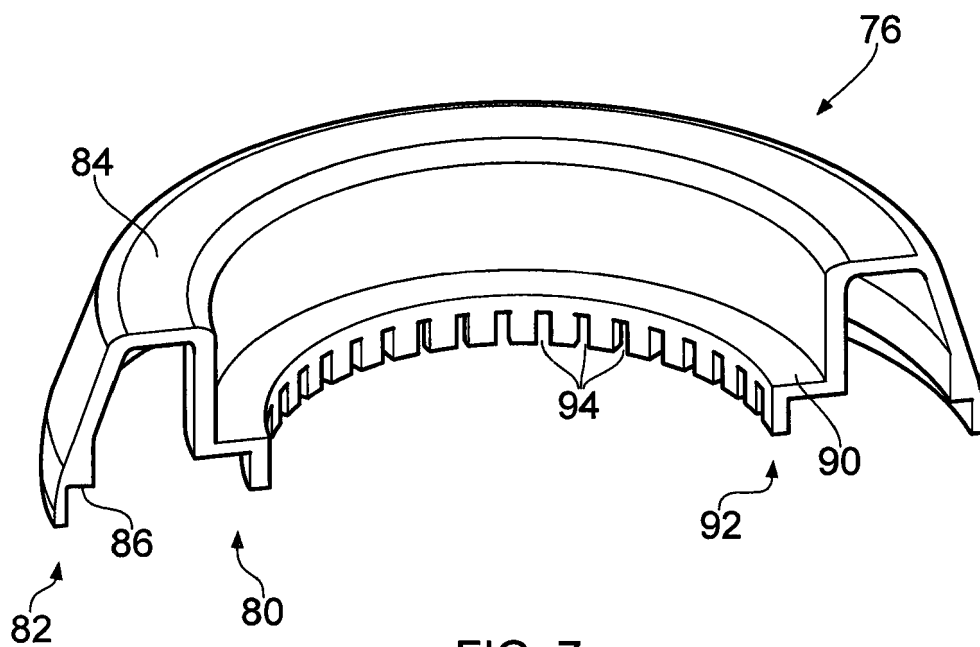


FIG. 7

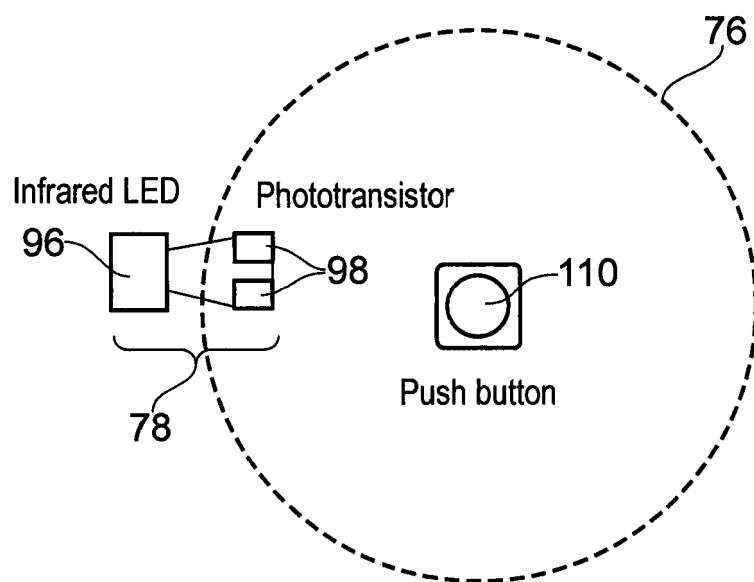


FIG. 8

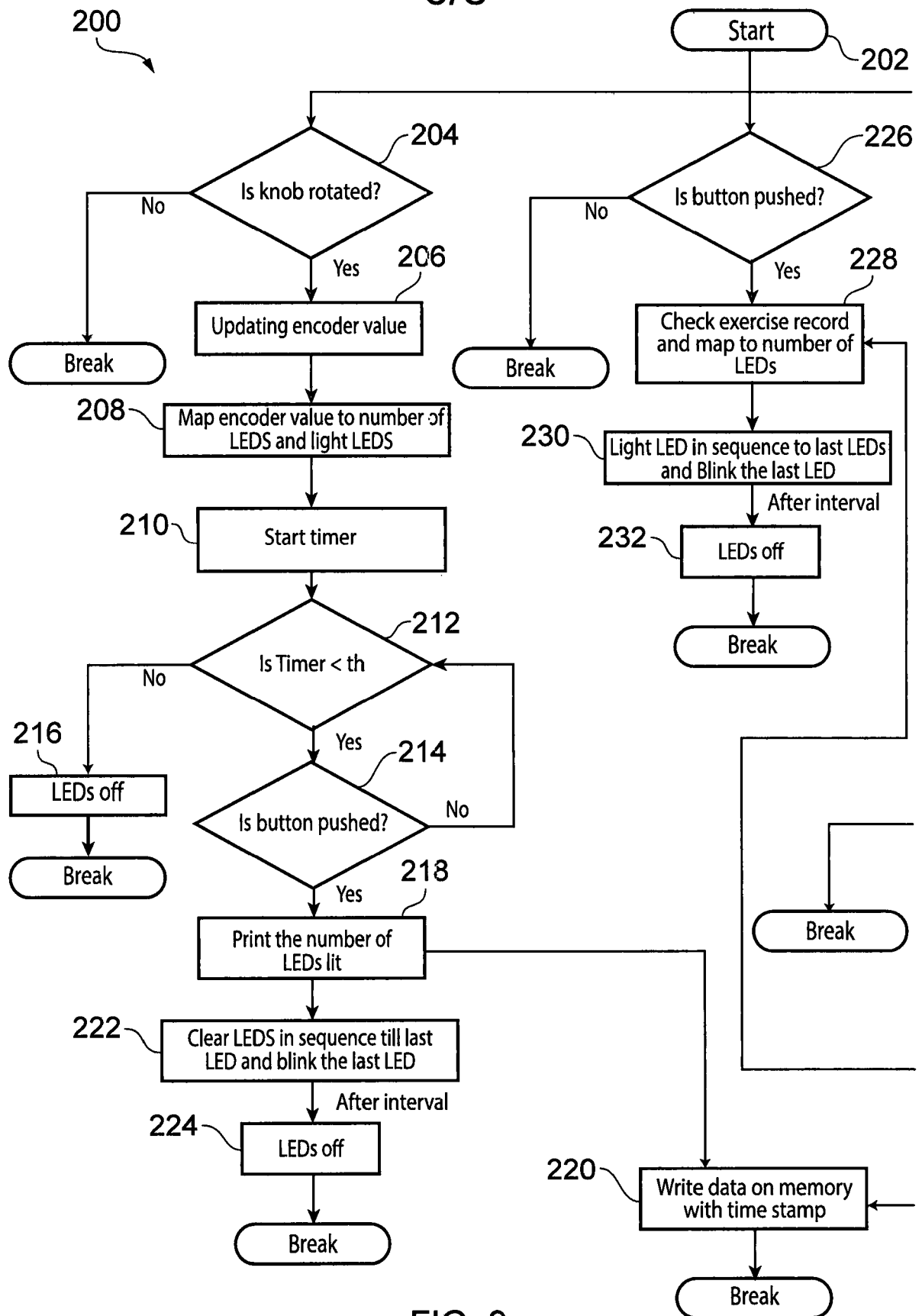


FIG. 9

