

Advocacy Charter

What we believe

We believe... *that everybody with spinal cord damage in Australia should have access to healthy living to allow equal participation in society.*

Who we are... *Spinal Life Australia assists people with spinal cord damage to ensure equality of opportunity, inclusion and participation.*

Our advocacy principles

Spinal Life Australia will:

- Support our members to advocate on their own behalf when possible, and advocate with or for our members when appropriate.
- Work to identify and remove barriers to participation in mainstream services and the general community for people with spinal cord damage.
- Advocate to all levels of government, organisations providing disability related products and services, and other organisations with interests in physical disability.
- Understand our current and future members' needs and priorities through regular engagement on issues of importance to them.
- Communicate our advocacy initiatives with our members and stakeholders, to provide an opportunity for interested people to become involved.
- Provide feedback to members on advocacy efforts and the outcome of initiatives.

Advocacy program for 2018/2019 and 2019/2020

Accessible accommodation

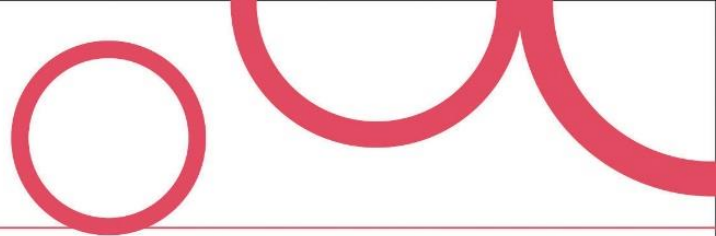
We will:

- Continue to advocate to the State Government to play its role legislatively to mandate for residential accommodation to meet Liveable Housing Design Guidelines (at a minimum silver level, but preferably gold standard)
- Aim to influence hotel and accommodation peak industry bodies to better understand how to improve the accessibility of their properties and how to make their accessible properties more discoverable by people with disability.

Accessible local communities

We will:

- Support the development of local volunteers (member network facilitators, and community connectors) to engage with their respective local government agencies in a professional, positive and pro-active manner.
- Develop models of engagement for use in multiple local government areas and distribute amongst members information relating to influencing local government.



Employment

We will:

- Work to increase the employment participation rates of people with newly acquired spinal cord damage through return to work programs.
- Advocate and influence Local and State Government agencies to include targets for employment of people with disabilities in their strategic workforce plans.

Access to funding, aids and equipment

We will:

- Advocate and work with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the National Injury Insurance Scheme Queensland (NIISQ) and the Spinal Injuries Unit to ensure that all home modifications and assistive technology requirements are approved and completed in time for a person's earliest possible discharge from the Spinal Injury Unit to allow a seamless transition from hospital to home.
- Lobby the government to fund complex equipment through the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) to allow the full funding of equipment for individuals with complex equipment needs.
- Pressure the government to fund the Aged Care system to allow individuals with approved Aged Care packages to immediately access the highest-level package for which they are approved, without delay.

Research

We will:

- Advocate to the Australian Government and private enterprise to encourage new research and continued promising research to be incentivised.
- Continue to apply for and partner with other organisations to apply for funding to enable the delivery of and/or participation in contemporary research opportunities for the benefit of our members and the wider community of people with spinal cord damage.

Transport

We will:

- Advocate for a nationally consistent Taxi Subsidy Scheme equivalent to the benefit provided under the Victorian scheme, up to \$60 per trip, to continue indefinitely and in conjunction with the NDIS.
- Advocate for more inclusive and comprehensive airline travel policies for people with spinal cord damage and other physical disabilities.
- Collaborate with the taxi industry and ride-booking services to maintain or influence an increase in the availability of wheelchair accessible vehicles.

Health

We will:

- Advocate to the Queensland Government to continue improving Queensland's primary Spinal Injuries Unit facility and related services.
- Continue to advocate for increased accessibility and inclusiveness of mainstream health services.