

## **ProtoStar™ Announces the LifeWalker™ Upright, a New Medical Walker Designed to Enable Users to Stand Upright and Walk Safer and Longer for Improved Health**

**San Diego, February 3, 2016,** ProtoStar™, Inc., a designer and developer of advanced medical assistive mobility devices, announced today the launch of the LifeWalker™ Upright, a next-generation medical walker designed to enable users to stand upright and walk safer, longer and more comfortably than with currently available, less stable walkers and canes. The Company will debut the LifeWalker Upright at the Combined Sections Meeting of the American Physical Therapy Association, February 18-20, 2016, in Anaheim, CA, and at Medtrade Spring, March 1-2, 2016, in Las Vegas, NV.

The advanced, proprietary design of the LifeWalker Upright specifically addresses the deficiencies of current walkers, including fall risk, slouching, and lack of user confidence and comfort. The product's design allows the user to walk within the walker's footprint, creating a contained, safer environment, as compared to existing walkers in which users walk behind the device. The LifeWalker Upright features adjustable armrests and handles that enable users to stand tall and look ahead, providing better support and stability than conventional walkers.

The design of the LifeWalker Upright incorporates a high-tech metal frame built for stability and strength, giving users a greater sense of security and the confidence to walk longer and become more active. Adjustable to fit patients of different heights, the LifeWalker Upright includes handles that help patients stand up, and caliper brakes and shock absorbers for greater comfort, stability and safety.

ProtoStar intends to market the LifeWalker Upright to physical, occupational and neurological therapists to help patients recovering from joint replacement surgery and needing assistance in regaining their normal gait, and to the less-abled, including the elderly and patients who have neurologic or orthopedic disorders.

Steven R. Garfin, M.D., distinguished professor and chair, UC San Diego Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, stated, "Having assessed the LifeWalker prototype in our Department for both post-operative and non-operative patients, the device proved to be a useful new tool that we believe will make a positive difference when used in rehabilitating joint replacement, spine and other recovering orthopedic surgery patients. The LifeWalker product may help them walk sooner, farther and safer than with other devices currently available to rehabilitation therapists. For those who are long-term users of walkers, the LifeWalker product may help them walk longer, and provide a safer, more comfortable way to continue walking rather than going to a wheelchair. This should improve general health for those users, as well as possibly reducing back, foot, hip and leg pain."

"We developed the LifeWalker Upright to help patients recovering from joint replacement surgery and needing assistance in regaining their normal gait, and for the less-abled, including the elderly and patients who have neurologic or orthopedic disorders," stated David Purcell, founder, chairman and chief executive officer of ProtoStar. "Launching the LifeWalker Upright is a major advancement in assistive mobility with the potential of enabling millions of people to walk longer and safer, as compared to existing walkers, while restoring their dignity and confidence."

## Medical Mobility Device Market

Growing market demand for medical mobility devices is driven by an aging population and the associated risk of falls among the elderly, and by joint replacement rehab, spinal cord injuries, neurological, gait and orthopedic disorders, as well as obesity. In 2013, the total cost of fall injuries was \$34 billion, and is expected to rise to \$67.7 billion by 2020.

One-third of those over 65, or more than 12 million people in the U.S. fall each year, resulting in 2.4 million injuries treated in the emergency room and 772,000 hospitalizations. Falls account for about 424,000 deaths globally each year. In addition, there are up to 500,000 spinal cord injuries each year due largely to preventable causes such as falls, as well as one million joint replacements.

A 2009 review of admissions to emergency departments conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) revealed that more than 47,000 older people are treated each year in the U.S. for falls associated with walkers and canes, with 87% of those accidents involving walkers. These statistics have led the CDC to state that “additional studies are needed to better understand fall risk factors for older adults who use walkers and canes, as well as to identify potential design problems and improve the design of walkers.”

More than 8.5 million medical mobility devices are sold annually today, with the global medical mobility device market totaling \$4.0 billion in 2013. North America accounts for 35 percent of global revenue. Market growth is expected to be 9.2 percent per year with global sales projected to reach \$8.0 billion by 2020.

### About ProtoStar, Inc.

ProtoStar, Inc., headquartered in San Diego, is a newly formed company focused on the design and commercialization of a new category of assistive mobility products that are referred to as “upright walkers,” which the Company believes will create a new paradigm in medical walkers that will prove to be safer for patients, provide for improved stability, result in better health, and allow patients to walk longer and further. The Company’s mission is to create mobility devices that improve the lives of people who need assistance with walking as a result of aging, trauma, spine or joint replacement surgery, musculoskeletal, neurological and gait disorders, and obesity. For additional information please see [www.lifewalkerupright.com](http://www.lifewalkerupright.com) or [www.protostar.us](http://www.protostar.us).

### Company Contact:

Tom Forgeron  
Vice President, Sales and Marketing  
619-350-0150  
[tomf@protostar.us](mailto:tomf@protostar.us)

### Media Contact:

Scott Rieger  
619-994-5994  
[scott.rieger@protostar.us](mailto:scott.rieger@protostar.us)