

Issue 54 events calendar:

14 February
Valentine's Day

28 February
SAHS Health Seminar -
Sexual Health & Intimate
Relationships

17 March
St Patrick's Day

27 March
10th Anniversary Classic
Wallabies Lunch

4 April
Easter Saturday

5 April
Easter Sunday

6 April
Easter Monday

25 April
Anzac Day 100th
Centenary

10 May
Mother's Day

11-17 May
National Volunteer Week

23 May
SAHS Health Seminar -
Pain Management

25 May
Transverse Myelitis
Awareness Day

CEO'S UPDATE

BRUCE MILLIGAN

Welcome to the first issue of your staff newsletter for 2015. I hope you all enjoyed the festive season with your loved ones, and are refreshed and ready for an exciting year ahead.

We begin the year with a new Chairman, Alan Ashford and a new Deputy Chairman, Richard Boys, who will lead the Board as we look to the future.

This year the focus for our organisation is very much on the preparation for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), which is still scheduled to be rolled out in Queensland from July 2016.

Work is currently being undertaken across all departments of the organisation to ensure we are ready to support clients and be responsive to market opportunities.

Guiding this body of work is an NDIS preparation plan which includes a range of activities such as examining current and future service opportunities, costing our services, identifying potential client groups and the geographical areas we will support, along with information technology and workforce planning.

We are also preparing a marketing plan and conducting a comprehensive rejuvenation program of our brand marketing and communication activities to ensure we focus on client needs and present as a united organisation.

The NDIS commenced in other states in July 2013 and, for the first three years, is being introduced at trial sites in selected regions and for selected age groups, including in Tasmania for young people aged 15-24, in South Australia for children aged 13 and under, and in the Barwon area of Victoria and the Hunter area in New South Wales for people up to age 65.

From 1 July 2014, these trials also commenced across the ACT, the Barkly region of Northern Territory, and in the Perth Hills area of Western Australia.

Last month, the National Disability Insurance Agency's CEO, David Bowen, confirmed that more than 10,000 people with disability now have an approved NDIS plan, with an estimated 450,000 to go.

We are watching the progress of these trial sites closely for information that will assist us in this planning. To find out more, check The Advocate and our website for updates.

Along with this, it is business as usual when it comes to providing high-quality support services for our clients across Queensland.

Whether it's personal support, employment assistance, health and lifestyle advice, and much more, I am proud of the work that we are doing every day and look forward to Spinal Injuries Australia achieving great success again in 2015.



Member Scott Stidston OAM speaking at the Charters Towers Australia Day celebrations where he gave a stirring speech about being Australian, his work with SEAT and advocacy for an inclusive community.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

JOHN MAYO, GENERAL MANAGER

BRISBANE CITY COUNCIL BUS STOPS EQUIVALENT ACCESS PROPOSALS

Brisbane City Council (BCC) is commencing a Bus Stop Upgrades process to meet requirements under the Disability Accessible Public Transport Standards (DSAPT).

This is a major task given Brisbane's road building, footpath and bus stop design history.

Under the DSAPT, when no clear solution to an access problem arises, the asset owner (in this case, BCC) is required to consult with the local community to achieve equivalent access. BCC has recently consulted a disability stakeholder reference group (John Mayo represented Spinal Injuries Australia) and presented six proposals for equivalent access at bus stops.

Spinal Injuries Australia, like other stakeholder representatives, have taken the proposals to our members and clients via email and website to seek their approval or feedback, given BCC needs advice before proceeding with the investment the Upgrades project requires.

The six proposals are for:

1. Minimum kerb height
2. Setback for Tactile Ground Surface Indicators
3. Seat types
4. Waiting areas
5. Allocated wheelchair spaces
6. Signs – priority signage

We have noted the importance of feedback and encouraged participation because other local governments and bus operators will follow Brisbane's lead on this.

TM TO CONNECT IN SYDNEY

Transverse Myelitis is a rare neuroimmunological disorder which can have a devastating impact on the lives of both the individuals diagnosed and their families.