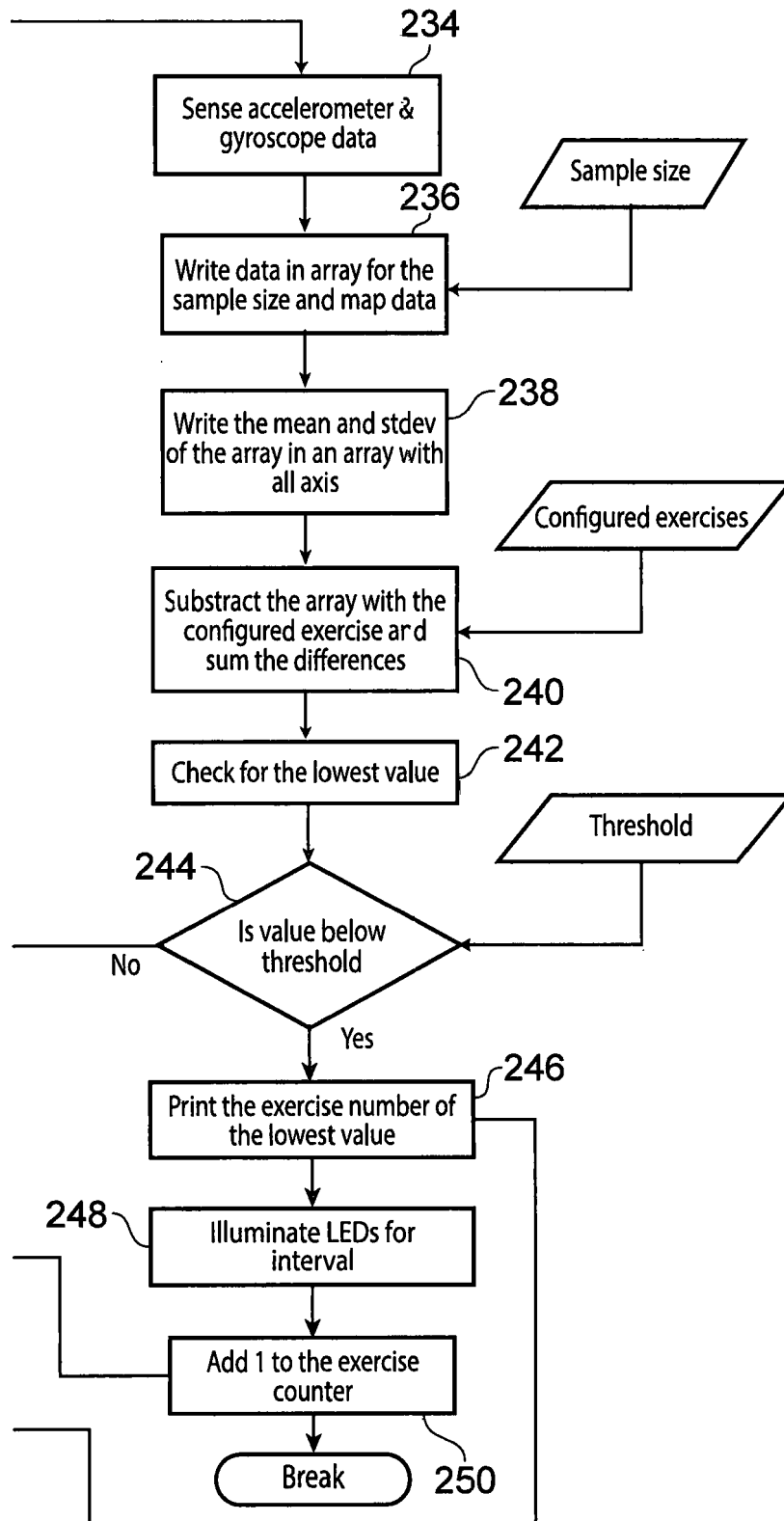


FIG. 9 (continued)



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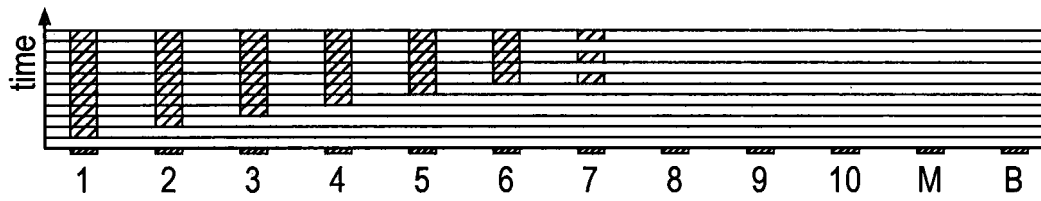


