Annual Classic Wallabies Lunch

Friday, 4 April 2014

The annual Classic Wallabies Lunch is into its ninth year and is set to be another fantastic afternoon of rugby and sports banter. With all proceeds donated to the Spinal Injuries Association, guests pack into Brisbane’s Hilton Hotel where they enjoy a sumptuous three course lunch while being treated to an up close and personal insights of the game from former Wallaby and All Blacks greats.

All Blacks great Stu Wilson, Australian cricket coach Darren Lehmann, current Queensland Reds captain and Wallaby James Horwill and former Wallabies captain Andrew Slack, will be in attendance at the event.

Date: Friday, 4 April 2014
Time: 12pm to 4.30pm
Venue: Ballroom, Hilton Hotel, 190 Elizabeth Street, Brisbane
Tickets: $160 +GST each or $1,600 +GST for a table of 10
Dress Code: Business attire
RSVP/Book tickets by: Friday, 28 March 2014

To book tickets or to find out more, please contact Rebecca Hutton on 3435 3184 or rhutton@spinal.com.au or check out our website at www.spinal.com.au/events/classic-wallabies-lunch/.
Welcome everyone to the first edition of the InterComm for 2014. I hope you all had a wonderful festive season with your loved ones, and that you are ready for a busy and exciting year ahead.

**Member Survey Results**
We have now received the results of the 2013 Association Survey, which was sent to all members and clients. For 2013, the percentage of respondents increased by 27% compared with the previous year, which was fantastic to see. More than half of the total respondents (54%) received direct services from the Association such as personal support. As the majority of respondents were aged between 50 and 69 years old, one of the main concerns for many were issues surrounding funding and access to services after the age of 65. More than 92% of respondents felt that the Association advocated well on their behalf, which is a positive result. Overall, the respondents indicated they were more than satisfied with the services provided by the Association. The feedback we received through this survey will now be reviewed to identify potential areas for improvement in future.

**Progress with the change of name to ‘Spinal Injuries Australia Limited’**
We are continuing our progress in gaining the necessary approvals for our change from an Incorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee. As mentioned in previous issues of the InterComm, we will no longer be referred to as an Association when this conversion occurs. Therefore, our name will be changing to Spinal Injuries Australia Ltd. This change has not happened as yet and you will be notified when it is time to start using the new name. We have a working group in place to ensure this transition will be a smooth one, including how we will be communicating this information to members and clients. If you have any questions, please contact your manager or Team Leader.

**G20 Summit in Brisbane**
We have also put together a working group to begin planning ahead of the G20 Summit, which will be held in Brisbane in November. The event will officially take place on the weekend of November 15 and 16, with a public holiday on Friday, November 14. There are a number of potential impacts for our organisation and we are working to prevent any disruption to our services for members and clients. These impacts include traffic delays caused by the arrival of world leaders and an exclusion zone that will be put in place surrounding the event in South Bank. This event also unfortunately falls during Spinal Injuries Awareness Week, which means we will look to focus our media campaign on regional areas to receive better coverage. We have also updated our events calendar accordingly, with our Take My Seat events in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast to be held earlier in September.

I look forward to working with you in 2014, and thank you for your ongoing support and hard work.
**SIX MYTHS ABOUT STRESS**

Six myths surround stress. Dispelling them enables us to understand our problems and then take action against them. Let’s look at these myths.

**Myth 1: Stress is the same for everybody.**

Wrong. Stress is different for each of us. What is stressful for one person may or may not be stressful for another; each of us responds to stress in an entirely different way.

**Myth 2: Stress is always bad for you.**

According to this view, zero stress makes us happy and healthy. Wrong. Stress is to the human condition what tension is to the violin string: too little and the music is dull and raspy; too much and the music is shrill or the string snaps. Stress can be the kiss of death or the spice of life. The issue, really, is how to manage it. Managed stress makes us productive and happy; mismanaged stress hurts and even kills us.

