



Personal Support Plus



Keeping you...

in the loop

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Susanne Jones
Operational Manager
Personal Support Plus

Manager's Message

EziPay system launches this month

In April and May 2012, Personal Support Plus formally launches the EziPay system across the state. The launch comes after a successful pilot program that commenced in October 2011 and lasted six months. Results were great and the response was positive. We sincerely thank the PSWs who were involved.

PSWs in North and Central Queensland will go live with the EziPay system in April and our teams in south east Queensland will go live in May. If you have not received a letter regarding the go live date applicable to you, please contact your Client Service Officer. All PSWs will have the opportunity to test the system for two to three weeks prior to going live. Then, you can happily leave paper timesheets behind for good!

With the introduction of EziPay it is important that you keep in contact with your Client Service Officer whenever your shift changes, particularly if you stay longer than the rostered shift. Make sure you read the letter and its instructions carefully and contact your Client Service Officer to discuss any concerns you might have.

With your help, Personal Support Plus and the Spinal Injuries Association can realise many benefits from this change, which will enable us to give back to our clients.

Add more skills to your experience

Skilling Solutions Queensland is the Queensland Government's free training and career information service. Their face-to-face service will provide you with important information on:

- ◆ Formal skills recognition
- ◆ Career pathways
- ◆ Training options

It works like this — specially trained consultants can work with you to identify opportunities to turn your workplace experience into a formal qualification through recognition of prior learning (RPL). Or, if you are seeking a career change or wish to re-enter the workforce, they can work with you to explore career and up-skilling options.

The service is free!

Skilling Solutions Queensland can help you open new doors:

- ◆ If you're working and have no formal qualifications.
- ◆ If you're ready to re-enter the workforce.
- ◆ If you need a qualification for legislative requirements.
- ◆ If you are seeking a promotion.
- ◆ If you're planning to move from volunteer or community work to paid employment.
- ◆ If you want to undertake formal study.
- ◆ Skilling Solutions consultants will take into account your specific skills, background and circumstances and work with you to provide information on possible career and training choices.

Your previous skills and experience are valuable!

Skilling Solutions Queensland can work with you to identify the qualification that best matches your skills and experience and provide you with an indication of the recognition of prior learning you could achieve.

They can then refer you onto a network of training organisations across Queensland who are contracted to provide the formal recognition of prior learning process to referred Skilling Solutions Queensland customers.

The training organisation will work with you to gather evidence of your skill level and assess your work experience against the formal qualification.



The recognition of prior learning process will also identify if you are required to undertake any gap training to gain the entire qualification.

And, subsidies of up to \$1,000 are available towards the cost of the formal assessment for eligible Skilling Solutions Queensland customers, depending on the qualification.

This means you could gain a nationally recognised qualification as evidence of your skill level in less time and at a reduced cost!

To access Skilling Solutions Queensland's services and general enquiries, phone 1300 654 687 between 8.30am -4.45pm (EST, excluding public holidays) or visit www.skillingsolutions.qld.gov.au.

Continued learning secures Jane a golden career opportunity

If gold medals were given out for most extreme career changes, then Townsville Client Service Officer (CSO) Jane Gullison would be on top of the podium.

The enthusiastic North Queenslander began her career at the Spinal Injuries Association as a Personal Support Worker (PSW) at the end of 2010.



Married with two young children, Jane decided her seven year career in the Australian Army (*pictured left*) would need to draw to a close given her family responsibilities.

"I was looking for something that I could do to combine work and family and a job ad for a PSW jumped out at me," Jane said.

"Before I joined the army I was a support worker for people who had disabilities in Goulburn, New South Wales and I'd loved the work."

While the personal support work industry had changed quite dramatically in the years in between, Jane adapted to the changes and decided she wanted to further her knowledge about the sector.

"While working as a PSW I also studied a Certificate III in Aged Care. As a PSW I had all of these great ideas on ways of further developing the role, so I approached the Association office and offered to volunteer in order to learn more about how the organisation works," Jane said.

Read more over page...

After completing the Certificate, Jane's interest in the sector deepened so she began a Diploma of Community Services.

"It was tough balancing study with work and family but my seven years in the Army had given me the confidence and self-belief that I could do anything," Jane said.

Pictured: Jane's husband Luke, son Tannar, 5, and daughter Mackenzie, 7.



During her armed forces tenure Jane was a Cargo Specialist, which involved working on a wharf driving trucks and loading and unloading trucks and trains. She then became a Movements Operator, the equivalent of a travel consultant in the civilian world. This gave her the opportunity for regular travel and plenty of variety and she said she treasured her time in the Army. Her husband Luke is still in the Army, giving Jane an ongoing connection to the culture that she loves.

While working as a PSW and nearing the end of her studies, Jane applied for a vacant role of CSO with the Association and was delighted to receive the job.

Jane said her field experience as a PSW had complimented her current role as she knew the challenges, good points and frustrations associated with the position.

