

AQA NEWS LINK

The Official Newsletter of AQA Victoria Ltd., & AQA Tasmania

NOVEMBER 2010



BE Lifestyles Retreats

Holiday house in the
Sunshine Coast,
Queensland

Lifetime Achievement Award

Kevin Coombs receives
Lifetime Achievement Award



Ladies Day Out Botanical Gardens

Plus much more...



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A.Q.A. NEWS LINK is the official newsletter of A.Q.A. Victoria Limited, and is published bimonthly. *NEWS LINK* seeks to publish material of interest to people with physical disabilities and their families, professional workers and other individuals and organisations concerned with the welfare of those who are physically disabled.

A.Q.A. Victoria Limited always welcomes articles for News Link. Please feel free to send in your contribution. Articles will be published at the discretion of the Editor who also has the right to edit all submissions as it sees fit.

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Deadlines for News Link contributions are:

December Issue

10/12/2010

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From the CEO



In November we launch our Annual Report 2010 and I recommend the report to all members and friends of AQA as it gives a great summary of many of the activities and initiatives the Association is involved in. A copy will be available on the website - along with our full financial report for the year.

October saw us run our first Community Forum - *Where there's Hope there's Life*. This was a great start to what we hope will be a regular program of forums in 2011. I thank all the presenters and our audience for fully engaging in the topic which led to a great discussion. We have received really positive feedback from those attending which spurs us on for next year. We have commenced planning a session looking at spinal cord research - neuro regeneration and quality of life.

Work is also progressing in the collaboration to develop a Spinal Information website. Thanks to all those AQA members and friends of AQA who contributed their opinion about a suitable domain name. We recently welcomed members of the design team to AQA where they spent some time with Peter, John & Nigel from our Peer Support & Information team getting valuable practical advice about the experience of accessing websites.

We were pleased to launch the first Industry Newsletter from our Qualcare service this month. This newsletter will go out to industry contacts including case managers and service planners to keep them informed about developments at AQA Qualcare and the initiatives at AQA that can add value to Qualcare clients.

We are putting the final touches to our AQA member survey 2010 that we plan to deliver in early December. These surveys are an important part of our planning and development. Many of the initiatives we are pursuing in 2010 such as partnering in research, the Community Forums, positioning on the National Disability Insurance Scheme came from feedback we received in our last survey. Our mission & vision are all about quality of life, independence and participation and so our survey will be aimed at getting feedback from members about the things that enhance or diminish quality of life, independence and participation. So look out for it and I encourage you to share your perspective with us.

Peter Trethewey
Chief Executive Officer
peter@aqavic.org.au

From the Editor



Welcome to the November issue of News Link.

First of all I'd like to encourage readers to consider being part of a study being conducted by La Trobe University. We are looking for people who have sustained a spinal cord injury in the last 8 years. Your involvement will only be a short interview. The interview will involve hearing about your experiences since your spinal cord injury; ie 'who and what was helpful?', 'who wasn't?' and 'how they were helpful?'. All participants will receive 2 Gold Class Movie tickets. You can read more about the purpose of the study on page 5.

As we are only a few weeks away from the holiday season, we thought it good timing to write about BE Lifestyle Retreats on the Sunshine Coast in Queensland on page 10. The fully accessible holiday house can cater for anyone who has a disability at exceptionally reasonable rates. They can also organise personal care during your stay as well as tours to see the many sights that the area has to offer.

You can also read about Wheelie Easy on page 11, which is an organisation based in the Cairns region of Tropical North Queensland, who organise supported holidays and tours for people with disabilities.

On page 12, you can read about how the Victorian State Government has introduced a Carer Card program with many real benefits for those who are 'carers' to people with a disability. Benefits and discounts are available from not only government departments but also from the private sector.

Wheelie Wear is an innovative company that produces clothing for people with physical disabilities who use wheelchairs. On page 13 you can read about the types of clothing they produce and innovations that they use.