**Myth 3: Stress is everywhere, so you can’t do anything about it.**

Not so. You can plan your life so that stress does not overwhelm you. Effective planning involves setting priorities and working on simple problems first, solving them, and then going on to more complex difficulties. When stress is mismanaged, it’s difficult to prioritise. All your problems seem to be equal and stress seems to be everywhere.

**Myth 4: The most popular techniques for reducing stress are the best ones.**

Again, not so. No universally effective stress reduction techniques exist. We are all different, our lives are different, our situations are different, and our reactions are different. Only a comprehensive program tailored to the individual works.

**Myth 5: No symptoms, no stress.**

Absence of symptoms does not mean the absence of stress. In fact, camouflaging symptoms with medication may deprive you of the signals you need for reducing the strain on your physiological and psychological systems.

**Myth 6: Only major symptoms of stress require attention.**

This myth assumes that the ‘minor’ symptoms, such as headaches or stomach acid, may be safely ignored. Minor symptoms of stress are the early warnings that your life is getting out of hand and that you need to do a better job of managing stress.

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**Employee Assistance Program (PPC Worldwide)**

Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides counselling and support to all employees and immediate family members. You can feel comfortable using your EAP to confidentially discuss any work or personal issues that are an inevitable part of life. The EAP is free to all employees and immediate family members.

If you have any confidential issues you would like assistance with, you can contact PPC Worldwide on 1300 361 008 - 24 Hours a Day Australia Wide or visit their website at PPC Worldwide.
Hello everyone

It is hard to believe that it is February already. I hope you have all had a good start to the New Year.

As I write this clients and PSWs from Townsville down to Mackay will be feeling the effects of wind and rain from Cyclone Dylan. I hope that the impact of this cyclone was not too severe. All clients who were likely to be impacted were contacted by our NQ office to check that the client had reviewed their own emergency plan. Clients were advised that if they required additional support prior to or following a natural disaster, they should contact the Association to make the request for the extra support. Clients have been advised that PSWs will attend shifts where possible but only when and where it is safe to do so.

PSWs, if it is not safe for you to get to a shift please let us know and we will arrange for someone who can get to and from a shift safely to attend. Please don’t drive through flood waters to get to your shift!

I have had some great feedback from two clients who were able to take holidays in December and January and both have said that PSWs and their CSO made it possible for them to have an incident and stress free holiday.

One family travelled to the Gold Coast and were supported by PSW’s who live on the coast. This is the second time the Gold Coast staff have supported this client and the client had high praise for these PSWs. Another family also holidayed at the Gold Coast but this time the PSWs on his roster travelled down from Brisbane to the coast to provide his support. He was really appreciative that the PSWs supporting him were prepared to be flexible and change arrangements to make this holiday happen.

Thank you to all the staff involved in these and any other holiday arrangements. You make such a difference in the lives of our clients and their families by enabling them to achieve these activities.

We have been working on a project during 2013 to be able to notify you when there is a change to the printed roster that you are sent fortnightly. I am happy to announce that we have completed the project and from 15 February we will commence sending SMS messages to notify you of any changes to your current printed roster. When we sent your roster out last week there was a flyer attached to explain these notifications. Please contact your CSO if you have any questions or feedback about this new initiative.

I would like to thank Milena Dawson and Matthew Linscott from IT Business Systems who have worked on the project and tested this product for us. PS & HCS often collaborates with other departments to achieve goals and this is another example of how departments can work together to improve the operation of our service.

We would like to welcome Megan McRae to the Transition and High Support team. Megan is an RN and has had significant community nursing experience. Watch for more information about this team in the next edition.

Pauline Davis and all other office staff members will be on deck on Monday, 3 February. We have a lot to do this year:

• Self-Directed Service Delivery Pilot
• Disability Service program Your Life Your Choice
• Disability Service initiative to Individualise Block funding of clients
• and the preparation for the NDIS

Thank you to everyone for your support while I have been acting General Manager and I look forward to working with you on the various projects that we have happening this year.

Regards

Marg Murray

How long have you been a High Support (HS) PSW?
For seven years but I’ve been with the Association for 12 years.

What do you enjoy about working in HS?
I enjoy working with the client and I enjoy the challenge.

