

# the advocate

A voice for accessible, equitable and empowered lives Winter 2020



Staying connected,  
safe and healthy:

REACH OUT FOR PEER SUPPORT  
BECOME INVOLVED IN ADVOCACY EFFORTS  
HOME EXERCISES TO TRY, AND MORE

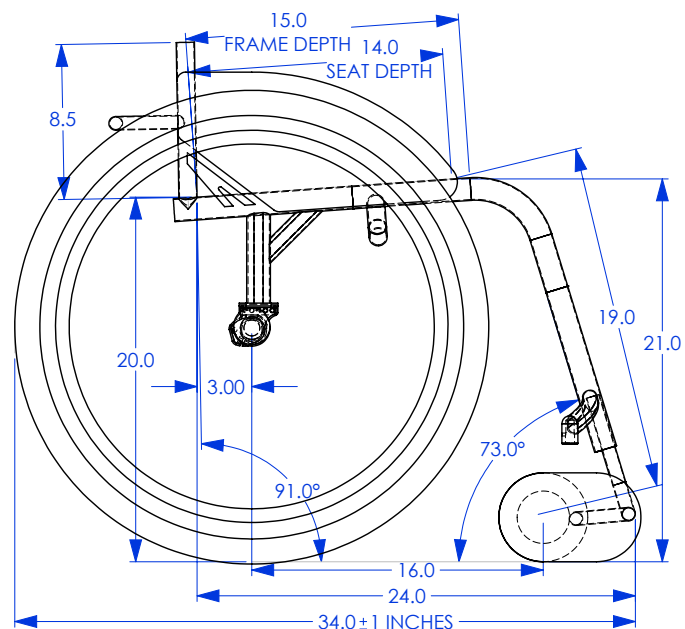
Spinal Life  
AUSTRALIA

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Cover photo of Peer Support members Col Mackereth and Katie Hammond by Stephen Lawrence.

## CEO's message

# Being there for you during COVID-19



I was reading back on my column from the previous issue of The Advocate and reflecting how quickly things can change.

As we have responded to the threat of COVID-19 and the impacts on our services, our aim has been remain flexible and support our staff, members and clients in a collaborative manner.

We have adapted quickly and I'm incredibly proud of our team's efforts in such uncertain, challenging times.

Spinal Life has introduced a range of new policies and procedures to support the health and wellbeing of our community, including a fortnight's paid leave for our employees if they need to self-isolate or become unwell.

This leave is aimed at supporting our team members to stay at home if they are experiencing any coronavirus-like symptoms, further protecting the health and wellbeing of our staff, members, clients and community.

Behind the scenes, our team has worked tirelessly to access additional supplies of hand sanitiser and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including face masks and gloves, to protect our team members and clients.

We know many of our members and clients have been self-isolating and this has presented many challenges.

In this issue, our Peer Support Officers and members have shared their tips for

coping with COVID-19 and managing your health and wellbeing during this period.

We encourage you to connect with us and reach out if you need support. Our Peer Support Officers are always available for a chat over the phone or email, or you can join the conversation in our active online community via our private Facebook group (search Peer Support Spinal Life Australia on Facebook to find us).

Don't forget, we are always happy to receive your feedback and you can find all the details on Page 34.

We've heard the word 'unprecedented' many times over the past months and that's certainly true.

Our message throughout this time continues to be "we're all in this together" so please don't hesitate to get in touch if you need anything at all.

**Mark Townend**  
Chief Executive Officer

# EVERY HUMAN



## Function x Fashion

We know 1 in 5 Australians live with a disability, for whom getting dressed can be a real challenge.

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Every Human's mission is to empower people to independently express themselves and achieve their dreams by making life a little easier.



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## Jane finds recent passion something to dance about

**While many people get nervous to take a step out of their comfort zone, Jane Hutch literally danced her way out of hers.**

The Perth member was convinced by a friend to give ballroom para-dancing a try in 2018 and after some initial nerves, it quickly became a passion of hers.

*"Before I tried para-dancing, I just knew I would either love it or hate it," Jane said.*

*"Thankfully it was definitely the former.*

*"Since then I've gone on to compete in several local competitions and even the national wheelchair ballroom dancing championships in Melbourne in the same year that I started!"*

Jane said discovering her passion for dancing reflected her belief that some of the best experiences in life are found outside your comfort zone.

*"I realised after my accident that it can be very tough to get out of your comfort zone but that's how you learn to grow and transform," she said.*

*"I've also learnt the importance of patience and gratitude – patience to deal with day-to-day life with a spinal cord injury and gratitude about what you have; even the most mundane of things can be seen as a blessing!"*

As part of her goal to continue to push herself, in 2019, Jane found herself abseiling down Perth's QV1 – a 40 storey building.

*"What seems impossible yesterday may be possible tomorrow – you just need to live one day at a time," Jane said.*

### Jane Hutch

- › Has lived in WA her entire life and loves its weather and laid-back attitude.
- › Competed in the 2016 Abilympics in France in the photography category.
  - › Is a people person and loves socialising and meeting others.
- › Joined the Spinal Life WA Peer Support team in 2019 to provide advice and mentorship to others using her own lived experience.
- › Out of all her recent achievements, says one of her greatest ones was becoming a grandparent for the first time in 2019.

*Visit [ballroomfit.com.au](http://ballroomfit.com.au) for more information on para-dancing classes in Western Australia.*

*Jane is also a member of Spinal Life's WA Peer Support team – for more information on our Peer Support program, visit [spinal.com.au/peer-support](http://spinal.com.au/peer-support) or call 1300 774 625.*



# Chuck elated and relieved after tenth NDIS application is a success



**They say third time's a charm, but after nine unsuccessful NDIS applications, Orange resident Chuck Manning was understandably frustrated.**

*"Whenever I'd question the reason for my rejections, they said I was disabled enough to meet the criteria then in the same breath would say I wasn't eligible for funding," he said.*

*"I have paralysis from the waist down and partial paralysis in my hands and left arm, I have epilepsy, a chronic pain condition and automatic dysreflexia attacks as well as a desperate need to upgrade my wheelchair so you can see why I was getting frustrated."*

After a conversation with his friend Scott from Wheelie Campers Australia, Chuck got in touch with Spinal Life's Executive Manager – Member Services, Ross Duncan.

*"Ross talked me through all the guidelines of applying for the NDIS and what I needed to get from my doctors, Occupational Therapists and specialists," Chuck said.*

*"My social worker at the time made a comment that she had never seen someone walk into an appointment so prepared and understanding before – quite a change from nine failed applications!"*

*"When I heard my tenth and final NDIS application was successful, I was elated; I felt like I could finally breathe."*

Chuck said his NDIS plan will help a lot with his day-to-day life by funding a Personal Support Worker, home modifications such as a hoist and his first ever customised wheelchair.

*"I've had many nasty falls in the past thanks to an ill-fitting chair but with the NDIS, I'm looking forward to finally getting a chair that's the correct size for me," he said.*

*"Ross has been a huge help in finding me an electric chair in the meantime, which was especially useful after surgery left me unable to use my old manual chair for several weeks.*

*"I'm extremely grateful for the help I've received and I'm expecting the assistance I'll get with my NDIS plan to immensely improve my quality of life."*

**For more information about how Spinal Life can help you make the most from your NDIS plan, including our planning templates, visit [spinal.com.au/ndis](http://spinal.com.au/ndis) or call 1300 774 625.**

# Using your NDIS plan to stay connected and healthy

**NDIS participants can now use their plan to access low-cost, low-risk Assistive Technology (AT) such as smart devices to ensure they can continue to access essential services during COVID-19.**

The NDIS has temporarily moved to allow participants to purchase items such as smart devices and low risk exercise equipment recommended by your existing provider. This ensures supports can continue online while social distancing practices continue to be in place.

While participants are able to spend up to \$1500 on low-cost AT items from their existing budgets, participants should not spend more than \$750 on electronic/smart devices needed to maintain existing services.

In the case of computer tablets or iPads for telehealth and care, or participating in online classes and programs, advice from AT specialists is that most NDIS participants will not need more than a standard tablet which costs no more than \$600.

This is a time-limited policy which will be in place until September 2020 and will be reviewed at the end of June 2020.