FIG. 10a

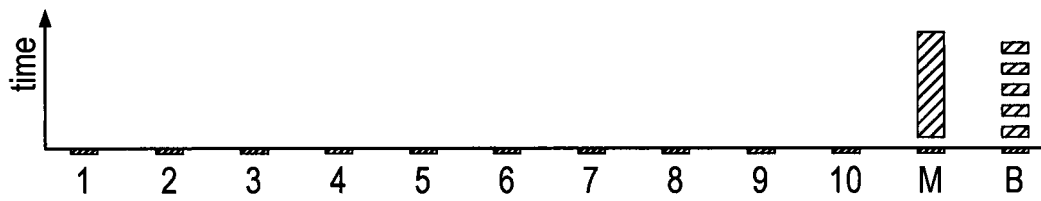


FIG. 10b

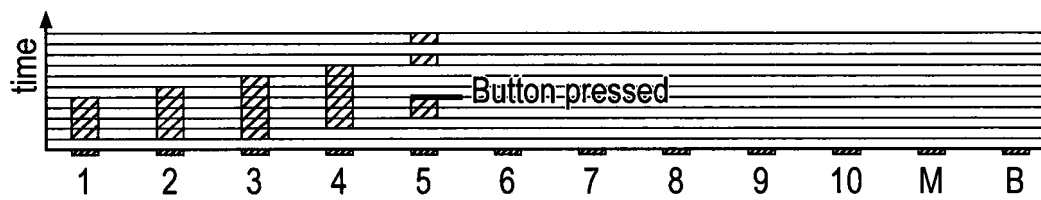


FIG. 10c

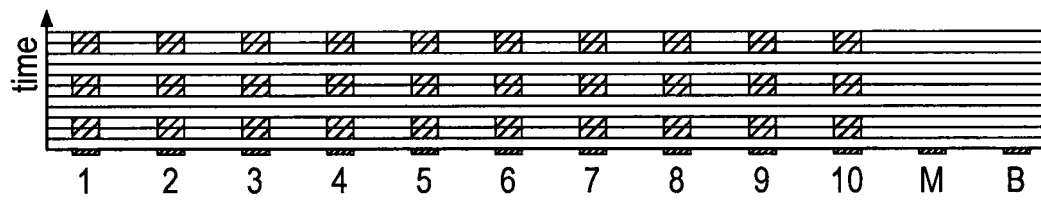


FIG. 10d

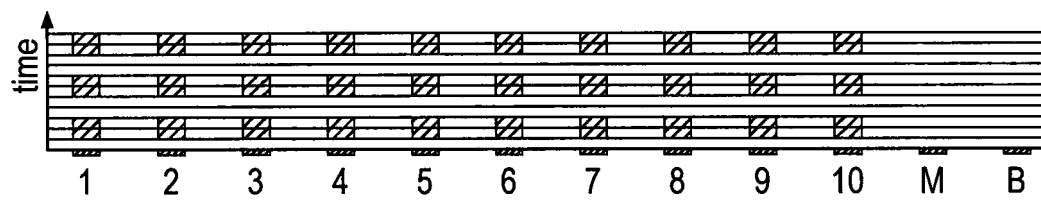


FIG. 10e



FIG. 10f

## Apparatus and Method for User Exercise Monitoring

The present invention relates to an apparatus and method for user exercise monitoring. Such monitoring may be conducted in the context of rehabilitation following an illness,  
5 injury or medical procedure.

### Background

Patients suffering from injury or recovering from medical procedures or surgical  
10 interventions typically undergo a period of recovery and rehabilitation. Joint replacement surgery is one example of a medical procedure following which a period of rehabilitation is necessary. Following initial in-patient assessment and rehabilitation treatment, a patient is typically prescribed a series of exercises in order to continue the rehabilitation process in their own home. Away from the close medical supervision  
15 provided in a hospital environment, many patients struggle with the completion of such exercise programs, failing to conduct the exercises correctly, if at all. The supervising medical practitioner, typically a physiotherapist, is reliant upon the patient for information concerning how the exercises have been performed in order to monitor and tailor the exercise program to the patient's progress. Information provided by the  
20 patient may in some cases be incomplete or inaccurate, complicating the task of the supervising practitioner. Similar difficulties may be experienced during rehabilitation following a stroke or other illnesses or medical procedures.

Personal monitoring devices are well known in the fitness industry, enabling the  
25 capture of relevant information during or after performance of certain activities. The information captured may concern a user's physical state, as in the case for example of heart rate and breathing monitors, or may relate to the activity conducted, as in motion trackers such as pedometers. Advances in sensing and communications technology have resulted in considerable expansion of this market, and in the development of a  
30 new generation of high performance activity trackers, designed to be continuously worn by a user. Activity trackers track the movement of a user and connect over wired or wireless links to a user's computer, Smartphone or other device in order to display the captured information. Such devices are primarily targeted towards the active adult population, providing insight for a user into their fitness and activity levels and acting as  
35 a motivational tool in achieving increased activity levels.

Activity trackers developed for the fitness market are generally unsuitable for the more targeted monitoring that would be useful for a rehabilitation patient. While activity trackers provide insight into general levels of activity, they are typically unable to provide information of the detail required for a medical practitioner to monitor completion of a specific exercise program. In addition, their correct operation requires certain levels of dexterity and computer literacy, as well as ownership of a compatible computing device. Joint replacement surgery, stroke illness and similar events prompting a period of rehabilitation generally affect an older population, amongst whom levels of computer literacy and Smartphone or laptop ownership are considerably lower than in the general adult population.

### Summary of Invention

According to the present invention, there is provided an apparatus for user exercise monitoring, comprising a frame, a motion sensing unit and a user input unit supported by the frame, and a harness configured to secure the frame to a user body part. The user input unit comprises a continuous input device.

In some examples, the continuous input device may comprise a rotary device and may, for example, comprise a rotary knob and cooperating rotary displacement measurement element.

In some examples, the rotary displacement measurement element may comprise one of a potentiometer or a rotary encoder, and may for example comprise an incremental optical rotary encoder.

In some examples, the motion sensing unit may comprise at least one of an accelerometer or a gyroscope. In some examples, the motion sensing unit may comprise both an accelerometer and a gyroscope. For example, the motion sensing unit may comprise a 3-axis accelerometer and a 2-axis gyroscope.

In some examples, the user input unit may further comprise a discrete input device. The discrete input device may for example comprise a push button.

In some examples, the apparatus may further comprise a feedback unit supported by the frame. In further examples, the feedback unit may comprise a plurality of light

sources. The light sources may for example comprise LEDs which may be arranged in a bank or array. The LEDs may in some examples include bi-colour LEDs.

5 In some examples, the feedback unit may be configured to represent input from the input unit.

In some examples, the apparatus may further comprise a memory and a processing unit, and the memory and processing unit may also be supported by the frame.

10 In some examples, the processing unit may be configured to receive data from the motion sensing unit and to identify completion of exercises corresponding to motion patterns stored in the memory.

15 In some examples, the processing unit may be further configured to store a record of completed exercises in the memory.

In some examples, the feedback unit may be further configured to display feedback from the processing unit.

20 According to another aspect of the present invention, there is provided a method for monitoring user exercise via a monitoring apparatus secured to the user, the method comprising sensing user motion with the monitoring apparatus and receiving, via the motioning apparatus, user input during exercise, wherein the user input is received via a continuous input device on the monitoring apparatus.

25 In some examples, the user input may correspond to a level of pain experienced by the user during completion of an exercise.

30 In some examples, the method may further comprise storing the received user input on the monitoring apparatus.

In some examples, the method may further comprise identifying within the monitoring apparatus sensed motion patterns corresponding to exercises stored in the monitoring apparatus.

35

In some examples, the method may further comprise providing feedback to the user via the monitoring apparatus on identifying completion of a motion pattern corresponding to a stored exercise.

- 5 In some examples, the method may further comprise storing a record of exercises completed by the user on the monitoring apparatus.

In some examples, the method may further comprise associating, in the stored record of completed exercises, received user feedback with the exercise being completed at  
10 the time of receipt of the user feedback.

In some examples, the method may further comprise comparing a sensed motion pattern to the stored motion pattern of an identified exercise and storing in the monitoring apparatus a degree of accuracy with which the exercise is completed by the  
15 user

In some examples, the method may further comprise storing a program of exercises for the user on the monitoring apparatus and providing feedback via the monitoring apparatus to the user indicating the proportion of the program completed by the user.  
20

In some examples, the method may further comprise reminding the user via the monitoring apparatus when the stored program has not been completed by the user.

### **Brief Description of the Drawings**

25

For a better understanding of the present invention, and to show more clearly how it may be carried into effect, reference will now be made, by way of example, to the following drawings, in which:-

- 30 Figure 1 is a perspective view of an apparatus for user exercise monitoring;

Figure 2 is an exploded perspective view of another example of the apparatus of Figure 1;

- 35 Figure 3 is a perspective view of a circuit board of the apparatus of Figure 1;

Figure 4 is a part sectional view of the apparatus of Figure 1;

Figure 5 is an exploded view showing connections between components of the apparatus of Figure 1;

5

Figure 6 is a perspective view of a frame of the apparatus of Figure 1;

Figure 7 is a part sectional view of a turn knob;

10 Figure 8 is an illustration representing operation of parts of the apparatus of Figure 1;

Figure 9 is a chart illustrating an example of process flow for the apparatus of Figure 1; and

15 Figures 10a to 10f are graphs representing illumination patterns for the apparatus of Figure 1.

### **Detailed Description**

20 Referring initially to Figures 1 and 2, an apparatus 2 for user exercise monitoring comprises a frame 4, on which are mounted additional apparatus components. A harness 6 in the form of a strap 8 is configured to secure the frame 4 to a body part of a user, for example to a limb of a user. Mounted on the frame 4 are a motion sensing unit 10, user input unit 12 and feedback unit 14. Also mounted on the frame 4 are a  
25 processing unit 16 and a memory 18.