What are some of the challenges of working in HS?
The changes clients go through and the different things to remember every day. You really need to be able to go with the flow and let things go.

What question do you wish you had asked before you started work as a HS PSW?
I had many questions! I wasn’t sure what to expect until I started working in HS and in this industry, I wish I was more prepared!

What piece of advice would you give someone thinking about becoming a HS PSW?
I advise people not to take anything personally, keep your problems for after work, concentrate on what you’re doing and don’t become too complacent.

How do you keep a good work-life balance?
I make sure I enjoy my days off; I don’t talk about work on my time off and I do things I enjoy.
Thank you to PSW Hanan Sukkarieh for her reliability and professionalism. She is always open to very short notice backfill and has received positive feedback from a new client for her support on completing a recent last minute fill in shift.

A huge thank you to High Support PSW Tash Katandika for travelling back from out of town to provide last minute shift coverage. Your commitment to client service is greatly appreciated.

**Update on NDIS**
Queensland’s planning for the NDIS will include:
- working to better support people with disability to transition to the NDIS, particularly about their readiness to identify goals and plan for their future
- agreeing on how and when eligible participants will enter the scheme during the transition phase between 2016 and 2019 – which people, type of disability, age and location, and in which order and when
- supporting disability service providers to reconsider their business models to be able to operate in a competitive, consumer driven market
- encouraging more people with disability to commence individual funding arrangements for services rather than through block funding individualising disability payments for individual support
- changing operating models to handle different funding models making a concerted effort to increase services offered in rural and remote areas
- transitioning and increasing skills in the Queensland disability workforce, where possible

More information about the NDIS can be obtained from their website: http://www.ndis.gov.au


**Client Passing**
Long-time member, friend and client of the Spinal Injuries Association Victor Clulow sadly passed away on the 20th of November 2013. Vic will be remembered for his beautiful paintings, cheeky smile and great sense of humour. Victor had a very loyal team working for him including Sue Perry, Wendy Howard, Linda Lawson, Jacque Tuckey, Rose Phillips, Trish Ruf and Karen Cook. We would like to thank these ladies for their dedication and hard work over the years.

You all often went above and beyond for Vic and I know that he was very appreciative of your efforts and your friendship – CSO Louise Darch

December saw the passing of one of our long time clients Teresa (Joyce) Bechard.

CSO Nereis Long states: I have had the pleasure of working with this family over the past few years and have witnessed first-hand the effect that this remarkable lady and her husband Mitch had on all who came into their world. For all who knew her, she is too well loved to ever be forgotten.
PSW update

INDUCTION PHOTOS AND MORE

I just wanted to do a shout out to two of my star North Queensland PSWs - Leanne Andrews and Helena Penny. Both made themselves available at short notice to support a client on Christmas Day and Boxing Day. Their willingness to assist is much appreciated.

ARE YOU PLANNING ON TAKING LEAVE OR LOOKING FOR EXTRA SHIFTS OVER EASTER BETWEEN 7/4/14 or 25/4/14?

If taking leave, please lodge a request for leave form before Friday 7/3/14. If looking for shifts please advise your CSO or Shift Fill. This will greatly assist us in ensuring your client’s needs are met during this period.

NQ update

JILL MORISON, NQ REGIONAL MANAGER

Left to right back:
Salman Ghumman, Amanda Tappenden, Megan McRae, Stephanie O’Hanlon, Lindy Monthy, Greg Murphy. Front: Natalie Bowker, Elizabeth Castaneda

Left to right beginning with front:
Kelly Yendall, Maria Illing, Yujuan (Amy) Cheng, Wanxia (Vivienne) Wei, Lisa Jones, Kerrie O’Keeffe, Tara Cochrane, Leigh-Teagan Wilde, Fiona Hammond, Rose De’Har, Darryl Hill

Left to right:
Ronnie Sutherland, Elizabeth Tipper, Adrianna Gray, Julie Ellyatt

Left to right:
Natalie Bowker, Elizabeth Castaneda
Style Guide Reminder

The Association Style Guide (QUDOS No.101135) allows us to ensure that our organisation has a strong, consistent, professional and clear corporate identity. A strong identity and brand reflects a strong, unified, professional organisation, which in turn helps us to attract more members, more funding, and more donors, among many other benefits. The guide contains essential information about a number of areas, including putting together documents such as certificates, letters, and PowerPoint presentations. This month, we are looking at the Out of Office response in Outlook for office staff.