*For full details check out the NDIS website.*



## How can a Supports Coordinator help me manage during COVID-19?

**Supports Coordination is a service offered under the NDIS to assist participants to understand and implement their plan, including connecting you with providers and linking you to community, mainstream and other government services.**

Previously, Supports Coordination was a service that was written into your NDIS plan, under Capacity Building Supports. On 25 March 2020, the NDIS price guide was updated in response to the ongoing COVID-19 environment to allow participants to use their funds more flexibly and access these supports from either their Core or Capacity Building budgets.

There are three levels of Supports Coordination that can be included in your plan based on what you would like to achieve, which are:

- › Support connection – to build your ability to connect with informal, community and funded supports
- › Supports coordination (coordination of supports) – to assist you to build the skills you need to understand, implement and use your plan, along with ensuring you have the right mix of services you need to reach your goals
- › Specialist supports coordination – for people whose situations are more complex and who need specialist support to manage challenges, ensuring your service delivery is consistent.

*To find out more, visit [spinal.com.au/ndis](https://spinal.com.au/ndis), email [enquiries@spinal.com.au](mailto:enquiries@spinal.com.au) or call 1300 774 625.*



# Campaign aims to improve local communities



## Campaign snapshot



We held workshops in Logan, Moreton Bay, Mackay, Rockhampton, Bundaberg, Cairns, Ipswich, Toowoomba

There were 105 attendees across all the workshops

The main topics discussed were accessible parking (and the lack of it), availability of accessible accommodation/housing, accessible transport options and footpaths

Next steps: following up with successful mayoral candidates to continue the conversation

**Ahead of Queensland's local government elections in March, we led a campaign to reach out to candidates, aiming to help our members share more about key disability issues in each region and how these could be addressed.**

The key issues we focused on included creating or updating access and inclusion plans for each local government area, increased regulation and availability of disability parking spaces and improved transport options and community connections such as footpaths, kerb ramps and pedestrian crossings.

Other areas of interest included promoting inclusive tourism opportunities and raising awareness of the needs of people with a disability among local businesses, along with encouraging housing developers to meet or exceed the silver level of liveable housing guidelines.

Our Peer Support Volunteers, Advocates and members actively led the charge, sending letters to candidates and contacting them for one-on-one conversations to discuss their experiences on a local level.

We also held a series of workshops to bring together members, candidates and community organisations, which was a productive and positive way to share feedback and collaborate on a way forward.

Spinal Life's Executive Manager – Ross Duncan thanked everyone who became involved in the campaign and shared their local knowledge.

*"Our Advocacy team have contacted all newly-elected mayors across Queensland, to follow up on the issues that were raised and further develop strong ties with each Council," he said.*

*"This advocacy work will also assist with the development of our accessibility app, as we are encouraging all Councils*

*to share their valuable data to populate the app."*

We will also be assisting our members to advocate for improvements in how the Queensland Government supports people with a disability, ahead of the state election in October.

**Visit [spinal.com.au/advocacy](https://spinal.com.au/advocacy) to learn more about our advocacy activities, or you can get in touch with our team on [members@spinal.com.au](mailto:members@spinal.com.au) or 1300 774 625.**

*"This advocacy work will also assist with the development of our accessibility app, as we are encouraging all Councils to share their valuable data."*



# Accessibility app on track for 2020 launch

**Development on our accessibility app is well underway, with Spinal Life and its members working together to create a resource for users to locate and review accessible features and venues in the community.**

Spinal Life's CEO Mark Townend said with parts of the app soon to be in the testing phase, he was looking forward to sharing more with members and clients ahead of a launch later in 2020.

*"At the moment, our dedicated team of project officers are continuing to work across Australia to locate data about accessible features of the community to include in the app," he said.*

*"We have enlisted the help of Telstra Purple to capture the essence of what people with spinal cord injury would like to achieve and develop a simple, easy-to-use app that will enable people to explore the community.*

When launched, the app will enable users to find accessible places in the community (including hotels, bars, cafés, restaurants and bathrooms) and leave a review about the level of accessibility and the quality of their experience when they visit.

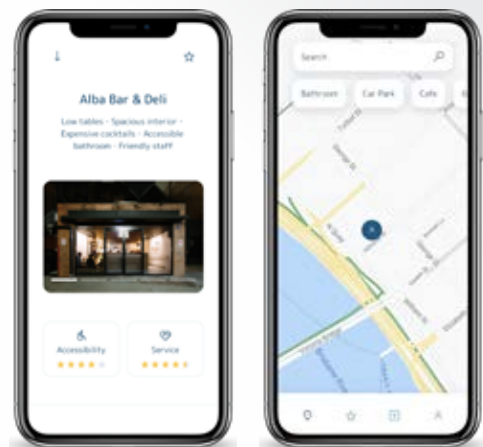
In March this year, the Telstra Purple team interviewed many people living with spinal cord injury to understand the types of activities they would like to use the app for, while further information has been obtained from members and clients across Queensland and WA

*"We wanted to put people with disability at the centre of the design of the app, to make sure that as it was developed it focused on the most important things for users," Mark said.*

*"We have been working hard on the app, even through the disrupted times of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the aim of enlisting users to populate the app with reviews from July onwards.*

*"The app has also enabled us to initiate higher-level advocacy conversations with local and state governments across Australia."*

**Visit [spinal.com.au/advocacy](http://spinal.com.au/advocacy) for more information on our advocacy work towards a more accessible Australia.**



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## Message from the Chair

# Technology keeps Spinal Life Board connected

On behalf of myself and the Spinal Life Board, we hope you are keeping well during these challenging times of isolation and uncertainty.

While it's important to look after your physical health and take extra hygiene precautions through social distancing and frequent hand washing, your mental health is just as important.

With our in-person Peer Support Catch-ups temporarily suspended on advice from the Australian Government, you can join the conversation in our private Peer Support Facebook group if you'd like to connect with other people with spinal cord damage to share advice and experiences.

Our Peer Support team are also available to chat over the phone – if you'd like to reach out, email [peersupport@spinal.com.au](mailto:peersupport@spinal.com.au) or call 1300 774 625.

The Board is using technology to keep in touch to continue to lead Spinal Life Australia. Apart from the obvious email and phone, we're continuing with our scheduled Board and Committee meetings virtually, connecting Board members from Cairns, Sunshine Coast and Brisbane. We will continue with this until travel restrictions are lifted.

We also used this technology to connect everyone remotely for a strategy workshop in early May.

This workshop aimed to ensure that the short and medium term plans for Spinal Life Australia are fully aligned to the long-term strategic direction of the organisation.

With the recent change in Board composition and a new CEO there is an opportunity to create a united sense of purpose and a mandate for the CEO to implement the plan.

Our objectives are to make sure that our priorities are clear, aligned to our strategic direction and included in the budget for 20/21.

We look forward to providing you with more Spinal Life news soon, as we all work together to get through this current time. In the meantime, please feel free to get in touch at [chair@spinal.com.au](mailto:chair@spinal.com.au) if you have any feedback you wish to share.

**Gyl Stacey**  
Chair



## Sharing our tips: coping with COVID-19

Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, I've been staying at home, except for the odd trip to the supermarket. I've made more use of video calling with friends and family especially those in the UK. I'm not sure when we might be able to travel again, especially long distance, so it's important to keep in touch regularly.

I live with my husband, Mark, and we have two border collies who are delighted that we're around so much.

I try and get out for fresh air regularly and take my Batec (handbike) around the local area. I'm fortunate enough to live in a semi-rural area so there's plenty of space and places to cycle to. I miss my twice weekly gym and personal training session so have dusted off my hand crank and dumbbells and do a small workout in the garage each day (mostly!) I also play keyboard, I'm a big reader and watch world films.

## Staying connected through COVID-19



**Peer support has become more important than ever in the time of COVID-19, ensuring anyone who is facing challenges throughout the restrictions has someone.**

Peer Support Officers Katie Hammond and Col Mackereth recently shared their tips and advice as part of an online Wellbeing Series video, aimed at promoting the importance of reaching out during this unprecedented time.

The video aired on our private Peer Support Facebook group and was followed by the opportunity to ask questions and share personal experiences.

Katie said while the team had been unable to help in person due to COVID-19 restrictions, including postponing visits to the Spinal Injuries Unit at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, they had utilised a range of technology to stay connected and share their lived experience.

*"We have provided support via email, phone or video chat, Zoom meetings,*

*in the private Facebook group, and we've even had people from the Unit text a question in and then we would record videos to explain and show how we do things," she said.*

*"It's about socially distancing yourself, but not disconnecting from the things that are most important in your life.*

*"If you are starting to feel overwhelmed, you can give your GP a call and discuss accessing a mental health care plan, or there are services such as Lifeline and Beyond Blue.*

*"If you've got things you want to say, the Peer Support team are also here any time you need us, so please reach out."*

Katie said it was important to continue doing 'what makes you feel like you', in any small way possible.