Finally, on pages 16 and 17, you can read about the ever so popular Ladies Day Out held at the Observatory Café - Botanical Gardens, Melbourne. You will see from the pictures how enjoyable it was for those who attended.

And please let us know about any articles / information you would like included in the next edition of News Link.

Simon Damevski
News Link Editor
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Time to respond

Taxi services are a critical means of public transport for people with disabilities as Melbourne's bus, tram and train networks will not be completely accessible for another twenty years.

In 2007, the Commission's "Time to respond" report found that people with disabilities were not receiving good quality taxi services and that as a result, their access to public life, employment and other aspects of daily life was unfairly limited.

Despite recent reform to the taxi industry, waiting times and reliability continue to be serious barriers to accessible taxi services for people with disabilities.

There is still much work to be done in improving timeliness, booking and payment methods, access to conventional taxi services and the quality of taxi service related to driver knowledge and customer perceptions of safety.

These findings by the Commission are detailed in "Time to respond - three years on", published by the Commission in October 2010, as a follow-up to research undertaken three years earlier.

"Time to respond - three years on", is the result of 604 responses to an online survey from people with different types of disabilities, in consultation with the Victorian Taxi Association and the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's Disability Reference Group to determine whether aspects of service delivery have improved over time.

The Commission will continue to work with the Victorian Taxi Directorate and interested groups to continue the focus on improved accessibility to taxi transport for people with a disability.

More information can be found at www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au.

Employment with ANZ Bank

The ANZ Bank is wanting to include people with disabilities into their work force. ANZ has flexible hours of work and are seeking resumes from interested people.

These resume's can be emailed to chris.smith@anz.com.

VICTORIAWORKS for carers returning to work

Have you been away from work, education and/or training for at least the last two years?

You may be eligible for a government grant.

Are you a carer of someone with a disability, with a mental illness or with a chronic health condition that has been away from work, education and/or training for at least the last two years.

You may be eligible for a grant of up to \$1,000 to help you return to work.

You can use the grant to pay for your:

- Training course fees.
- First year Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) fees.
- Respite care or child care to cover your attendance at training.
- Broadband access when you are studying by remote access.
- Transport costs.
- Books, software or tools.
- Training uniforms.

Special conditions

- Any unused money will be lost at the end of the project.
- Only one grant can be used per person for the life of the program.
- You can continue to make claims against the grant until you reach the \$1,000 limit or to the end of the project, whichever comes first.

For further information contact:

Otway Community College:

Phone: (03) 5231 9500

Email: otwaycommunitycollege@occ.vic.edu.au

Web: www.communitycolleges.vic.edu.au



Tough new rules for support pension eligibility

The Age newspaper reported a few weeks ago that more than 25,000 Australians with disabilities will be denied the Disability Support Pension (DSP) and pushed onto the dole over the next 3 years under tough new rules for "borderline" cases.

In moves to cut the dramatic growth rate in the DSP and compel more people to work if they can, new applicants deemed to have some capacity for work would be rejected on their first application for the pension. Instead they would be placed on the dole - leaving them up to \$116 a week worse off - and forced to do training courses for up to 18 months in a bid to make them job-ready. But they would still be free to reapply for the DSP at any time while in training, if they can make a case that they are still unable to work 15 hours a week or more.

The changes will come into effect from January 1, 2012, at the same time as new impairment tables announced in last year's budget.

Most applicants will have to provide proof they are unable to get a job through a mainstream job service or vocational rehabilitation. But people with a severe disability or illness or those who are clearly unable to work have been reassured that they will be fast-tracked on to the DSP in future.

The tougher rules are expected to cut the number of newcomers on the DSP by 7550 in 2011/12, with a further 9912 and 7945 in the following two years. The new regime will also save taxpayers \$383 million over four years.

The number of Australians on the Disability Support Pension has grown by more than 30% over a decade, rising to 777,000 last December. The changes are projected to cut the growth rate in the DSP by around 10% a year.