Out of Office Responses

With the enormous number of external emails being sent by each employee every day, it is important to again have consistent branding. Staff must always set an Out of Office response in Outlook when they are away from the office for a day or more. Please use the following wording:

Thank you for your email. I am currently ( unavailable/working away from the office/on leave) until [date]. If your enquiry is urgent, please contact my colleague, [name], at [email]@spinal.com.au. Alternatively, you can call the Spinal Injuries Association on (07) 3391 2044.

Yours sincerely

Name
Job title
Spinal Injuries Association

Points to remember

• Use Arial font, 12 point.
• Dates should be written Day/Date/Month/Year. For example, Monday, 19 February 2008, not Monday 19th.
• Ensure you save this message in the ‘Inside my organisation’ and ‘Outside my organisation’ sections of Microsoft Outlook.

With the upcoming conversion to a Company Limited by Guarantee (CLG), there will be some changes to the Style Guide and the terminology used to describe the organisation. We will update you on these changes once we have completed the transition.

SEAT & SEAT AT WORK

SEAT

If you would like your child to hear our valuable injury prevention messages, why not ask their school to book a presentation from our Spinal Education Awareness Team (SEAT). SEAT is free for all Queensland schools, is accredited by Education Queensland and has reached more than 1.5 million children state-wide.

Our volunteer presenters have all sustained a spinal cord injury and are passionate safety advocates. SEAT presentations are suitable for all year levels from Prep through to Year 12. Each presentation is approximately 40 minutes in duration and can be tailored to suit each school’s requirements based on student numbers and number of sessions.

To book a free visit, schools can use the online booking form at www.spinal.com.au, phone (07) 3391 2044 or email seat@spinal.com.au.

SEAT at WORK

Don’t forget our injury prevention presenters also visit workplaces to share their safety messages! SEAT at WORK is available across Australia, with the sessions tailored to the industry.

The presentations are ideal for people who work in industries such as construction, mining, utilities, transport and storage. Although the program has a fee, we have aimed to make the presentations as affordable as possible. If you know anyone who would be interested in booking a presentation, they can find out more by contacting seatatwork@spinal.com.au or (07) 3391 2044.
This month India marked three years since its last reported case of polio, paving the way for it to be declared polio free. In 2009, 741 Indians fell sick with polio, nearly half the world’s cases that year. The number dropped to 42 in 2010 and only one in 2011. Afghanistan, Pakistan and Nigeria are the only countries in the world where the disease remains endemic.
Hello 2014!

This year really has kicked off with a BANG! We have some extra exciting projects that will come to fruition early in 2014.

Our honorary ambassador, Erin Brockovich will be officially welcomed into our team at a morning tea at the Spinal Unit in February. We can’t wait to catch up with her again, she’s way cool.

With Chani’s creative genius helping us, we are frantically trying to fill the pages of our Coffee Table book. Full of great role models, it will help new patients to visualise a positive future for themselves, especially in the early days in the unit. It’s looking great so far and should be completed by April.

2014 marks 10 years of Peer Support and we will be celebrating our anniversary later in the year. While we will be celebrating this year, there is always the sobering fact that every four days someone new finds themselves in the Spinal Unit with a life changing injury. That’s where our real work is. The Christmas period is traditionally a quiet time at the unit with lots of patients discharging or going on pass. Unfortunately with the New Year comes another influx of new patients, new families and new lives to rebuild.

Peer Support is such an essential part of the rehabilitation process for anyone who has a spinal cord injury. Our team has the responsibility to help rebuild these lives by jumping on board the emotional roller coaster with them. We will share our own lived experience while sharing their highs and lows just like we did when we were there ourselves. It’s hard to describe what it’s like and why we love it so much. Here’s Katie’s version:

“Last week was no different when we spoke with a patient and partner who were barely scraping through emotionally. They vowed to stay strong and the partner apologised for a tear escaping his eye. With the Peer Support team you don’t have to be strong. It’s your worst nightmare, a situation with a huge amount of pressure, it’s undignified and cruel, BUT you will get through it.”