SIA is the Australasian affiliate for the Transverse Myelitis Association (USA) and receives many requests from members for contact with others with the same condition.

Our TM members are spread across all states of Australia. To assist in these requests SIA is planning an inaugural gathering of TM members in Sydney on 21st March.

The aim of this event is to facilitate a meeting of members to meet others that are dealing with TM and to share knowledge and local resources.

From this event, it is hoped that a stronger network in NSW will evolve.

NEW IMPROVED BOARDING RAMP ON CITY FERRY AND CITYCAT NETWORK

Brisbane City Council operates its fleet of CityCats and CityFerries along a network of 24 terminals stretching from The University of Queensland at St Lucia to Northshore Hamilton.

Boarding ramps are located at each ferry terminal to assist safe and efficient boarding of the vessels.

In October a number of community representatives using a range of mobility aids had the opportunity to trial a prototype new improved boarding ramp.

Unlike on a bus or train, the boarding ramp in the marine environment operates in a dynamic environment that requires it to keep each end on the pontoon and ferry deck while both are in motion. There are also the effects of the rising and falling tides to be considered. It therefore must have a convex shape, which to date has been steep with poor transitions to the deck and pontoon.



Reducing the convex to a minimum while maintaining contact with the decks at all times has been the challenge. This prototype ramp offers a more comfortable less steep gradient along with less steep and gentler transitions to deck and pontoon and has achieved the compromise to the best degree to date.

The boarding ramp needs to serve a variety of purposes:

- Provide a safe and functional transition from the pontoon to floating vessel while both are in motion
- Accommodate the rising and falling tide and the loading of the vessel
- Meet compliance
- Operated and deployed by staff so workplace health and safety considerations apply
- Situated in a robust marine environment

It was a delight to use a piece of transport transition equipment that was so easy, dignified and felt safe. The transitions to and from deck and boarding pontoon were very well graded, so no footplate scraping. Little extra effort was required to cross the boarding ramp resulting in a safe, functional and dignified outcome for all users.

Welcome to the new year to all PS&HCS staff and particularly to our Personal Support Workers. I hope you all had a happy and safe Christmas and New Year. I hope all the kids were excited about returning to school and that it was not too sad a time for those of you who sent your babies off to their first year at school.

As in past years, there are many challenges for us in the coming year including:

- Ensuring we continue to offer a high quality service to our clients;
- Keeping our rates competitive;
- Looking after our workforce so that we continue to be a great organisation to work for;
- Engaging with new clients through the Your Life Your Choice initiative;
- Continuing our preparations and business development work for the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Queensland in July 2016; and
- Welcoming new clients from the Spinal Injuries Unit into our service.

We are in the process of interviewing for the vacated Community Psychologist position and hope to have some news about an appointment soon. Many of our PSWs would have worked with Caroline Binns who was previously in this role.

We are also recruiting to two new positions to assist with our Your Life Your Choice work and our NDIS readiness work. These positions have been advertised on SEEK and we hope to be interviewing shortly. If anyone is interested, please look up the advertisement and, if you feel you have the required knowledge and experience, please submit your application.

As always thanks to everyone for the great energy that you put in on behalf of the organisation. Keep up the good work. You are welcome to provide good news/feedback as well as issues of concern to me at any time.

Cheers

Pauline Davis
General Manager

WEATHER WARNINGS

As we are in the peak season for interesting weather, please remember to be mindful when travelling to and from shifts.

Quite often localised flooding is a concern in areas that you may need to travel through to get somewhere. Try having the radio on while in the car, listen to the news or checking updates online on BOM website, Facebook groups or even sign up for the local council alerts!

Having these put in place can quite often save you a lot of time and trouble in allowing you to plan alternative routes to work or giving enough notice to the Urgent After Hours team and your client to arrange an alternative.

Your client and CSO will be aware of any issues that may arise with storms and rain so have a quick chat with them if you have any concerns.

Remember – If it's flooded, forget it!