*"I needed a routine so that was about making a lot of family time in the afternoon, going outside and watering our new veggie patch," she said.*

*"It's been tricky not being able to step away from the 'Mum mode' stuff when I'm working at home, so it's important to*

*set up routines and set time aside for yourself as well as for the family.*

*"We have tried to enjoy the time we've got and make sure we get outside and get some sunshine – that was so important for me."*

Col said he had also tried to create a routine while being at home due to COVID-19.

*"I have made sure that I shaved and dressed well every day – I dressed for business rather than bed," he said.*

*"If you're prepared for work, you're prepared mentally as well, and it kept me out of that feeling of being stuck at home.*

*"It's really important to know you don't have to do this on your own and there are ways you can get help – and knowing that most people are going through a similar experience."*

You can watch Col and Katie's Wellbeing Series presentation on our YouTube channel at [spinal.com.au/wellbeingvideos](https://spinal.com.au/wellbeingvideos), or in our private Peer Support group, with more online videos to come over the next few weeks.

***Our 2020 Wellbeing Series is proudly supported by our partners at Coloplast.***



# Sharing our tips: coping with COVID-19

Two of our members have shared how they're coping throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, including staying connected with their loved ones and managing their health and wellbeing.



## Jane Hutch, Perth

I have used apps like Houseparty, Zoom, WhatsApp and old-fashioned talking on the phone to stay connected with family and friends.

Doing nothing endlessly can also make you feel sooo lethargic. I've been "trying" to stay true to eating a "mostly" plant-based diet as it works better for my general overall wellbeing, but I do have binge breakouts especially when watching Netflix.

I try and aim to do exercise 4-5 days a week for about 20-30mins by either going for walks or doing weights, and I have also been doing dance lessons via Zoom (*read about Jane's dancing on Page 5*).

I think it's also important to try and maintain some normalcy and to lift your mood. Like the saying "Get up, dress up" as opposed to staying in PJs all day.

Something I have always been planning to do pre-pandemic days was "Marie Kondo" my place, but never eventuated 'til now... and I'm still in the midst of it!



## Lindsay Nott, Brisbane

This isn't my first time being stuck in the house – health issues can do that sometimes!

I've been fortunate that I've been able to keep busy with work, although I've also been working on little projects around the house.

I've tried to stay social through everything by posting on forums and Facebook groups and sharing advice with others, as well as having a few Zoom meetings and virtual drinks with friends, neighbours and work colleagues.

While I haven't been able to go to the gym, I've been able to do some telehealth consults to keep my fitness up at home.

My advice is to try and keep a regular routine, have your meals at the same time and just try and do what you'd do in a normal day – that means not spending all day in your pyjamas!

I've also been doing a lot of reading and listening to podcasts – it's a great time to try and learn something new.

## About the Peer Support program

Our Peer Support network across Queensland and Western Australia use their lived experience to provide guidance, mentorship and connections for people with spinal cord damage.

This includes within the Princess Alexandra Hospital's Spinal Injuries Unit in Brisbane, where our Peer Support Officers check-in with newly injured patients and their families and provide valuable support.

At the time of printing, the team were looking forward to returning to the Spinal Injuries Unit in consultation with

hospital staff, as COVID-19 restrictions were beginning to ease.

Our team of staff and volunteers also provides support to individuals in the community along with via email, phone and the Peer Support Facebook group (search for Peer Support Spinal Life Australia on Facebook to join). You can also join the Spinal Chatter Facebook group (*read more on Page 27*).

***If you'd like to reach out to one of our Peer Support Officers during this time, email [peersupport@spinal.com.au](mailto:peersupport@spinal.com.au) or call 1300 774 625.***

# Emergency care planning in a time of COVID-19

**It never hurts to plan ahead and with the recent uncertainty around coronavirus, it's more important than ever to make sure you're prepared for the event of a disruption to personal support services.**

Spinal Life's CEO Mark Townend said anyone who relies on personal care or support should ensure they have an emergency plan for any scenario where their regular support was not available.

*"The plan should include the names and contact details of friends, partners, family members or trusted neighbours who would be willing and able to support you in a situation where your regular support is not available and your provider cannot organise a replacement," Mark said.*

*"It's also a good idea to have a list of your routine as well as support activities that are important to your wellbeing written down somewhere to assist replacement support workers or your personal network to understand what support is needed.*

*"If you have a plan already, this is also a great time to review it and make sure the details are up to date."*

Mark said health authorities advise to consider hospital admission in the event that your usual support networks were unavailable.

*"It may be a last resort but if you need emergency care, advice from Queensland Health is to make contact with your local hospital in advance to discuss this," he said.*

Peer Support Officer and member Lindsay Nott said while the coronavirus outbreak was unexpected, he was prepared after previous events helped him realise the importance of an emergency plan.



*"When Queensland experienced those serious floods in 2011, that was a bit of wake-up call to make sure I was prepared for an emergency of any kind," he said.*

*"Communication is a very important part – you should talk with your CSO or provider about your situation and keep them updated if anything changes and make sure they're doing the same.*

*"You can't always predict how your services or personal situation will be affected – it's good to be adaptive and open to changing your schedule if you need to."*

Lindsay said he had also taken additional precautions during the COVID-19 outbreak.

*"If you have a plan already, this is also a great time to review it and make sure the details are up to date."*

*"When the outbreak started, I talked with my GP and pharmacist about what medications I would need in the case I would be required to be self-isolated for several weeks," he said.*

*"I made sure I had a few extra things on hand, such as continence products – not hoarding, just being prepared."*

**Visit [spinal.com.au/emergencyplan](https://spinal.com.au/emergencyplan) for more information on emergency planning.**



## EMERGENCY PLAN

### What to include:

- ✓ Consideration of what support or care is essential to your health and wellbeing
- ✓ The names and contact details of your first choice of family member, partner, friend or trusted person that can provide informal support in the event you cannot receive care from your usual provider
- ✓ At least two other contacts you can reach out to in case your first choice is not available
- ✓ A list of your required medications to provide to a support worker or care provider (including hospital staff) if needed
- ✓ Any additional important information to provide to a support worker or care provider (such as allergies).



## Flu season is here – are you protected?

With all the talk of coronavirus, it's important to not forget to still protect yourself against influenza, especially with winter arriving.

People with spinal cord damage and respiratory issues are often at greater risk of flu symptoms.

If you have not yet had your influenza vaccine this year, we recommend organising it soon to allow the vaccine to take effect.

People with spinal cord damage are also eligible for free vaccines each year under the Australian Government's National Immunisation Program.

*For more information on the program, visit [health.gov.au](http://health.gov.au) and search for the National Immunisation Program, call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) or discuss with your GP.*



## Preparing for hospital admission

In the event you may be required to be admitted to hospital, it's important to be prepared.

To assist, we have created a pre-admittance checklist and a document template about your routine, medication and other requirements that you can complete and bring with you.

We've also created a document to provide to hospital staff to give them more information about supporting people with spinal cord damage to ensure your treatment is safe and effective.