Referring also to Figures 3 to 6, the frame 4 comprises an arcuate base portion 20 with a cylindrical support 22 protruding from a central region of the base portion 20. The cylindrical support is substantially hollow, with supporting ribs 24 extending across the  
30 base of the cylindrical support 22 to define ventilation holes 26. A series of fins 28 extend radially inward from the internal circumference of the cylindrical support 22. The fins 28 are substantially evenly spaced around the inner circumference and divide the inner circumference into 20 substantially equal open segments 116, each suitable to receive an individual LED as explained in further detail below. A watertight circular  
35 bearing 30 is received over the cylindrical support 22 to rest on the base portion 20 of the frame 4 and is held in place by snap fit connectors 32 protruding from an outer

circumference of the cylindrical support 22. The bearing 30 supports rotational movement of an element of the user input unit 12, as discussed in further detail below. Opposite ends of the base portion 20 of the frame 4 comprise longitudinal openings 34 extending across the width of the frame, suitable to receive opposing ends of the strap 8. In use, opposing ends 36 of the strap 8 pass through the openings 34 before folding back to be secured to the body of the strap, as described in further detail below as illustrated in Figure 1. Velcro ® or other quick release fastening may be applied to allow the ends 36 of the strap 8 to be securely attached to the main body of the strap 8 after passing through the openings 34 in the frame 4.

On a side of the frame 4 opposite to the cylindrical support 22 (a lower side as viewed in the Figures), a circuit board 38 and battery 40 are secured to the frame 4. The circuit board 38 is received immediately under the supporting ribs 24 with the battery 40 received below the circuit board 38. The battery 40 comprises two battery units, each of which is received in a housing 42 defined in the frame and held in position via a snap connection 44. Additional supporting fins 46 impart rigidity to the frame in the region between the battery housing 42 and opposing ends defining the openings 34.

Referring particularly to Figure 3, the circuit board 38 comprises a series of functional units which may be realised in a combination of hardware and/or software. In the illustrated example, many of the functional units are realised as application specific integrated circuits, as described below. A first functional unit mounted on the circuit board comprises the motion sensing unit 10. In the illustrated example, the motion sensing unit comprises a 3-axis accelerometer and a 2 axis gyroscope configured to sense linear and rotational acceleration of the apparatus 2. The accelerometer and gyroscope are mounted on the circuit board 38, and the circuit board 38 is mounted on the frame 4, such that, once the apparatus 2 is attached to a user body part, the axes of the accelerometer and gyroscope will be aligned with the principle axes of the user body. The motion sensing unit 10 is configured to send the output of the sensing elements comprised within the unit 10 to the processing unit 16. Suitable sampling rates, time intervals and measurement resolution may be selected for the measurement sensing unit 10, as discussed in further detail below.

Other functional units mounted on the circuit board 28 include the processing unit 16 and the memory 18. The processing unit 16 comprises a microprocessor and is configured to manage operation of the apparatus according to procedures outlined

below with reference to Figure 9. The memory 18 comprises a rewritable flash memory and may be sized according to the likely amount of data to be stored and the time for which data is to be retained before being downloaded to another location. The circuit board 38 additionally supports a mini USB port 48, enabling connection via a USB  
 5 cable to a computer for downloading and uploading of data onto the memory 18. An opening 50 in the frame 40 allows access to the mini USB port 48.

The frame 4, bearing 30, circuit board 38 and battery 40 are substantially encased by a housing 52 comprising an upper housing unit 54, a lower housing unit 56 and, in the  
 10 example of Figure 2, side support units 58. The upper housing unit 54 comprises a circular opening 60 and is received over the cylindrical support 22 of the frame 4, allowing the support 22 to protrude through the opening 44. The upper housing unit 54 extends away from the opening 60 to engage the frame 4. A side opening 62 in the upper housing unit 36 aligns with the opening 50 on the frame 4 to allow access to the  
 15 mini USB port 48. In the example illustrated in Figure 2, the upper housing unit 54 engages opposing ends of the frame 4 via the side support units 58. In other examples, (as shown in Figures 1 and 6), the upper housing unit 54 substantially directly engages the opposing ends of the frame 4 and the side support units are not present. The lower housing unit 56 engages the 40 against a lower side the frame 4.  
 20 The lower housing unit 56 also provides the lower surface of the apparatus 2, and as such offers a smooth surface for engagement with a user body part. Additional rigidity may be imparted to the housing units through high density foam components 64, shaped to fit between the frame 4 and attached components and the housing units 54, 56. Connections between the housing units 54, 56 and the frame 4 may be seen in  
 25 Figure 6. Upper and lower housing units are directly connected at join 66 along the sides of the apparatus 2. This connection may for example be by ultrasonic welding. The upper and lower housing units 54, 56 are connected to the frame at joins 68. The upper housing unit 54 and frame 4 are additionally connected at join 70 in the region of the bearing 30.

30

The user input unit 12 is mounted in the opening 60 of the upper housing unit 54, supported by the bearing 30. The user input unit 12 comprises a continuous input device 72 and a discrete input device 74. The continuous input device may comprise a linear or a rotary device, and may comprise a displaceable element and a displacement  
 35 measurement element. The displacement measurement element may for example be a potentiometer or encoder.



In the illustrated example, the continuous input device 72 is a rotary device comprising a displaceable element in the form of a turn knob 76 and a displacement measurement element in the form of an optical incremental rotary encoder 78. Referring in particular to Figures 4, 7 and 8, the turn knob 76 comprises an annular component having inner and outer skirts 80, 82 joined by an upper annular face 84. The cylindrical support 22 of the frame 4 is received between the inner and outer skirts 80, 82. An inner surface of the outer skirt 82 comprises an annular shoulder 86 which is slidably received on the bearing 30. Feedback ribs 88 formed on the outer circumferential surface of the cylindrical support 22 provide mild resistance to rotation of the turn knob 76, so providing haptic feedback during rotation of the knob 76 and acting to prevent accidental rotation. The inner skirt 80 of the knob 76 comprises an inwardly extending annular shelf 90. A slotted skirt 92 extends axially downward from an inner edge of the shelf 90. The slotted skirt 92 comprises a series of evenly spaced axial openings or slots 94 extending from a lower (as seen in the Figures) edge of the slotted skirt towards the shelf 90.