STAFF MEMBERS OF THE MONTH

- CSO Stacey Kerslake would like to acknowledge Casey Rea for delivery exception support to her clients. You always go above and beyond to make your clients' needs a priority, thanks Case!
- CSO Eileen Bedford would like to thank Kyle McGregor for his willingness to assist with shift-fill on such a regular basis during the holiday period.
- CSO Lisa Milliken would like to thank her team in Gympie for all the extra work that they are about to take on with one PSW going on Maternity leave. Good luck Erin Seegar and we are all looking forward to your return after bub is born!



SHIFT FILL CHAMPIONS

The NQ Shift Fill Team would like to acknowledge Leanne Strauss, June Hood & Robyn Davies who do a wonderful job supporting their clients. Thank you for all that you do. Jenny & Nadine

Thank you to all the PSW's who helped out over the crazy holiday period! The Shift Fill team were very busy and every little bit is appreciated!

Remember to please answer contact as promptly as possible even if it is to decline a shift.

Thanks Again!



PSW UPDATE

CONTINUED

PASSIVE RANGE OF MOVEMENT EXERCISES

On discharge from the Spinal Injuries Unit your Client will have been prescribed Range of Movement (ROM) exercises that should take no longer than 30 minutes.

The purpose of these exercises is to maintain joint range of movement and muscle length in all joints of the limbs and trunk. They may also feel benefit with reduction in spasm.

Your Client will have been advised:

- These exercises are best performed 3-5 days a week.
- To repeat each exercise approximately 10 times. Hold each stretch at the end of range of movement for a few seconds and then return to the starting position. Muscle tone may fluctuate day to day and some movements may cause an increase in muscle tone. If this is a problem, it is possible to maintain the stretch position for longer (at least 30 seconds) and complete fewer repetitions (approx. 3).
- To use pain or discomfort as a guide. It is possible to experience some discomfort due to stretching of the joint and muscle tissues, but it should not be too intense. If the pain / discomfort persists for more than 1 hour, it means you have done too much and you will have to decrease either the ROM or the number of repetitions.

It is important you:

- Adopt a comfortable position when assisting with ROM exercises, including optimising the bed height if possible and getting as close as possible to the limb being moved.
- Do each exercise slowly. Ensure the paralysed limb is supported well. If the exercise is done too quickly you may increase muscle spasm and/or strain muscles or joints. When you encounter muscle spasm through the exercise, pause and wait for the spasm to relax. Then proceed further. Never push into spasm.
- Gently take the limb through the range until some gentle resistance is felt. This indicates that the stretching limit of the joint and muscle tissues have been reached. Do not bounce at the end of range.
- Remember that the program should only take a maximum of 30 minutes.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THE EXERCISE PROGRAM HAS BEEN PRESCRIBED, LIKE MEDICATION IS PRESCRIBED. LIKE MEDICATION, CHANGES SHOULD NOT BE MADE WITHOUT ADVICE FROM A QUALIFIED PRACTITIONER.

INDUCTION PHOTOS



(Left) L-R: Karrine Hanlon, Stacey Hudson, Kara Darcy, Cade Smith, Danielle Aston, Stephanie Collins, Joshua Guthrey, Jessica Williams & Jesse Todd



(Above) Back L-R: Melissa Rosenberg, Frances Pearce, Melissa McChesney, Lynda Walker, Babita Uprety, Crystal Lim, Arlene Lou
Front: L-R Loraine Lysaght & trainer Aaron Buckner



(Left) Back L-R: Hayden Grantham, Carmel Joseph, Tara Adams, Ellie McLawly, Lisa Tomczak, Shelly Goos
Front L-R: Shayne Kievit, Peka Fiu, Georgina Houghton

It may be of no surprise to learn that sitting all day at your workstation can be harmful. In recent times there has been significant amounts of research undertaken on the health risks associated with sitting all day and, while regular stretching exercises may be a useful tool to use to reduce fatigue, there is another innovative but not necessarily new option.

While standing at your workstation may seem challenging, it has been established that a person's energy and productivity significantly improve by standing for periods of time.