Gold Class movie vouchers

for all participants in a spinal cord injury study



Have you been discharged from the Victorian Spinal Cord Service at Royal Talbot within the last 8 years (i.e., since end of September 2002)?

If you are aged between 18-65, we are keen to hear from you.

We all live in a social world where we give and receive social support to each other. We want to hear about your experiences since your spinal cord injury: who and what was helpful? Who wasn't? And how they were helpful?

Whatever you tell us will be 'de-identified' - your personal details will be kept confidential.

Results will be aggregated and used to:-

- Create a tool to measure social support needs;
- Design interventions and activities to improve quality of life after SCI.

Your involvement could improve the outcomes of people with SCI going through the Royal Talbot.

All that is involved is one 45-60 minute interview with a La Trobe University Researcher at a time and place that's suitable for you.

As a thank you for your time, you will receive 2 Gold Class movie vouchers.

To express your interest send an email to Belinda Garth or Brendon Murley

Email: B.Garth@latrobe.edu.au

Email: B.Murley@latrobe.edu.au

For further information, contact Paul O'Halloran on (03) 9479 5607 or Belinda on 0423 709 449.



Disability Discrimination Act (D.D.A.) Guide Part II

In the last issue of News Link we introduced the first of a three part series of what the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) is all about and how it can help you from being discriminated against. The series will cover all areas of disability discrimination within our state and country as it is Federally based.

In Part I we discussed the following topics; “What is it all about”, “What areas of life does the D.D.A. cover?”, “Who does the D.D.A. protect?”, “Earning a living”, “What should employers do?”, and “What about workplace changes?”

Buying goods and using services:

A person with a disability has a right to obtain goods and use services and facilities in the same way as people without a disability. This includes goods, services and facilities from:

- Shops and department stores
- Cafes, restaurants, pubs
- Theatres and other places of entertainment
- Banks, credit unions, building societies
- Lawyers and legal services
- Sports and social clubs
- Swimming pools
- Public transport
- Travel agents
- Dentists, doctors, and hospitals
- Hairdressers and beauty salons
- Government-run services.

What is expected?

The D.D.A. makes it against the law for providers of goods, services and facilities to discriminate against a person because of his or her disability. This means that providers of goods, services and facilities cannot:

- Refuse to provide a person with a disability with goods, services and facilities - eg, a person cannot be refused service in a restaurant because he or she has a guide dog. A person cannot be refused hospital treatment because he or she is HIV positive.
- Provide goods, services and facilities on less favourable terms and conditions - eg, charging a person with a disability a higher km rate for a taxi because he or she uses a wheelchair or not providing a TTY line for deaf people to contact emergency services.

- Provide the goods, services and facilities in an unfair manner - eg, making insulting remarks while serving a person with a disability or serving a person with a disability after everyone else has been served.

It also means that a person with a disability has a right to enter the premises of providers of goods, services and facilities if people without a disability can do so. Like other areas of the D.D.A. a defence of “unjustifiable hardship” may be available.

A place to live

Accommodation

A person with a disability has a right to obtain accommodation in the same way as people without a disability. This includes renting a flat, house, unit, a room in a boarding house, hotel or motel.

What is expected?

The D.D.A. makes it against the law for real estate agents, landlords or landladies, and other providers of accommodation to discriminate against a person because of a disability. This means that providers of accommodation cannot:

- Refuse an application for accommodation from a person with a disability
- Provide a person with a disability with accommodation on less favourable terms and conditions. For example, giving a person with a disability the least attractive room in the hotel or not allowing a person to keep his or her guide dog in a rented flat.
- Put the application of a person with a disability on the bottom of the list - eg, giving an application a lower priority because it is assumed the person with a disability will be a less stable tenant.

Like other areas of the D.D.A. a defence of “unjustifiable hardship” may be available in some circumstances.