The incremental rotary encoder 78 comprises an infra red (IR) LED and a double IR sensor 98. With the turn knob 76 received in place on the bearing 30, the IR LED 96 and sensor 98 are mounted on opposite sides of the slotted skirt 92, with the IR LED 96 protruding through a hole 118 in the frame 4. Radiation emitted by the IR LED 96 is received at the sensor 98 via the slots 94 in the skirt 92. As the turn knob 76 is rotated, the interruptions in received IR radiation at the sensor generate a pulse which is conveyed to the processing unit 16, enabling the amount and direction of rotation to be determined. The incremental nature of the encoder formed by the IR LED 96 and sensor 98 results in an input device having no maximum or minimum position, merely registering an amount and direction of angular displacement of the turn knob 76.

The discrete input device 74 of the user input unit 12 comprises a push button 100 which is received within the central opening of the annular turn knob 76. The push button comprises a planar disc 102 and stem 104 which extends from a central point of a lower face of the disc 102. The stem 104 engages ribs 106 extending from the support ribs 24 of the frame 4. The stem 104 and ribs 106 form a snap fit connection 108 that maintains the push button 100 in the central opening of the turn knob 76. The ribs 106 receive the stem 104 directly above a receptor 110 mounted on the circuit board 38. Pushing the push button 100 forces the stem into contact with the receptor

110, sending a signal to the processing unit 16 and so registering a discrete input event. Once pressure is released from the push button 100, the push button is urged back to its original position by a compressible o-ring 112 which is seated on the annular shelf 90 of the turn knob 76 and engages a lower face of the disc 102 of the push button 100. The stem 104 and o-ring 112 are sized such that the push button 100 is slightly recessed with respect to the turn knob 76. An upper face of the disc 102 of the push button 100 may be suitable to receive branding or other printed or engraved material 114.

- 10 In one example (not shown), the frame 4 and upper housing unit 54 may be shaped such that the user input unit 12 is angled with respect to a reference plane defined by the frame 4. With the apparatus 2 in place on the limb of a patient, the angling of the user input unit 12 may direct the user input unit towards the head of the user, making the apparatus 2 more convenient to interact with when in position, particularly if the apparatus 2 is mounted on the leg of a patient.

The feedback unit 14 of the apparatus 2 comprises a bank of light sources. In the illustrated example the light sources comprise LEDs, mounted in a circular array immediately below the upper annular face 84 of the turn knob 76. This upper annular face is translucent, thus allowing light emitted by the LEDs to be seen by a user through the annular face of the turn knob 76. Translucency may be achieved through material choice, or by appropriate selection of material thickness, or by a combination of material choice and thickness. Each LED is received in an open segment 116 defined by the radially extending fins 28 and the inner circumference of the cylindrical support 22. The fins 28 serve to limit the area of illumination of the LEDs as perceived through the turn knob 76, and so to ensure the effect of illuminating each individual LED may be clearly distinguished by a user.

In the illustrated example, the circular array of LEDs comprises a continuous bank of bi-colour (green/blue) LEDs. The feedback unit 14 also comprises two single colour (red) LEDs mounted on a side of the apparatus 2 at positions 118 either side of the opening 62 for the mini USB port. Other arrangements and colour choices for the LEDs may be envisaged. Operation of the LEDs is controlled by the processing unit 16. The single colour (red) LEDs may be employed to provide user feedback concerning status of the apparatus 2. For example a first of the red LEDs may indicate battery status while a second red LED may indicate memory status. The bank of bi-

colour LEDs may be used both to represent input received via the user input unit 12 and to feedback information processed by the processing unit. In another example (not shown), the feedback unit may further comprise a vibrating and or audible feedback element such as a buzzer. Precise operation of the feedback unit 14 is discussed below with reference to operation of the apparatus 2.

Suitable materials for some of the above described apparatus components include Polyamide (PA) for the push button 100 and turn knob 75, Thermoplastic Polyurethane (TPU) for the housing 52 and Polyoxymethylene (POM) for the frame 4.

In use, the apparatus 2 functions as a standalone monitoring device that enables user interaction without additional need for cooperating computing devices such as a laptop or Smartphone. The user may interact with the apparatus 2 using the input unit 12 and via the feedback unit 14. Functioning of the apparatus according to a typical user scenario is explained below, followed by a detailed discussion of the processing supporting this functionality.

The apparatus 2 may in one example scenario be used by a rehabilitation patient in cooperation with a medical practitioner such as a physiotherapist. The physiotherapist may first assess a patient and devise a course of exercises to be performed by the patient in their own home. These exercises may comprise a series of movements to be performed by the patient, for example forward, rearward and lateral leg raises for a patient recovering from hip replacement surgery. Each exercise may be defined by the linear and angular acceleration to be experienced by the leg during correct performance of the exercise. Values for the mean and standard deviation of the linear and angular acceleration corresponding to each exercise prescribed for the patient may be recorded in the memory of the apparatus 2. This is one example of how a pattern of motion corresponding to a single exercise may be digitally represented on the memory 18 of the apparatus 2. Other examples may be envisaged. Each exercise in the patient's prescribed program may be stored in the memory as its representative motion pattern together with the number of repetitions of the exercise to be conducted by the patient each day. Correct performance of the prescribed exercises, as well as operation of the apparatus 2 may be explained to the patient before the patient is sent home to conduct the program of exercises in their own home, away from the direct supervision of the physiotherapist.

When the patient is ready to conduct the exercises in their home, the patient first attaches the apparatus 2 to the appropriate limb using the strap 8. The strap 8 is passed around the limb of the patient, the two ends 36 of the strap 8 being passed through their respective openings 34 and folded back to fasten against the encircling portion of the strap 8. It is envisaged that Velcro® or a similar fastening mechanism may be used, allowing for considerable adjustment to accommodate different limb circumferences. Such a system offers the advantage of combining both attachment and adjustment of the strap in a single action. In the case of a patient requiring rehabilitation of a lower limb, the apparatus 2 offers the additional advantage that it may be attached to the lower limb with the patient in a sitting position, without requiring significant flexibility or dexterity on the part of the patient.

Once the apparatus 2 is comfortably attached to the limb, the patient commences the first exercise of their assigned program. As the patient moves their limb with the attached apparatus 2, the accelerometer and gyroscope of the motion sensing unit 10 sense the motion of the limb and the processing unit 16 calculates the mean and standard deviation and then compares the sensed motion pattern to the motion patterns stored in the memory 18. Suitable sampling rates, time intervals and measurement resolution may be selected for the accelerometer and gyroscope to facilitate exercise recognition. The k-nearest neighbour algorithm may also be used to assist with pattern recognition. If the processing unit 16 recognises the sensed motion pattern as resembling a stored motion pattern corresponding to an assigned exercise of the patient program, the processing unit 16 causes the array of feedback LEDs to glow an assigned colour (for example green). In some examples, the timing of the glow may be matched to the motion of an exercise. For example, if the exercise comprises lateral leg raises, the feedback LEDs may glow progressively as the leg is raised and fade as the leg is lowered. In this manner, the patient is reassured that they are conducting the exercise approximately correctly, as their motion is sufficiently close to the stored motion pattern for the exercise to have been recognised. If at any time this exercise recognition feedback stops, this indicates that the motion pattern no longer matches the stored pattern, and the patient is reminded to check that they are still conducting the exercise properly. If the apparatus 2 additionally comprises an audible feedback device such as a buzzer, this may be used to provide alternative or additional exercise recognition feedback, ensuring that the patient may receive this feedback even when the exercise results in the apparatus being out of view or difficultly visible by the patient (for example during rear leg raises). Each completed repetition of

an exercise is stored in the memory 18 along with a time stamp and the degree of accuracy with which the exercise was conducted, i.e. the extent to which the sensed motion pattern matched the stored motion pattern. The threshold level for pattern similarity allowing exercise recognition may be adjusted to require a greater or lesser degree of accuracy in conducting an exercise before the exercise is recognised.