*Visit [spinal.com.au/emergencyplan](http://spinal.com.au/emergencyplan) to access these and other useful resources.*



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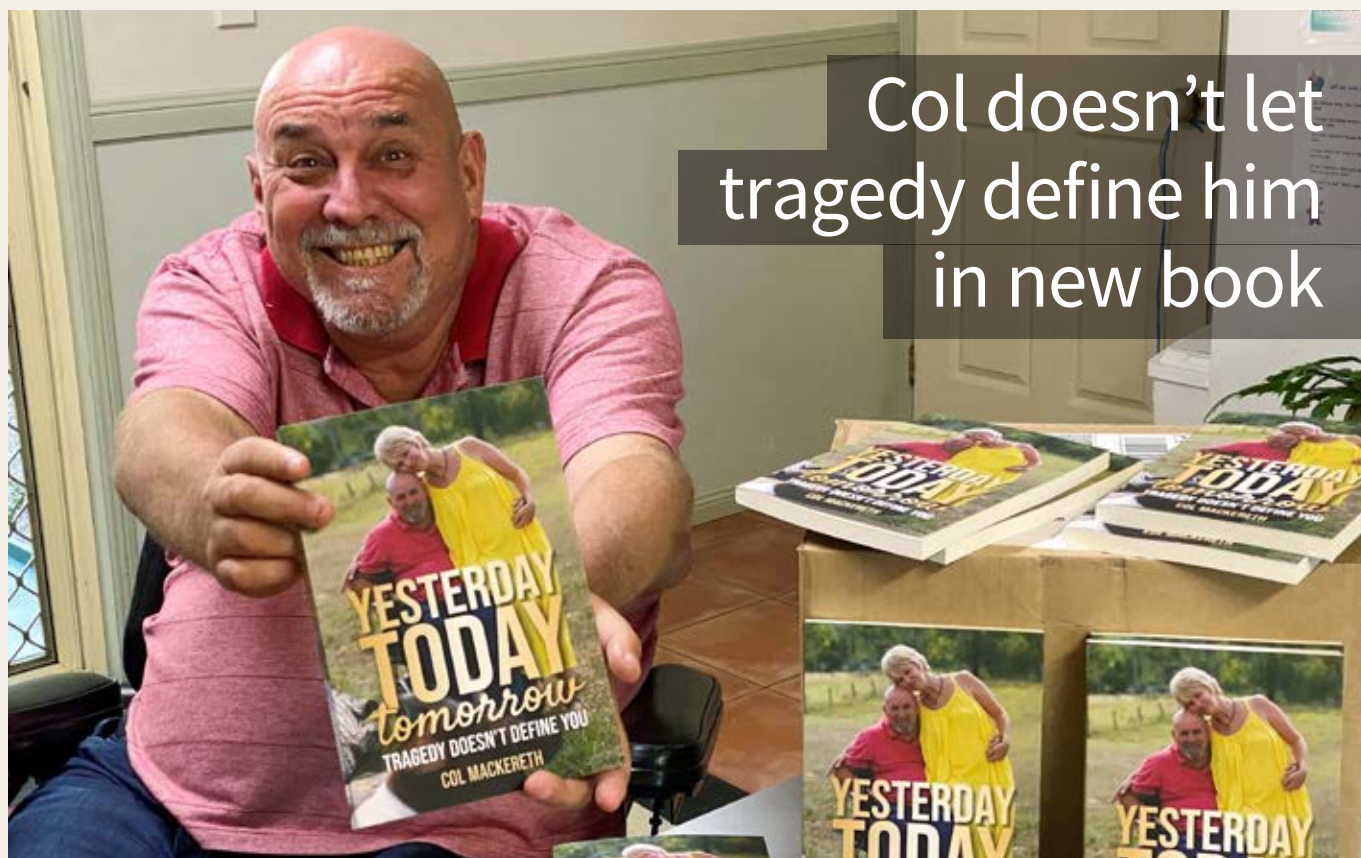
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both hands, thanks to my  
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## Col doesn't let tragedy define him in new book



**Col Mackereth has been through so many life experiences since sustaining a spinal cord injury at 18, it's hard to fit it all into words.**

Not one to shy away from a challenge, he did it anyway.

In April, the Spinal Life Peer Support Officer released an autobiography of his life and achievements titled *Yesterday Today Tomorrow: Tragedy Doesn't Define You*.

*"It was an emotional rollercoaster re-visiting the events of the past, but also exhilarating to know that other people will be able to learn from my own mistakes and experiences,"* Col said.

*"I started writing a book about my life 15 years ago but for various reasons, I never got around to finishing it.*

*"Last year I started again – ironically not one word from my old manuscript made it to the new one, I'm not sure what that says about where I was then compared to now."*

Col said while the book explored life with a spinal cord injury, the lessons he had learnt in his journey were applicable to anyone and everyone.

*"When you have a spinal cord injury, especially in the early days, it's difficult to find information and your future becomes very uncertain,"* Col said.

*"Many people get caught up in what they can't do, but my book gives examples over 40 years of living with quadriplegia of what I can do, what I have done, and what I will continue to do in the future.*

*"A big part of my work with the Spinal Life Peer Support team is showing people with newly acquired injury what's still possible*

*and it's been great to finally be able to put those experiences into words."*

*Yesterday Today Tomorrow: Tragedy Doesn't Define You* is available in paperback and Kindle formats by visiting [amazon.com.au](https://www.amazon.com.au) and searching "Yesterday Today Tomorrow".

You can also email Col at [col@8keys.com.au](mailto:col@8keys.com.au) to order a paperback copy directly. The book also reached the #1 Best Seller on Amazon in the Biographies of People with Special Needs category.

*Visit [spinal.com.au/peer-support](https://spinal.com.au/peer-support) for more information about Spinal Life's Peer Support program, which provides advice, guidance and mentorship for people with spinal cord injury.*



# Boosting your respiratory health

**Spinal cord damage can lead to greater risk of respiratory issues, but there are ways to help you breathe that little bit easier.**

Spinal Life Healthy Living Centre Physiotherapist Julie Ince said there were little things you could do every day to strengthen your respiratory system from simple exercises to diet and posture.

Julie has shared her tips in a video presentation, which you can watch at [spinal.com.au/wellbeingvideos](http://spinal.com.au/wellbeingvideos).

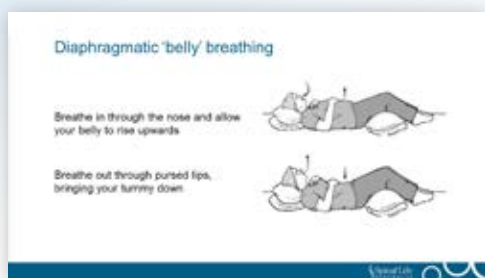


## Posture

*"Maintaining good posture can help with respiratory strength and help prevent pressure injury," Julie said.*

*"Check your cushion and wheelchair support systems and make sure they're still effective at keeping you in a support position.*

*"For more advice or help on posture and seating, talk to an Occupational Therapist."*

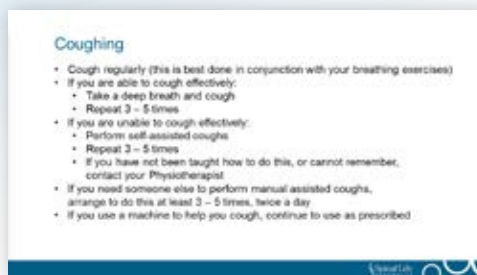


## Breathing exercise

*"A good way to increase your respiratory health is performing breathing exercises at least twice a day, preferably in bed at morning and night," Julie said.*

*"Try the following, 3 to 5 times each:*

- › *While lying down, breathe in through the nose and allow your belly to rise upwards. Then, breathe out through pursed lips, bringing your tummy down.*
- › *Take a deep breath, hold for a few seconds, then slowly breathe out.*
- › *Take a deep breath, hold it, take another breath, hold it and repeat one more time before slowly breathing out.*
- › *Take a deep breath in, then breathe out as long and fast as you can."*



## Coughing

*"You should also be coughing regularly, best done alongside your breathing exercises, again around 3 to 5 times," Julie said.*

*"If you can, take a deep breath and cough; otherwise you may need to perform self-assisted coughs or manual assisted coughs with someone else.*

*"If you have questions or concerns about forced coughing, consult a Physiotherapist.*

*"Importantly, do not breathe in or swallow your secretions – make sure you spit them out."*



## Diet and exercise

*"Living a healthy lifestyle, eating well and exercising regularly can have a real positive impact on your respiratory health," Julie said.*

*"And of course, don't forget to drink plenty of water!"*

**For more information about Physiotherapy and other health and wellbeing services at the Spinal Life Healthy Living Centre, visit [spinalhealthyliving.com.au](http://spinalhealthyliving.com.au) or call 1300 774 625.**



# Peer Support Join the community

Connect with other people around Australia with spinal cord damage and other physical disabilities by joining our Peer Support Facebook Group.



Spinal Life Australia  
**Peer Support**  **Group**



# Exercising at home

**Found yourself stuck indoors for longer than expected?**

Spinal Life Healthy Living Centre Exercise Physiologist Elise Reddicliffe and Guest and Services Manager Ben Griggs have teamed up to share some useful exercises to build your upper body strength. You can do these exercises using objects you can find around the home, such as a milk bottle or bucket with something inside it for weight.

## EXERCISES USING A RESISTANCE BAND



**Exercise 1:** With the band wrapped around a pole or door handle, use one hand to gently pull on the band, with your elbow going back just past your torso. Repeat on both arms.