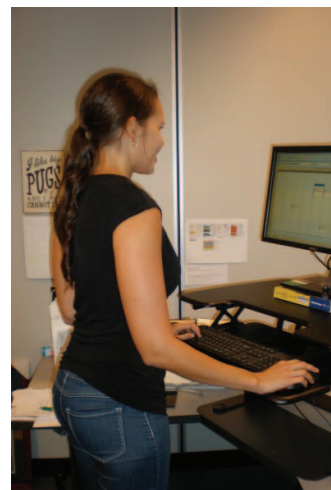
A stand-up desk that is both portable and sits on top of your existing desk, allows the user to switch from a seated to standing position in just three seconds, adjusts to any user's height and is the perfect size for work stations with dual monitors or docking stations.

With this in mind, Stacey Kerslake, CSO Townsville agreed to test the desk, over the last two months Stacey has reported that through regular use of the desk from a sitting position, to a standing position throughout the day, improved her capacity to maintain concentration and assist

in the reduction of ongoing posture concerns. Stacey uses the variation of height to a standing position for at least an hour at a time throughout the day.

"I find the desk gives me a level of comfort that I have not experienced by remaining seated all day,"

Stacey said, "The desk is easy for me to move up and down and does not reduce the ability for me to use the phone or any other part of my workstation."



While standing at your desk may not be for everyone, it is an initiative that has shown to have some benefits.

HR

OPPORTUNITIES TO VOLUNTEER OVERSEAS IN 2015

Calling all health workers! Take your skills where they're really needed to improve health outcomes and save lives in Asia and the Pacific through the Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID) program.

Good health is essential to reducing poverty and is critical to improving livelihoods, enabling poor people to participate in the economy, and lifting living standards. We're looking to recruit health professionals across a range of sectors to make a difference in our region.

Assignments of up to 12 months in duration are available in a range of different areas including; Occupational Therapy, Special Education, Speech Pathology, Prosthetics and Disability.

Find out more about how you can make a difference in the health sector on our website. <<http://www.volunteering.scopeglobal.com/health>> The AVID program is an Australian Government initiative.

MARKETING & FUNDRAISING

The 10th Anniversary Classic Wallabies Lunch is being held at the Hilton Hotel Brisbane on Friday, 27 March 2015 and we're again looking for lots of dedicated volunteers to help us out on the day!

The lunch is a signature fundraising event for SIA and it wouldn't be possible without the support of the many Brisbane based staff members who take time out of their busy days to assist. You would be required from approximately 11am to 3.30pm to assist with registrations, ushering guests to their seats, selling raffle tickets, spotting the auction and running prizes. We will even shout you a delicious lunch of sandwiches (or an alternative if you have special dietary requirements)!

If you are interested in volunteering at this year's Classic Wallabies Lunch or know someone that would be, please ensure you have your managers prior approval and contact Rebecca Hutton at rhutton@spinal.com.au or on 07 3391 2044. PSW's are welcome to volunteer.

For more information on the Classic Wallabies Lunch head to <http://www.spinal.com.au/events/classic-wallabies-lunch/>



Training Dates:

BRISBANE

First Aid & CPR

16 February

16 March

23 April

22 May

Skills Day

13 February

23 February

11 March

27 March

8 April

24 April

5 May

21 May

BUNDABERG

First Aid & CPR

25 March

Skills Day

26 March

GLADSTONE

Skills Day

25 February

First Aid & CPR

26 February

GOLD COAST

First Aid & CPR

10 March

Skills Day

8 May

MOSSMAN

Skills Day

27 April

First Aid & CPR

28 April

ROCKHAMPTON

Skills Day

22 April

First Aid & CPR

21 April

SUNSHINE COAST

Skills Day

4 March

TOOWOOMBA

Skills Day

12 May

First Aid & CPR

11 May

TOWNSVILLE

Skills Day

27 February

24 March

First Aid & CPR

17 February

30 March

L & D UPDATE

MARIA PALEOUDIS,
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR

ARE YOU DUE FOR A SKILLS DAY REFRESHER?

If you are a Personal Support Worker and it's been 18 months since your last Skills update, please contact your Client Service Officer today to book in for an upcoming session.