"Knowing those challenges, I have established a presentation to deliver to our PSWs to give them a better insight into the entire Association and how the different departments support members and clients and how this can support their work," she said.

With plenty of new initiatives on the boiler, including a potential partnership with a Townsville training organisation to give PSWs the opportunity to complete a Certificate III in Disability at no cost, Jane said she was just getting started and couldn't wait to continue adding value to the service delivered by North Queensland PSWs.



Five Minutes With....Helen Downey, Personal Support Worker, Brisbane

Nickname? I have claimed the name of Grandma. I have three grandchildren and another due in August.

Pets? No pets. I like my 2 ornament ceramic cats.

Most extravagant thing you've ever bought? My new Mitsubishi

Lancer (love that car...).

Five people (living or deceased) you would invite to a dinner party? My mother, Jesus Christ, Joan Collins, Helen of Troy and Beethoven.

Favourite book? I study the Bible.

Your perfect Sunday? I love the feeling of a perfect blue sky and a country drive.

What was your dream career as a child? A fashion designer.

What's a daggie song that you love? *Sadie the Cleaning Lady*. I have done a lot of cleaning through the years.

What do you prefer – summer or winter? I love the growth of summer and short days of winter.

Where did you grow up? I grew up in the country on dairy farms around Gympie.

Favourite ice-cream flavour? Vanilla with chocolate chip.

Show your support for people with disabilities



www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au

What: Make the National Disability Insurance Scheme Real Rally.

When: Monday, 30 April 2012

Where: From South Bank to Brisbane's CBD

Time: 12pm-2pm

The Brisbane rally will be one of a number of rallies held across Australian capital cities that day.

The rally will call for:

- Legislation to pass the NDIS – supported by every federal MP and Senator regardless of which political party they represent
- An announcement of the proposed NDIS launch site/s

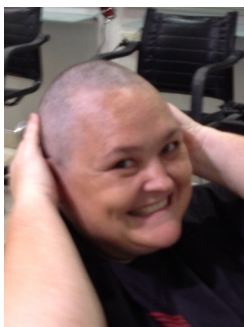
For more information, please visit www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au.

If you live outside of Brisbane and are unable to attend, please encourage family and friends to attend.



Donna loses her locks

In February we featured a story about



Donna Potts, a Brisbane PSW, who planned to shave her head for the World's Greatest Shave event. Well she's done it!

Pictured is Donna, before and after. Well done!

Meet the Transition Team



Gemma (left) and Samantha.

Samantha Timmins, Client Service Officer

For the past 2.5 years I have managed the high support program and worked with clients who use ventilators. I transferred to the transition team in February and I look forward to reviewing and improving our transition processes and working with new clients. Prior to that I worked as a Personal Support Worker for 18 months, followed by a six-month placement in the Brisbane office as part of my social science degree.

Gemma Fleischfresser, Client Service Officer

I began working for the organisation in February and so far I love it. I was a nurse working with patients who had brain and spinal injuries at home in Scotland before I moved here in December with my Aussie husband. I love the Aussie lifestyle and weather way better than -15 degree days with three feet of snow and "gey dreech" everyday. I love how intent on client choice the organisation is and passionate the Personal Support Workers are and I look forward to my contributions here. "Fare ye weel for noo..."

Welcome to our Workplace Health & Safety Manager



John 'Chuck' McInnes joined the Spinal Injuries Association as the Workplace Health & Safety Manager in February after a colourful career. Chuck spent 20 years in the Royal Australian Navy as a Senior Medic, a rewarding role that included postings in most Australian states; the USA's Naval Hospital ship USNS Comfort for the duration of the first Gulf War off Kuwait that involved front-line care to allied forces casualties; Russia; Hawaii (Pearl Harbour); Guam; Manila; Thailand; and others!

Leaving the Navy in 2000, Chuck decided to take a new direction and held health and safety management positions with Amcor, SITA and Spiritus.

"I enjoy the safety roles because I have moved from a history of responding and treating injuries and trauma to a proactive role in injury prevention and with my history in medicine, can identify potential consequences to unsafe work practices," Chuck said.

"I look forward to the challenges ahead of managing the Health and Safety of both our workers and clients and have an expectation that we have a reporting culture in hazards and incidents to ensure that everyone goes home at the end of the working day the same way they started."

Chuck is married with two sons (aged 21 and 20) and three daughters (aged 12, seven and three).

PSW positions vacant

South Brisbane:

Kangaroo Point
Wynnum West
Yeronga
Hemmant
Cleveland
Birkdale
Wakerley
East Brisbane
West End
Capalaba

Inner City/North Brisbane and Sunshine Coast:

Aspley
Carseldine
Wights Mountain
Warner
Fortitude Valley
Clayfield
Stafford

Yeppoon
Parramatta Park

Visit www.spinal.com.au and follow the "Working with us" prompts for more information.