That’s what Peer Support is for - we have been there. We remember, we figured it out.

Connecting with Colleagues
SHAREPOINT HELPS TO CONNECT
One of the Association’s IT projects is to update our Intranet from SharePoint 2010 to the latest technology offered by SharePoint 2013. The update provides new ways for you to share your work and information with others, organise your projects and teams, and learn more about your colleagues.

Through this software, you can share ideas, content and the vision of our organisation. SharePoint can:
- manage all of your information assets;
- organise and store documents to enable personal productivity;
- keep teams engaged and projects on track.

SharePoint is where you can go to share knowledge and uncover connections to information and people.

Other features of SharePoint 2013 are:
- Improved user interface: It’s easy on the eyes, easy to navigate and easy to accomplish common tasks.
- Drag and drop: Dragging and dropping a file from the desktop straight into a document library in the browser.
- On-hover: Hover over a Word Document in your library to see a preview using the embedded Word Web App.
- Touch: A key feature is large touch targets, which make it easy for you to filter, navigate, and work with documents with mobile devices.

The initial rollout of SharePoint 2013 will include a refresh of our Intranet site including each team/department sites. It will also include some smart technology that will enable us to transform all our internal forms to online versions using electronic workflows.

Once the upgrade is complete, we will use the improved technology to create a document management system along with external sites that will allow PSWs and other external employees to access this information.

SharePoint training refresher courses will be offered to all staff to familiarise you with the new features and provide you with the knowledge required to get the most out of the new software.
L&D update

ERICA VALADARES, ADVISOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Training Dates:

**BRISBANE**
First Aid
12 March
29 April
Skills Day
7 February
17 February
4 March

**GOLD COAST**
Skills Day
21 March
First Aid
7 February

**MARYBOROUGH**
Skills Day
12 May
First Aid
13 May

**SUNSHINE COAST**
Skills Day
17 June
First Aid
1 May

**BUNDABERG**
Skills Day
27 March
First Aid
28 March

**ROCKHAMPTON**
Skills Day
15 April
First Aid
16 April

**TOWNSVILLE**
Skills Day
20 February
20 March

**GLADSTONE**
Skills Day
20 February
First Aid
21 February

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**Need a Certificate III in Disability?**

A new training initiative, Certificate 3 Guarantee, has been implemented, as part of the Queensland Government's reform action plan to further education and training. This government initiative will provide subsidised training in one Certificate Level III qualification to eligible Queenslanders. In partnership with government approved training organisation, Community Services Institute of Training (CSIT), the Spinal Injuries Association is pleased to offer CHC30408 Certificate III Disability onsite in the Brisbane head office to those who are eligible utilising the Certificate 3 Guarantee funding.

If you live in the Brisbane metropolitan area please refer to communications sent via email/post for further information regarding this subsidised training opportunity (includes course outline for entry requirements, student contribution fees and course details). If you live in a regional or remote location and are interested in obtaining a Certificate III in Disability qualification, please contact Learning & Development for information regarding local Registered Training Organisations that are offering these opportunities in line with government funding.

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**Social media, work and you!**

With many of us engaging in the wonders of modern technology and social media, it is becoming easier for information to travel to a broader audience in a shorter period of time. With this in mind I would just like to initiate a timely reminder to all staff to ensure that the content on these pages (whether personal or business) is in no way impinging on the Associations ICT Policy and Code of Practice which states:

“Careful consideration should be given to the content of any published material (e.g. e-mail, Facebook, Twitter, Web page, images displayed on a screen, computer printout). Material that is unacceptable to the recipient and which creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment may constitute harassment under the Association's guidelines. Publication of such material outside the Association may harm the Association's good name.” and could constitute as defamation.

Breaches of such a policy could result in disciplinary action and/or legal ramifications.