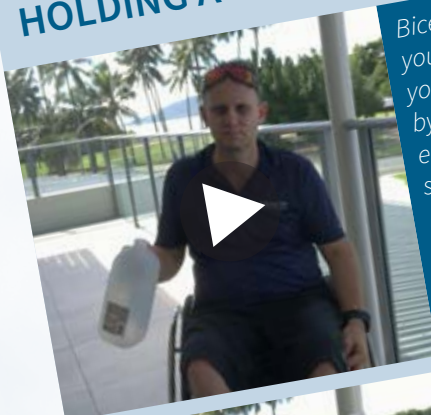


**Exercise 2:** Sit with the band to the side of you, use one hand to pull the band across your body with your elbow at a 90-degree angle.

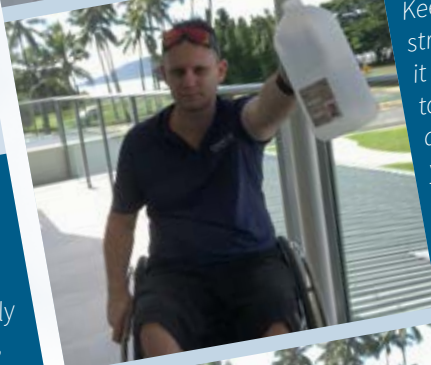


**Exercise 3:** Wrap the band around your back and use your arms to slowly bring each end of the band out as far as you can reach.

## EXERCISES TO DO WHILE HOLDING A WEIGHTED OBJECT



**Bicep curl:** Curl your arm towards your shoulder by bending your elbow. Keep your shoulders relaxed but don't swing them.



**Front raise:** Keeping your arm straight, move it from your side to a 90-degree angle in front of you while holding a weight.



**Side raise:** Same as front raise but move your arm 90 degrees to the side instead.



**Rotation:** With your elbow bent at 90 degrees, rotate your forearm to the side as far as it can go, then back again.



**Shadow boxing:** Use a weight that fits comfortably in the hands (such as a can) and, using both arms, perform controlled air punches.

Watch the full exercise videos at [spinal.com.au/wellbeingvideos](http://spinal.com.au/wellbeingvideos).

*It is important to seek medical advice before starting any new exercise program. This advice is general in nature and may not be right for you. If you experience any pain or discomfort, please stop immediately and contact a healthcare professional. You can also book a direct appointment with a Spinal Life Exercise Physiologist or Physiotherapist to discuss a tailored exercise program that's right for you.*





## Online tips from our experts

**Spinal Life Physiotherapist Anthony Nakhle has also shared a range of exercises that can be completed at home, especially during isolation periods.**

All the exercises can be done sitting down and are aimed at reducing pain, improving, increasing or maintaining your range of motion for functional activity, and supporting your overall health and wellbeing.

These videos are available on our Facebook page or YouTube channel, covering different key areas including:

- › arm stretches which can reduce stiffness and manage spasticity, as well as warm up for exercise or other physical activity
- › cardiovascular health exercises aimed at increasing your heart rate, using pillows and a resistance band (or an old tie or belt).

If you are experiencing any pain or discomfort, or would like a tailored exercise program, it's best to talk to a professional for support, such as a Spinal Life Exercise Physiologist (at our Healthy Living Centre in Cairns) or one of our Physiotherapists in Cairns or Brisbane.

The team focuses on advanced neurological and musculoskeletal rehabilitation, aiming to reduce pain, regain and enhance muscle movements, treat overuse injuries and prevent injury recurrence.

In the Healthy Living Centre, this includes appointments in our Active Gym and Active Hydro Pool.

We also have a dedicated physiotherapy practice for appointments with clients and staff at our Woolloongabba office and at 'The Gym' which is operated by the Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association.

*To find out more, visit [spinal.com.au](http://spinal.com.au) or contact us on 1300 774 625.*

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## Alliance promotes equal access to assistive technology

**Spinal Life has joined the Assistive Technology for All (ATFA) Alliance, which brings together peak bodies and consumer advocates from both the ageing and disability sectors.**

The Alliance has been launched in response to growing concerns about the lack of access to assistive technology for all people who are not eligible for the NDIS, many of whom are over 65.

The term 'assistive technology' refers to any aid or piece of equipment that provides a practical solution to help someone complete an everyday task.

Examples of assistive technology include mobility aids such as wheelchairs and scooters, communication aids, computer software and hardware such as voice recognition programs, physical modifications to the environment, and other devices and tools.

Spinal Life's Chief Advisor – Government, John Mayo, said people with disability who are not eligible for the NDIS are eligible to receive support under the Commonwealth Continuity of Support Program, My Aged Care or state-based aids and equipment programs.

*"However, the funding that is provided is limited and nowhere near the level of the NDIS," he said.*

*"This means many people are either going without or are forced to purchase these items themselves, despite many other expenses and limited incomes."*

As part of the campaign, the Alliance is calling on all parties involved in funding assistive technology at a State and Commonwealth level to come together to find a more equitable approach to addressing the needs of people with disability who are not eligible for the NDIS.

The recommendation is to establish a nationally consistent assistive technology

program that can be accessed by all people with disability who fall outside the NDIS.

This program would be aligned with the NDIS Assistive Technology Strategy to address the inequality between the support that is provided under the NDIS and other service systems.



In the absence of a nationally consistent program, the Alliance would welcome any measures that aim to ensure all people with disability who fall outside the NDIS:

- › Have access to clear, easy to understand information about the most appropriate pathway for accessing assistive technology.
- › Have timely access to skilled assessment and referral for assistive technology.
- › Can access adequate and equitable funding for assistive technology irrespective of their eligibility for other services, such as those provided under the aged care system. This also extends to people with disability living in residential care.
- › Are not subjected to long waiting lists for assistive technology and can receive the support they need in a timely manner.
- › Can access training to enable them to use the assistive technology that has been prescribed both safely and effectively.

We'll be sharing further updates from the campaign and ways you can spread the word.

**Visit [assistivetechforall.org.au](http://assistivetechforall.org.au) to sign up for the latest updates and find out how you can become involved.**



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# Royal Commission seeks feedback on emergency response

**The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability is seeking information about the experiences of people with disability during recent emergencies in Australia, including the COVID-19 outbreak.**

The Emergency Planning and Response Issues Paper was published in April, asking for feedback about what can be done to improve the safety and wellbeing of people with disability during similar emergencies in the future.

It also asks what should be done to ensure people with disability are not at risk of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation during emergencies.

Disability Royal Commission Chair Ronald Sackville AO QC said all Australian governments have a responsibility to uphold the rights of people with disability during emergencies.

*"The unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic our country is facing comes just months after the summer bushfire crisis. Both of these events have had a profound effect on the Australian population," he said.*

*"We are encouraging people with disability, as well as their families, advocates and experts to provide information about how emergency planning and responses can be improved."*

*"We are encouraging people to provide information about how emergency planning and responses can be improved."*

The Disability Royal Commission has also released a Statement of Concern about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on people with disability, which was endorsed by the United Nations.

All upcoming public hearings and community forums for the Disability Royal Commission have been suspended. Feedback can still be shared over the phone, in writing or by making a video or audio recording.

The Emergency Planning and Response Issues Paper features 11 questions,

with responses due by 17 July 2020, although submissions will also be accepted after that date.

**To share your feedback on the Issues Paper, or find out more, visit [disability.royalcommission.gov.au](http://disability.royalcommission.gov.au) or call 1800 517 199.**

**If you or anyone you know needs help, you can call services such as Lifeline (13 11 14), 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or the National Disability Abuse and Neglect Hotline (1800 880 052).**



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# COVID-19 reaction brings back memories for polio survivor Joy



*"There was often a stigma attached with polio that came with the disease being relatively misunderstood when I was young."*

## **The feelings of fear, isolation and uncertainty felt by many during the COVID-19 outbreak are familiar to Cairns member Joy Hay.**

As a polio survivor, Joy said she saw several parallels in the response to COVID-19 and the response to the polio outbreak when she was a child in the 1950's.

*"The attitude back then was of fear – I remember being told about buildings, railway stations, even entire streets being closed down because of a single case," she said.*

*"Watching the news lately can bring back some very unpleasant memories and I've found myself needing to walk away and go to the garden to clear my head."*

Joy said there was often a stigma attached with polio that came with the disease being relatively misunderstood

when she was young.