In some embodiments, the processing unit 16 may cause the number of LEDs providing exercise recognition feedback to represent the proportion of the allotted program of exercises so far completed. For example, if the program consists of a total of 20 repetitions, 10 repetitions of each of two different exercises, and the LED bank comprises 10 bi-colour feedback LEDs, the processing unit 16 may cause a single LED to glow providing exercise recognition feedback for the first two repetitions. For the third and fourth repetition, both the originally glowing LED and a neighbouring LED may be caused to glow in synchronisation with the completing of the exercises. The LEDs may be progressively illuminated as the repetitions are completed, showing the patient at a glance how far through the day's assigned program of exercises he or she has progressed. This progression feedback may also be requested by the patient during a pause in activity by pushing the push button 100. Depression of the push button 100 when an exercise is not taking place may be interpreted as a request for progression feedback, and the processing unit 16 may cause an appropriate number of LEDs to glow their assigned colour (for example green) to demonstrate the proportion of the day's prescribed exercises that have been completed.

During completion of any exercise, the patient may provide feedback to the apparatus 2 via the input unit 12. This may be particularly advantageous in allowing the user to indicate a level of pain or discomfort experienced during completion of the exercise. The pain or discomfort experienced during particular exercises can provide valuable insight to the supervising physiotherapist as to the progress of the rehabilitation. By enabling the patient to provide that feedback during completion of the exercises, the apparatus contributes to gathering and storing relevant information on which the supervising physiotherapist may base further treatment.

A level of pain or discomfort may be input by the patient by turning the rotary knob 76 during or shortly after completion of an exercise. When turning of the rotary knob 76 is registered by the rotary encoder 78, the pulse generated by the encoder 78 is transmitted to the processing unit 16 which causes the bi-colour LEDs to illuminate in

their second colour (for example blue) according to the amount of rotation detected.

The more the rotary knob 76 is turned, the greater the number of illuminated LEDs,

indicating a greater degree of pain. The LEDs are progressively illuminated in either a clockwise or anticlockwise direction, according to the direction in which the rotary knob

5 is turned, thus allowing for both left and right handed patients. After an initial rotation in a first direction, causing illumination of an appropriate number of LEDs, should the rotary knob 76 be rotated back in an opposite direction to the initial rotation, the illuminated LEDs are progressively turned off. The patient may thus adjust the amount of rotation to indicate precisely the level of discomfort they are feeling from a minimum  
10 level of zero pain (no turning of the rotary knob 54 and hence no LEDs illuminated) to a maximum level of pain (all LEDs illuminated). Once the patient is satisfied that the proportion of LEDs lit accurately reflects his or her level of discomfort, the patient presses the push button 100 to register the pain input, at which point the pain level is saved in the memory 18 along with a time stamp, allowing the pain input to be matched  
15 to the exercise being conducted at the time the pain input was provided. The step of pressing the push button 100 to register pain feedback from the patient ensures that any accidental rotation of the knob is not mistaken for pain feedback, as well as allowing time for the patient to adjust the pain level to accurately reflect their experience before it is saved in the memory 18.

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Once the patient has finished exercising they may remove the apparatus 2 until the next exercise session. In some examples, the apparatus 2 may incorporate a reminder function, causing the LEDs to glow on and off periodically even when no motion is sensed, so as to remind the patient that the exercise program for the current day has

25

not yet been conducted. Pressing of the push button 100 during the reminder may “snooze” or cancel the reminder. If at any time the patient notices the battery feedback LED glowing red, the patient knows to place the apparatus 2 on charge for example via a suitable USB cable and charger. If the patient notices the memory LED glowing red, this suggests that at the next appointment with the physiotherapist, the patient data

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should be downloaded to a computer or other suitable device and deleted from the memory, to free up additional capacity. During data download, the battery may additionally be recharged using the computer or other device’s power source. In view of the need for physiotherapist to download data from the apparatus memory, it is envisaged that the memory LED would start to indicate low memory well before the

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memory is actually exhausted.

During the patient's next appointment with the physiotherapist, the physiotherapist may download the data stored on the memory to a computer, allowing both the physiotherapist and the patient to study the data recorded in order to assess the patient's progress. A suitable computer platform may be developed to represent the data recorded on the apparatus to the physiotherapist and user, for example in graphic form. Examples of insights that may be gained by the physiotherapist thanks to the data collected by the apparatus 2 include:

- To what extent the prescribed program of exercises was completed
- With what degree of accuracy the prescribed exercises were completed
- Which, if any, exercises caused particular discomfort

These insights may assist the physiotherapist in determining the effectiveness of the prescribed program and identifying any additional explanation or demonstration that may be needed as well as future modification of the program to accommodate the patient's progress. The input received from the patient concerning levels of pain or discomfort experienced enables the identification of problem movements and areas of difficulty, so enabling accurate targeting and evolution of the patient's future rehabilitation program.

The apparatus functionality described above is achieved by appropriate interaction between the components of the apparatus 2, managed by the processing unit 16. An example of process flow for the processing unit 16 is illustrated in Figure 9 and discussed in further detail below.

The process flow 200 starts at step 202 and follows three principle interlinked strands according to whether the turn knob 76 is rotated, the push button 100 is pressed and/or movement is sensed. At each break point in the process flow, the process returns to the start step 102. In a step 204, the processing unit 16 determines whether or not the turn knob 76 has been rotated. If the turn knob 76 has not been rotated, the process flow breaks. If the turn knob 76 has been rotated (Yes at step 204), the rotary encoder value is updated at step 206 and the updated encoder value is then mapped to the number of feedback LEDs, allowing the appropriate number of feedback LEDs to be illuminated in the appropriate colour (for example blue) in step 208. In this manner, the continuous input from the turn knob 76 is translated to discrete feedback elements (the illuminated LEDs) to give the user an easy to read representation of the input they have

provided. The amount of turn knob rotation required for each new LED to be illuminated may be selected to facilitate maximum ease of use. For example, a single complete revolution of the turn knob 76 may equate to all of the feedback LEDs being illuminated, i.e. maximum pain level. For a bank of 10 LEDs, this equates to a rotation of 36 degrees per illuminated LED, and represents a balance between the motor control required in the user to manipulate the turn knob accurately and the speed with which the user may navigate from minimum to maximum pain input.