This Skills Day workshop focuses on refreshing knowledge and industry best practice on all clinical aspects of your role; this includes manual handling of people. It also provides updated knowledge of organisational specific policies and practices where applicable.

Our qualified clinical educators are here to support you to use safe techniques and practices that will make your job easier.



UNIQUE STUDENT IDENTIFIER

As of January 2015, the Department of Industry is requesting all employees who are completing a Nationally Recognised training course in Australia will be required to hold a Unique Student Identifier (USI). This USI consists of 10 numbers and letters, which links students to their training records that are stored in the National Training Register.

By having an account set up, it will give you more access and more control over your educational information where you have the ability to download and share your records to other training organisations. The USI comes at no extra cost and will stay with you for life.

Prior to registering for a USI, please ensure that you have preferably one valid form of ID. This can be in a form of a Driver's Licence, Medicare Card, Birth Certificate or an Australian Passport. Once you create your USI, you will need to provide this unique number on your application forms when enrolling for a course to ensure that your training outcomes are linked to you. This number will also need to be provided to Learning & Development: learning@spinal.com.au

For more details and to register please visit: www.usi.gov.au. Click on create your USI and follow the steps.

Please Note: By failing to create a USI account, any training you complete, you will not receive your certificate or statements of attainment.

CERTIFICATE III & IV IN DISABILITY

Spinal Injuries Australia along with a preferred registered training organisation, have worked to align our current in house training with Certificate III and Certificate IV in Disability.

Applications for the course closed Friday January 16 2015 and we would like to thank those who have submitted their interest for the courses. All applications are in the process of being reviewed and further notification will be sent out advising what the next steps are.

2015 HEALTH SEMINAR SERIES

The Spinal Allied Health Service is hosting a program of free Health Seminars this year for clients to attend, featuring guest speakers from a range of professions. This series follows the success of a seminar held last year in October, which focused on bowel, bladder and nutrition.

The seminars are open to all clients over the age of 18, with the goal of sharing knowledge, addressing myths, and discussing best practice. The seminars will also share what's new on the market, including the latest research and products that are available.

We have taken on board feedback from clients about the topics that will be covered in 2015, which are:

- Sexual Health and Intimate Relationships – *Saturday 28 February*
- Pain Management – *Saturday 23 May*
- Pressure and Wound Management – *Saturday 29 August*
- Bladder, Bowel and Nutrition – *Saturday 28 November*

The seminars are interactive and we will encourage participation, including Q&A's. Clients can also send in questions via email prior to the seminars, for the guest speakers to answer.

The seminars will be held at our Brisbane office – 109 Logan Road, Woolloongabba, and will run from 9.30am (for a 10am start) through to 1pm on Saturdays. Lunch will be provided.

We will be contacting clients directly with information about these seminars, and will also promote the series on our website, in The Advocate and on social media. Please pass on any information to clients who you think may be interested in attending.

Clients can find out more information or register their interest by contacting Leanne on 07 3435 3124 or emailing Imorley@spinal.com.au. Places are strictly limited and bookings are essential.

Spinal Injuries AUSTRALIA

FREE SEMINARS

2015 HEALTH SEMINAR SERIES

The Spinal Allied Health Service invites you to a program of FREE Health Seminars. Featuring guest speakers from a range of professions, including Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and Nurses, the seminars will cover:

- Sexual Health and Intimate Relationships
Saturday 28 February
- Pain Management
Saturday 23 May
- Pressure and Wound Management
Saturday 29 August
- Bladder, Bowel and Nutrition
Saturday 28 November

The seminars are interactive and encourage participation, including Q&A's.

Where: Spinal Injuries Australia,
109 Logan Road, Woolloongabba

When: 9.30 am through to 1pm on Saturdays.

FOR INFORMATION AND TO BOOK

Please call Leanne on 07 3435 3124
or email Imorley@spinal.com.au
PLEASE NOTE: Places are strictly limited and BOOKINGS ARE ESSENTIAL

i GUEST SPEAKERS

OT OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS

PT PHYSIO THERAPISTS

RN REGISTERED NURSES