*"Many viewed polio as a disease caused by poor hygiene which led to a big focus on sanitation, similar to what we see today," she said.*

*"Unfortunately, this also meant I was on the receiving end of teasing from other school students, saying I was 'dirty' or that I lived in a dirty house.*

*"After I was diagnosed at the age of 7, I was put in an isolation ward in Hobart Hospital – I have memories of my family coming to visit but not being able to get any closer than the ward doorway."*

Joy said while the COVID-19 outbreak did bring back some unpleasant memories, there were still some upsides.

*"My husband Don and I have found ourselves with a lot of extra time to spend in our garden which has really kept me sane," she said.*

*"I've also been able to get in a lot of reading, including the book 'Dancing in my Dreams' by researcher Kerry Highley, which follows the epidemic in Australia across many decades.*

*"Reading it brought back so many memories and really showed how reactions, opinions and attitudes towards polio were so different around Australia and the rest of the world – just like with COVID-19."*

***Our information booklet for medical professionals on the late effects of polio has been recognised as an Accredited Clinical Resource by The Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP). If you would like copies to distribute, contact [members@spinal.com.au](mailto:members@spinal.com.au) or call 1300 774 625.***



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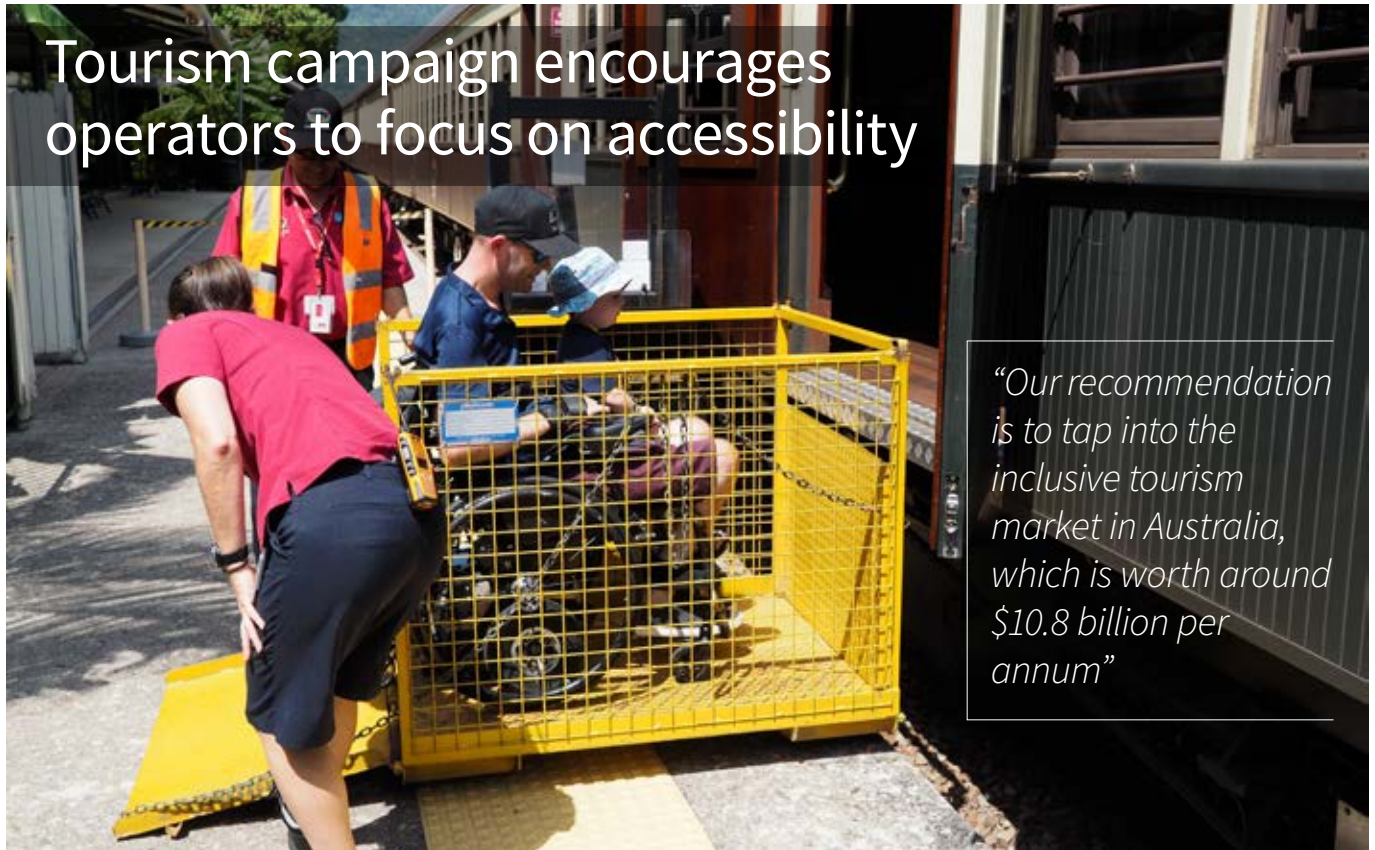
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## Tourism campaign encourages operators to focus on accessibility



*“Our recommendation is to tap into the inclusive tourism market in Australia, which is worth around \$10.8 billion per annum”*

**As the Australian travel industry continues to be impacted by coronavirus restrictions, we have asked tourism operators to consider using this time to make their offerings more accessible and inclusive.**

Spinal Life’s Advocacy Officer - Inclusive Tourism Dane Cross said he understood this was a difficult time for many operators but also provided a potential opportunity to explore options to increase their audience once regulations were lifted.

*“We want to see Australian tourism bounce back from the coronavirus impact and our recommendation is to tap into the inclusive tourism market in Australia, which is worth around \$10.8 billion per annum in domestic and international visitors,” Dane said.*

*“As well as the physical aspects of venue access, tourism operators could look at updating the accessibility information available on their website, social media or brochures to keep people informed before they visit.”*

Dane is leading our Inclusive Tourism campaign, which has had some recent wins, including a well-attended Far North Queensland inclusive tourism forum held in March.

We also recently welcomed the news that an inclusive tourism recognition program will be part of the state and national Tourism Awards from 2021, following many months’ campaigning for this to be introduced.

*Visit [spinal.com.au/advocacy](https://spinal.com.au/advocacy) for more information on our advocacy work.*

## Accessible taxis boosted by grants program

**The Queensland Government has announced the first recipients of a \$21 million grants program aimed at improving the state’s wheelchair accessible taxi fleet.**

Minister for Transport and Main Roads Mark Bailey said 51 applicants had received grants in the first round of the program.

*“This funding will help operators across Queensland to upgrade their older vehicles, so those vehicles can stay in service, rather than dropping out of the accessible taxi fleet when they become too expensive to maintain, or reach the end of their serviceable life,” he said.*

He said the grants will also assist existing conventional taxi licence operators to replace their vehicles with wheelchair accessible taxis.

Spinal Life’s Chief Advisor – Government John Mayo said the funding was critical to improve the safety, availability and reliability of wheelchair accessible taxis and reduce barriers for people with a disability.

Successful applicants will receive 50 per cent funding for the cost to purchase and modify a new wheelchair accessible taxi, up to a maximum grant of \$45,000.

*Visit [grida.qld.gov.au](https://grida.qld.gov.au) for more on the grants program.*





## Spinal Chatter collaboration strengthens WA community

**We've teamed up with WA-based peer support organisation Spinal Chatter to strengthen and expand the spinal cord damage community in Western Australia.**

Spinal Chatter has provided peer support for Western Australians with spinal cord injury and their friends and family for the last six years after it was created by Chairperson Karen Harvey.

Karen (above centre with Spinal Life's Peer Support team members), who sustained a spinal cord injury in 1992, also joined the Spinal Life Peer Support team in Western Australia in 2019.

*"We look forward to working together to push for a more inclusive and accessible Western Australia."*

Spinal Life's Executive Manager – Member Services Ross Duncan said the collaboration would assist in connecting people with lived disability experience in Perth and surrounding regions.

*"We're looking forward to working together on our shared goal of providing peer supports and connections for people with spinal cord damage in Western Australia,"* Ross said

*"As well as shared goals in peer support, Karen also shares our passion for advocacy and we look forward to working together to push for a more inclusive and accessible Western Australia."*

Ross said Spinal Life was looking forward to holding more events and catch-ups once COVID-19 social distancing regulations were lifted.

In early 2019, Spinal Life launched a Peer Support program in Western Australia comprised of residents of Perth, Mandurah and surrounds, each with their own lived experience.

Visit [spinal.com.au/wa](https://spinal.com.au/wa) for more information about our services in WA.