The LEDs are lit in sequence from a first LED until the appropriate number of LEDs is lit to represent the amount of rotation registered. The processing unit 16 then starts a timer in step 210 and checks for expiry of the timer in step 212. If the timer has not yet reached a threshold value (Yes in step 212) then the processing unit 16 checks for registering of depression of the push button 100 in step 214. While no pressing of the push button 100 has been registered, the processing unit 16 continues to check for expiry of the timer (No in step 214 and Yes in step 212). If the timer expires before the push button 100 is pressed (No in step 212) then the feedback LEDs are turned off in step 216 and the process flow breaks. If the push button 100 is pressed before the timer expires (Yes in step 214) then the user input is registered by printing the number of illuminated LEDs at step 218 and writing this data to the memory 18 in step 220 along with a time stamp of the time at which the push button 100 was pressed to register the user input. Following printing of the number of illuminated LEDs at step 218, the LEDs are turned off in sequence until the last LED (the first to be lit) is blinked for an interval of for example three seconds at step 222 before also being turned off at step 224. Having completed registering of the patient input, the process flow then breaks to return to the start.

From the start step 202, in a step 226, the processing unit 16 determines whether or not the push button 100 has been pressed. If the push button 100 has not been pressed (No in step 226), the process flow breaks. If the push button 100 has been pressed, the processing unit 16 checks the record of completed exercise repetitions for the day, compares this to the stored patient program in the memory and maps the proportion of the program which has been completed to the number of feedback LEDs in step 228. The processing unit then lights the mapped number of feedback LEDs in sequence at step 230 and blinks the last LED to be lit for a time interval of for example 3 seconds, indicating to the user the proportion of exercise repetitions completed for



the present day. After the time interval has expired, all LEDs are switched off at step 232 and the process flow breaks to return to the start.

From the start step 202, in a step 234 the accelerometer and gyroscope of the motion sensing unit 10 sense motion of the apparatus 2. The processing unit 16 then  
 5 conducts exercise recognition in steps 236 to 244. In step 236 the sensed data is written into an array appropriate to the sample size selected for the accelerometer and gyroscope. In step 238, the mean and standard deviation for each axis are calculated and these are then compared to the motion patterns of the stored exercises in the  
 10 memory 18 at step 240. The comparison is conducted by subtracting the mean and standard deviations of the sensed data from the mean and standard deviation values for the motion patterns of each of the stored exercises. Each exercise comparison produces a results value and the lowest of these values is selected in step 242. Owing to the subtraction calculation, the lowest results value represents the stored exercise  
 15 which most closely resembles the sensed motion pattern. In step 244 this lowest value is compared to a threshold value representing exercise recognition. If the value is not below the threshold (No at step 244) then the sensed exercise pattern is not sufficiently similar to any of the stored exercise patterns to be recognised as one of the stored exercises. The process flow then breaks and returns to the start at step 202. If the  
 20 lowest value is below the threshold value (Yes at step 244) then the sensed exercise has been recognised as the stored exercise corresponding to the lowest comparison value. The exercise number of this exercise is printed in step 246 and the feedback LEDs are temporarily illuminated an appropriate colour (for example green) in step 248. The counter for the recognised exercise is then increased by 1 in step 250 before the  
 25 process flow breaks and returns to the start. It will be appreciated that the exercise counter that is updated at step 250 is used in step 228 to assemble the total number of completed exercises for the day and compare this to the stored patient program.

The flow chart of Figure 9 illustrates an example in which progress feedback is given  
 30 after each exercise repetition. After a recognised exercise has been completed for a single repetition, and the exercise counter has been increased by one at step 250, the processing unit proceeds to steps 228, 230 and 232 in which the daily progress through the stored program is calculated and represented to the user through illumination of the appropriate proportion of feedback LEDs. In other examples, (not  
 35 illustrated), progress feedback and exercise recognition may be combined by lighting the appropriate number of LEDs to give progress feedback during the exercise

recognition feedback step 248. Alternatively, the two feedback elements may be completely separate, with all LEDs glowing for exercise recognition and progress feedback only being given on request via pushing of the push button 100.

- 5 Additional variations to the process flow illustrated in Figure 9 may be envisaged. For example, while checking for pushing of the button in step 214, the processing unit may also check for further rotation of the turn knob 76, in either the initial or reverse directions. Such rotation, if detected, may be reflected in the number of LEDs illuminated and may cause a restarting of the timer of step 210. Additionally, should  
10 the timer of step 210 expire before the push button 100 is pressed, the number of LEDs illuminated at the time of expiry may be stored in a temporary memory. As soon as further rotation is sensed, the last saved LED configuration may be retrieved such that the same number of LEDs are immediately illuminated, returning the user to their last input situation. Once input is registered by pressing of the push button 100, the  
15 temporary memory may be cleared. In this manner, should a user take longer than the threshold delay to decide whether the illustrated pain level is representative before pushing the push button 100, they may recommence immediately simply by making an additional rotational motion of the knob 76.
- 20 A reminder function may also be incorporated into the process flow of Figure 9. For example, at specified times of day the feedback LEDs may be programmed to glow if no exercises have yet been sensed by the apparatus 2 during the day. During display of the reminder, pressing the push button 100 may have the effect of “snoozing” or cancelling the reminder.
- 25 Another variation to the process flow and functionality which may be considered includes the addition of a further LED within the push button 100. According to one example, this push button LED may be caused to glow as soon as rotation of the knob 76 is registered, so prompting the user to push the push button 100 and so register the  
30 pain input information.

The three principle strands of process flow shown in Figure 9 (following rotation of the turn knob 76, pushing of the push button 100 or sensed motion) are illustrated as running substantially in parallel. A hierarchy may be imposed to address potential  
35 conflict between the strands, should multiple actions taking place contemporaneously cause conflicting instructions for example regarding the number of LEDs to be

illuminated. In one example, the hierarchy may place user input of maximum importance, such that illuminating LEDs to reflect rotation of the turn knob 76 (pain input) will always be given priority over illuminating the LEDs for any other reason, for example to provide progress feedback. Alternative priorities for LED illumination may  
 5 be envisaged for particular use cases.

Figures 10a to 10f illustrate feedback states of the array of LEDs forming the feedback unit 14. In the illustrated arrangement, the array comprises 10 bi-colour (green/blue) feedback LEDs, 1 red battery LED and 1 red memory LED. The bi-colour LEDs are  
 10 illuminated green for progress feedback and exercise recognition, and blue to represent pain input. The array is illustrated as a single linear array for ease of representation. However it will be appreciated that in the examples of Figures 1 to 7, the bi-colour LEDs are arranged in a circular array, with LED1 adjacent to LED10, and the red battery and memory LEDs are mounted on a side of the apparatus 2. Each of  
 15 Figures 10a to 10f illustrates illumination of the various LEDs against time for different feedback situations.

Figure 10a represents progress feedback, prompted by pressing of the push button 100 without turning of the turn knob 76. In the illustrated case, the proportion of the  
 20 assigned program of exercises that have been completed maps to 6 out of the 10 LEDs being illuminated green. LED1 is illuminated first, followed by LED2, LED3, etc until LED 7 is caused to flash, signalling that the user has completed 60% of the exercises and is currently working towards 70% of the program.

25 Figure 10b illustrates battery and memory feedback. The memory LED is glowing solid red, indicating that the available memory space is approaching low values and the stored data should be cleared at the next opportunity. When the available memory reaches a critical level, the memory LED will blink red. The battery LED is blinking red, indicating that the battery is low and should be charged. A solid glowing battery LED  
 30 would indicate that the battery is approaching low status while the blinking LED indicates the battery has reached low levels and should be charged.