## Catch up with members in your community

Our Peer Support Catch-ups are usually held across Queensland and Western Australia, and have been temporarily postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Keep an eye on Facebook and our website for updates on when these events will begin again, or if online catch-ups have been arranged.

If you'd like to connect with our Peer Support, Post Polio or Transverse Myelitis Groups in your region, please use the contact details below.

### Spinal Life Peer Support Groups

Bribie Island: Contact Bill Peacock on 0403 686 998.

Combined with Post Polio group.

Brisbane: Contact Bill Simpson on 0412 729 843.

Bundaberg: Contact Pat Allison on 4153 1005.

Cairns: Contact Jeanette Kretschmann on 1300 774 625.

Combined with Post Polio group.

Fraser Coast: Contact Jeanette Kretschmann on 1300 774 625.

Ipswich: Contact Eric Rushton on 0403 191 698.

Mackay: Contact Debra Reaves on 0487 021 735.

Moreton Bay: Contact Tom Dutton on 0448 949 910.

Rockhampton: Contact Robynne Clifton on 0473 576 107 or Anne Guthrie on 0407 116 035.

Toowoomba: Contact Wendy Adams on 0422 799 580. Combined with Post Polio group.

Western Australia: Contact Debbie Nobre on 0420 985 734.

### Post Polio Groups

Cairns: Contact Joy Hay on 4055 5795.

Gold Coast: Contact Lyn Glover on 0448 206 856 or Joan Radanovic on 0413 178 073.

Sunshine Coast: Contact Cathy Newman on 5447 6608.

Townsville: Contact Eric Collins on 4729 0275.

### Transverse Myelitis Group

Contact Louise Remilton on 0414 254 531.

Join our member community today at [spinal.com.au/membership](https://spinal.com.au/membership) or call 1300 774 625 to find out more.

# New Human Rights Act for Queensland – what it means for you



**Queensland's Human Rights Act 2019 came into effect on 1 January 2020, creating some of the strongest human rights protections in law anywhere in Australia.**

The Act also changed the name of the Anti-Discrimination Commission Queensland (ADCQ) to the Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC). The QHRC still has functions under the Anti-Discrimination Act, which is operating as it was and hasn't been replaced by the *Human Rights Act*.

The *Human Rights Act* protects 23 rights by law, including the right to education and the right to access health services without discrimination. It obligates the Queensland public sector (called 'public entities' in the Act) to act compatibly with human rights, and to properly consider human rights when they are making decisions. Public entities include the Queensland Government and its departments and agencies, local councils in Queensland, and non-government organisations paid to deliver services on behalf of the government.

This means that in your interactions with any public entity – which include the Queensland Police, Child Safety, public schools, public hospitals, social housing providers, and many more – your human rights have to be considered when they make decisions which affect you.

The Act does not extend to departments and organisations which are funded by the federal government. This means Medicare and Centrelink, for example, aren't covered by these obligations.

However, the Act states specifically that registered NDIS providers are considered to be public entities when delivering services in Queensland, even if they are big organisations which aren't based in Queensland.

Information on which rights are protected by the Act and examples of what they cover is available on the Queensland Human Rights Commission website at [qhrc.qld.gov.au/your-rights](http://qhrc.qld.gov.au/your-rights).

The Act applies to anybody in Queensland – there are no residency or citizenship criteria. It only applies

*“The Human Rights Act protects 23 rights by law, including the right to education and the right to access health services without discrimination.”*

to acts and decisions made on or after 1 January 2020; it is not retrospective. It does, however, provide for a complaints process, administered by the Commission. This means if you feel a public entity has limited your human rights in a way that isn't reasonable or justifiable, you may be able to make a complaint to the Commission, after first trying to resolve the matter with the public entity. Information about this process is available at [qhrc.qld.gov.au/complaints](http://qhrc.qld.gov.au/complaints).

*If you would like to know more or think you have a complaint, call 1300 130 670.*



## Your rights are protected in Queensland by both the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 and the Human Rights Act 2019.

The *Anti-Discrimination Act* (ADA) protects people from discrimination on the basis of 16 attributes, including impairment, in seven areas of public life, including work, education, state laws and programs, and accessing goods and services. The ADA also protects against sexual harassment and public acts which vilify people on the basis of their race, religion, sexuality or gender identity.

The *Human Rights Act* applies to everyone, not just those with particular attributes, in their interactions with the Queensland public sector.

Your issue may be covered by one of the Acts or both. In order to make a complaint to the QHRC, you don't need to know if it's a discrimination or human rights complaint in order to lodge it – the Commission will contact you to discuss it after lodgement, to help figure out the best way of moving forward with it. You can also talk to the Commission before you lodge it if you're unsure or need any more information.



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# Accessible accommodation made easier through modular cabin design

**SuzanneStays is the legacy of the late Suzanne Cram-Rossiter who passed away from motor-neuron disease in July 2019.**

After being diagnosed in December 2017, Suzanne attempted to fulfill her travel bucket list, but as her mobility decreased, she realised that short-term accommodation, despite providers' claims, wasn't usually accessible.

To help overcome this challenge on 28 March 2019 the first SuzanneStays property opened its doors to the public.

The Brisbane Riverfront Apartment has been designed with the utmost levels of accessibility in mind, from lowered kitchen benches to decked out wet rooms, each of the SuzanneStays properties are compliant with the NDIS Accommodation Design Standard.

People who use assistive technology and equipment should be able to expect accessible accommodation that is more than just a ramp. With over 400 properties throughout Australia planned in the next few years, SuzanneStays intends to become a leading provider in specialised accessible accommodation.

One year on from SuzanneStays' first property, the brand new accessible modular cabins have launched. These cabins are built to the exact same standards as the rest of our accommodation and come furnished, air conditioned and fully wheelchair compliant. For those who don't want to stay in a tent, this is an incredible alternative that makes travelling with assistive technology or equipment a breeze, whilst still being surrounded by your family. There are one, two and

three-bedroom options that are being distributed throughout Australia. Whether it's the hinterlands, rural outback Australia or the ocean front campgrounds, there will be few locations you can't stay in accessible accommodation. SuzanneStays is all about fulfilling every traveller's bucket list, as accessible accommodation should be the expectation, not the exception.

*If you have somewhere on your bucket list, that you'd like to see these cabins, please contact [admin@suzannestays.com](mailto:admin@suzannestays.com)*



Suzanne Cram-Rossiter





# Uncover the meaning of dignity

People with disability are invited to participate in the Dignity Project, a research project that aims to disrupt stereotypes and break down the barriers that impact on daily lives. The Dignity Project will harness community voices and ideas to reduce exclusion, marginalisation, and undignified treatment of people with disability.

Citizen researcher and 2019 Queensland Young Australian of the Year, Angel Dixon says, *“Everyone has unique experiences and we need diverse stories. By uncovering what dignity means to people with disability and where it is most commonly lost, we can make more practical and lasting change for the future.”*

People can take part in the project by taking the survey or becoming a member of the Community Hub. The Community Hub will bring together citizens and researchers to co-design service and system innovations for the future. Through timely research, we will work together to develop rapid

A man with glasses and a beard, wearing a blue denim shirt, is sitting in a wheelchair and using a laptop. He is smiling. In the background, there is a promotional graphic for The Dignity Project. The graphic is teal and white, featuring the text: "Presented by The Hopkins Centre Research for Rehabilitation and Resilience", "Queensland Government Office of the Queensland Chief Scientist", "SHARE YOUR STORIES", and "AND BE A PART OF MEANINGFUL CHANGE". The Dignity Project logo is also visible.

responses to critical issues that impact on all Queenslanders with disability, such as the current risk of COVID-19.

Have your say and share your stories to help The Dignity Project uncover the meaning of dignity. If you share a passion for “a fair and justice society, a society that is inclusive” like Dr Kevin Cocks AM and citizen researcher of The Dignity Project, join us in being part of meaningful change.

Join the conversation at The Community Hub by registering your interest on The Hopkins Centre website

or by taking part in the survey, helping us preserve dignity for all Australians.

The Dignity Project is a pilot project by The Hopkins Centre, proudly supported by the Queensland Motor Accident Insurance Commission and the Queensland Government—Queensland Citizen Science Grants.

*Visit [hopkinscentre.edu.au/the-dignity-project](https://hopkinscentre.edu.au/the-dignity-project) to find out more.*

# Healthy Living Centre doors open to Cairns community

To celebrate the opening of our Spinal Life Healthy Living Centre, we invited the Cairns community to see the facility for themselves at our Community Open Day in March.

Our team gave visitors a full tour of the fully accessible Centre, showing them the Active Gym, Active Hydro Pool and accommodation facilities, as well as providing more information on the useful supports and therapies the Centre provides to people with a physical disability.

Regional Manager – Queensland North Margaret McDonald said the Open Day was a great opportunity for the Cairns and Far North Queensland community to meet the Healthy Living Centre team and see the finished facility for themselves.

*“So many people told us they have watched the Centre being built from the foundations up and were looking forward to seeing it from the inside,” Margaret said.*

**For more information on the Healthy Living Centre, visit [spinalhealthyliving.com.au](http://spinalhealthyliving.com.au)**



Guest and Services Manager Ben Griggs (above) shares more about the Centre, Regional Manager – Queensland North Margaret McDonald and Chair Gyl Stacey (right) address the crowd, members Sandra Williams and Joy Hay listen in.







*Occupational Therapist Georgia Fowler (top left) showcases assistive technology that is available to trial, Executive Manager – Business Development, Frances Porter (left) in front of the Centre's History Wall, and the event proceedings on the day.*





# CALENDAR of dates

We are continuing to follow the Australian Government's guidelines in response to COVID-19, and have temporarily suspended all in-person events and Peer Support Catch-ups.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page and website for updates about when our Peer Support Catch-ups will recommence, as well as online events and videos.

You can also stay connected through our private Peer Support group on Facebook or by contacting us directly.

## Staying connected

We have a range of great online videos available for you via our Facebook page and YouTube channel, including:

- › Regular exercises from our physiotherapist and yoga consultant
- › Tutorials and presentations by our clinical staff and therapists
- › Tips from our Peer Support team
- › Wellbeing Series online events.

## Wellbeing Series events

We held a special Wellbeing Series online event focused on 'Reaching out during self-isolation' through our closed Peer Support Facebook group on Friday 22 May.

As part of this special event, Katie Hammond and Col Mackereth from our Peer Support Team discussed strategies to stay connected during these uncertain times and shared their personal experiences during the COVID-19 outbreak. You can read more on Page 12.

The 2020 Wellbeing Series is proudly supported by Coloplast, which is offering virtual clinics to discuss your bowel and bladder health by calling 1800 316 649.

## Don't miss out on the latest news!

 **Follow us on Facebook**  
([facebook.com/spinallifeaustralia](https://facebook.com/spinallifeaustralia))  
 **or Twitter** ([twitter.com/spinallife](https://twitter.com/spinallife))

Don't forget you can read *The Advocate* online at [spinal.com.au/resources/advocate-magazine/](https://spinal.com.au/resources/advocate-magazine/)

## About our services

At Spinal Life Australia, we aim to support people with spinal cord damage to live an accessible, equitable and empowered life.

### Personal Support and Home Care Services

Our team provides reliable services seven days a week\* including:

- › Personal care at home and work
- › Specialist complex personal care
- › Domestic assistance around the home
- › Lifestyle support to attend appointments, activities, holidays and events
- › Transition support from hospital to home.

\* *Seven-day service available in most locations. Contact us for more information.*

### Allied Health Services

Our dedicated professionals include physiotherapists, exercise physiologists, occupational therapists and registered nurses, who can assist with:

- › Access to expertise and funding schemes
- › Mobility, seating and equipment solutions and prescriptions
- › Specialist personal advice and assessments
- › Workplace/home modification assessments and pressure mapping
- › Continence and wound assessment and management
- › General health assessments and respiratory support
- › Specialised physiotherapy
- › Hydrotherapy and exercise programs for home or gym  
(available at the Spinal Life Healthy Living Centre)

The team is offering telehealth appointments wherever possible in response to COVID-19. *Services available in some areas only. Contact us for more information.*

### NDIS Supports Coordination

Our experienced team can help you navigate the NDIS and assist with planning and coordinating your supports.

### Member Services

Our members can access a range of services including peer support, individual advocacy assistance, events and activities, and more. You can also help set our course and have an active voice in our organisation.

Our Peer Support team also regularly visits the Princess Alexandra Hospital's Spinal Injuries Unit to assist newly-injured patients and their families. *Note: in-person visits are currently suspended due to COVID-19 and will restart soon.*

### Employment, study and workplace assistance

The Spinal Life Australia Back2Work® program supports patients in the Princess Alexandra Hospital's Spinal Injuries Unit to return to work or study, while our Allied Health team also provides detailed workplace assessments and equipment solutions.

Plus, we deliver disability awareness workshops to educate staff on inclusiveness, conducted by our Training Solutions facilitators.

### Sharing your feedback

We value your feedback, as part of our commitment to continuous improvement. You can submit feedback and view our Feedback and Complaints Policy by visiting [spinal.com.au/feedback](https://spinal.com.au/feedback).

Contact us today on 1300 774 625 or [enquiries@spinal.com.au](mailto:enquiries@spinal.com.au) to find out how we can support you.



# Win a trip to Cairns and a \$1,000 holiday voucher

## And the Empowered Travel Prize

We are giving YOU the opportunity to win a 4-day vacation to the brand new Spinal Life Healthy Living Centre and a \$1,000 voucher to go towards your flights or centre services such as gym or therapy.

Being away from home doesn't have to be an overwhelming challenge. Our Coloplast Care team is dedicated to empowering you to have a memorable trip away where urinary problems don't hold you back.

Coloplast is proud to partner with Spinal Life Australia to give YOU the opportunity to win the Empowered Travel Prize.

### The Empowered Travel Prize includes

- 4-day stay in a 2-bedroom apartment at the Spinal Life Healthy Living Centre (\$795 value)
- \$1,000 pre-paid Visa Card
- Kindle (\$139 value)
- Set of hand sanitiser sprays and antibacterial wipes
- Foldable toiletry bag
- x2 Stay Hydrated water bottles
- An assortment of SpeediCath intermittent catheters for your trip away



To enter, visit our website <http://coloplast.to/AU-CC-MajorPrizeSLA> and complete the online form during the promotion period.

The brand new Spinal Life Healthy Living Centre in Cairns offers accessible accommodation and specialist services to support the health and wellbeing of people with spinal cord damage or other physical disabilities.

Located close to the iconic Esplanade, the Centre features seven fully-equipped accommodation units, Allied Health and therapy services, a rehabilitation gym and hydrotherapy pool, as well as a community café. Guests also have the option to access specialist personal support, where and when you need it, so you can make the most of your time exploring beautiful Far North Queensland.

Visit [spinalhealthyliving.com.au](http://spinalhealthyliving.com.au) to find out more.

Entries open 01/03/20 at 12:00am AEST and close 30/06/2020 at 11:59pm AEST. Open to all Australian residents aged 18+ only. Limit 1 entry per person. Drawn at Coloplast Ltd, ABN 57 054 949 692, Level 4, 1 Acacia Place, Notting Hill Victoria 3168 on 02/07/2020 at 12:00 noon AEST. The winners will have their details published in The Advocate, Summer Edition 16th Nov 2020 and on <https://www.coloplast.com.au/empoweredtravelprize> on 02/07/2020. Total prize pool valued at \$2,961.96 AUD. Full terms and conditions are available at [https://www.coloplast.com.au/about-us/Landing-pages/terms\\_and\\_conditions\\_cc/](https://www.coloplast.com.au/about-us/Landing-pages/terms_and_conditions_cc/). Promoter: Coloplast Ltd, ABN 57 054 949 692, Level 4, 1 Acacia Place, Notting Hill Victoria 3168 Ph:1800 653 317. NSW: LTPS/xx/xxxx, SA:



Ostomy Care / Continence Care / Wound & Skin Care / Interventional Urology

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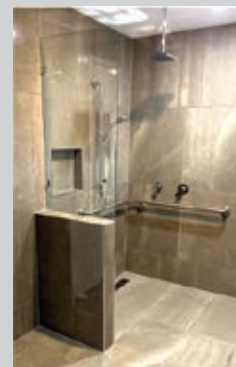
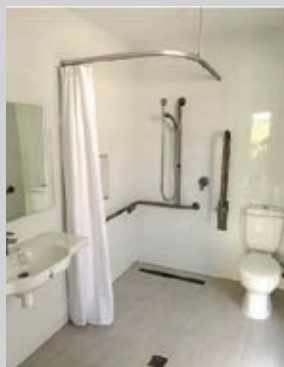
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