Figure 10c illustrates pain input from a user. The user has turned the turn knob 76 by an amount corresponding to 5 of the 10 LEDs being illuminated (blue). The user then  
 35 pushes the push button 100 to register the pain input, at which point the LEDs sequentially turned off, starting with LED1 until only the last illuminated LED (LED5)

remains. This last LED begins to blink, indicating successful registration of the pain input before also being turned off.

Figure 10d illustrates exercise recognition. On recognising completion of a stored exercise, the processor causes all of the bi-colour LEDs to blink (green) together, indicating that the current exercise has been recognised. As discussed above, the feedback situations of Figure 10a (progress feedback) and 10d (exercise recognition) may be combined by causing only the number of LEDs corresponding to the proportion of the assigned program which has been completed to blink on recognising completion of the stored exercise. Thus in the example of Figures 10a and 10d, the first 6 LEDs would blink on recognition of the exercise. Once enough additional exercise repetitions have been completed to represent completion of 70% of the assigned program, 7 out of the 10 LEDs would blink to single exercise recognition, and so on.

Figure 10e illustrates the reminder function, with all bi-colour LEDs blinking alternately blue and green while no movement is taking place, reminding the user to perform their exercises.

Figure 10f illustrates synchronisation with a computer, during which data may be uploaded to and downloaded from the apparatus 2. During this time the bi-colour LEDs may be each individually illuminated in sequence.

The apparatus 2 thus represents a self-contained monitoring unit with which a user may interact both to receive feedback and to provide input. The continuous input device enables the capture of relatively detailed information concerning user pain in a manner that is easy to master for users of all ages and abilities. The combination of discrete and continuous user input devices further facilitates the capture and display of information useful both to a user and to a medical practitioner such as a physiotherapist.

**CLAIMS**

1. Apparatus for user exercise monitoring, comprising:  
5       a frame;  
       a motion sensing unit and a user input unit supported by the frame; and  
       a harness configured to secure the frame to a user body part;  
 wherein the user input unit comprises a continuous input device.
- 10   2. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the continuous input device comprises  
       a rotary device.
3. Apparatus as claimed in claim 2, wherein the rotary device comprises a turn knob  
       and cooperating rotary displacement measurement element.
- 15   4. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the motion sensing  
       unit comprises at least one of an accelerometer and a gyroscope.
5. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein the user input  
20       unit further comprises a discrete input device.
6. Apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the discrete input device comprises a  
       push button.
- 25   7. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, further comprising a  
       feedback unit supported by the frame.
8. Apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein the feedback unit comprises a plurality  
       of light sources.
- 30   9. Apparatus as claimed in claim 7 or 8, wherein the feedback unit is configured to  
       represent input from the input unit.
10. Apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, further comprising a  
35       memory and a processing unit and wherein the memory and processing unit are also  
       supported by the frame.

11. Apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the processing unit is configured to receive data from the motion sensing unit and identify completion of exercises represented by motion patterns stored in the memory.

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12. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the processing unit is further configured to store a record of completed exercises in the memory.

13. Apparatus as claimed in any one of claims 10 to 12, when dependent on claim 7, wherein the feedback unit is further configured to display feedback from the processing unit.

14. A method for monitoring user exercise via a monitoring apparatus secured to the user, the method comprising:  
 15       sensing user motion with the monitoring apparatus; and  
           receiving, via the monitoring apparatus, user input during exercise;  
 wherein the user input is received via a continuous input device on the monitoring apparatus.

20   15. A method as claimed in claim 14, wherein the user input corresponds to a level of pain experienced by the user during completion of an exercise.

16. A method as claimed in claim 14 or 15, further comprising storing the received user input on the monitoring apparatus.

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17. A method as claimed in any one of claims 14 to 16, further comprising identifying within the monitoring apparatus sensed motion patterns corresponding to exercises stored in the monitoring apparatus.

30   18. A method as claimed in claim 17, further comprising providing feedback to the user via the monitoring apparatus on identifying completion of a motion pattern corresponding to a stored exercise.

19. A method as claimed in claim 17 or 18, further comprising storing a record of  
 35   exercises completed by the user on the monitoring apparatus.

20. A method as claimed in claim 19, further comprising associating, in the stored record of completed exercises, received user feedback with the exercise being completed at the time of receipt of the user feedback.

5 21. A method as claimed in any one of claims 17 to 20, further comprising comparing a sensed motion pattern to the stored motion pattern of the identified exercise and storing in the monitoring apparatus a degree of accuracy with which the exercise is completed by the user.

10 22. A method as claimed in any one of claims 17 to 21, further comprising storing a program of exercises for the user on the monitoring apparatus; and providing feedback via the monitoring apparatus to the user indicating the proportion of the program completed by the user.

15 23. A method as claimed in claim 22, further comprising reminding the user via the monitoring apparatus when the stored program has not been completed by the user.

24. Apparatus and method substantially as described herein, with reference to and as shown in the accompanying drawings.



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**Examiner:** Mr Daniel Jones

**Claims searched:** 1-24

**Date of search:** 21 March 2014

## Patents Act 1977: Search Report under Section 17

### Documents considered to be relevant:

Category	Relevant to claims	Identity of document and passage or figure of particular relevance
X	1-4, 6-8, 10, 12-16 at least.	US2009/187121 A1 (CAMNTECH LTD) Whole doc. is relevant, see para 43, clms 5, 14.
X	1-14, 16-19, 21 at least.	US2010/261146 A1 (KIM DONG KYUN) Whole doc. is relevant.
X	1-14, 16-19, 21-23 at least	US2012/046907 A1 (SCOTT TRAVIS) Whole doc. is relevant.
X	1-3, 5-10, 12-14, 16 at least.	WO99/49279 A1 (ROOT GARY MILLER) Whole doc. is relevant.
X	1-20, 22 at least.	GB2501799 A (SPORTMED AG) Whole doc. is relevant.
X	1-14, 16-19 at least.	US2011/199205 A1 (KREML STEPHANIE SUE LING) Whole doc. is relevant, see fig. 1c.
X	1, 14 at least.	US2011/046519 A1 (RAHEMAN FAZAL) Whole doc. is relevant.
X	1-20 at least.	US2010/280440 A1 (MEDTRONIC INC) Whole doc. is relevant, but see abstract and paras 119, 120.
X	1, 14 at least.	WO2009/144325 A1 (CUNCTUS AB et al.) Whole doc. is relevant.
A	-	WO2012/021878 A1 (ERMI INC et al.) See figs. 17, 36 at least.

### Categories:

X	Document indicating lack of novelty or inventive step	A	Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.
Y	Document indicating lack of inventive step if	P	Document published on or after the declared priority date but





combined with one or more other documents of same category.	before the filing date of this invention.
& Member of the same patent family	E Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of this application.

**Field of Search:**

Search of GB, EP, WO & US patent documents classified in the following areas of the UKC<sup>X</sup> :

Worldwide search of patent documents classified in the following areas of the IPC

A61B; A63B

The following online and other databases have been used in the preparation of this search report

WPI, EPODOC

**International Classification:**

Subclass	Subgroup	Valid From
A61B	0005/11	01/01/2006
A63B	0024/00	01/01/2006