Buying Land

A person with a disability has a right to buy land in the same way as people without a disability. The D.D.A. makes it against the law for a real estate agent, landowner, or other land and property agents to discriminate against a person because of his or her disability, or the disability of an associate. This means that an agent or landowner cannot:

- Refuse to sell land or property to a person with a disability - eg, refusing to sell a house to a person with a disability because neighbours object to the person’s disability or the disabilities of any group intending to use the house; or residents in a block of units refusing to sell a unit to a person because of his or her disability.

Continued on next page...



...from previous page

- Offer land or property to a person with a disability on less favourable terms and conditions - eg, offering to sell land to a person with a disability at a higher price.

A responsible government

The Federal D.D.A. makes disability discrimination against the law in many areas of life.

This includes provision of services of a kind provided by government. All governments in Australia - Commonwealth, State, Territory and local government - have responsibilities under the D.D.A.

This includes:

- Access to places where government programs are being run.
- Equal access to information on laws and government programs.
- Access to voting places, facilities and information
- Access to court buildings

Getting an education

A person with a disability has a right to study at any educational institution in the same way as any other student. The D.D.A. makes it against the law for an educational authority to discriminate against someone because that person has a disability. This includes all public and private educational institutions, primary and secondary schools, and tertiary institutions such as TAFE, private colleges and universities.

The D.D.A. protects people with a disability against discrimination in education in the following areas:

Admission

- Refusal or failure to accept an application for admission from a person with a disability
- Accepting a person with a disability as a student on less favourable terms or conditions than others - eg, asking a person with a disability to pay higher fees.

Access

- Denying or limiting access to people with a disability - eg, not allowing a person to attend excursions or join in school sports, delivering lectures in an inaccessible format, inaccessible student common rooms.
- Expelling a person because of a disability, or
- Subjecting a person with a disability to any other detriment.

Harassment

- Humiliating comments or actions about a person's disability, such as insults, or comments or actions which create a hostile environment.

What about course changes?

If a person with a disability meets the essential entry requirements, then educators must make changes or "reasonable adjustments" if that person needs them to perform essential course-work - eg, a student may not be able to perform dissections in a biology course because the bench is too high. The ability to reach a certain height is not an essential part of dissection. The student would be perfectly capable of performing the tasks of the lab session if provided with a lower table. In most situations the person with a disability will be able to tell educators what they need to be able to study. If necessary, educators should also seek advice from government agencies or organisations which represent or provide services to people with a disability.

Adjustments could include:

- Modifying educational premises - eg, making ramps, modifying toilets and ensuring that classes are in rooms accessible to the person with a disability.
- Modifying or providing equipment - eg, lowering lab benches, enlarging computer screens, providing specific computer software or an audio loop system.
- Changing assessment procedures - eg, allowing for alternative examination methods such as oral exams, or allowing additional time for someone else to write an exam for a person with a disability.
- Changing course delivery - eg, providing study notes or research materials in different formats or providing a sign language interpreter for a deaf person.

What if changes are too difficult for educators?

The D.D.A. does not require changes to be made if this will cause major difficulties or unreasonable costs to a person or organisation. This is called "unjustifiable hardship". Before considering to claim adjustments are unjustified, educators need to:

- Thoroughly consider how an adjustment might be made
- Discuss this directly with the person involved, and
- Consult relevant sources of advice.

If adjustments cause hardship it is up to the education authority to show that they are unjustified.

Note: Part III of this three part series will be published in the next issue of News Link.

For further reading;

www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/dda_guide/dda_guide.htm

www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au/types%20of%20discrimination/disability/default.asp

Kevin Coombs receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Wheelchair Sports Victoria and Basketball Australia recently reported on Kevin Coombs Lifetime Achievement Award.

Wheelchair Sports Victoria founder and Basketball Australia Hall of Fame recipient, Kevin Coombs has won numerous awards in his life and can now add a Lifetime Achievement Award to his list of accomplishments after he was recently inducted into ‘the Deadly Awards’ Sporting Hall of Fame.

Awarded with the prestigious Ella Award for his services to Aboriginal and Torres Straight Island sport, Coombs felt very honoured to be recognised by Australia’s most highly decorated indigenous awards.

“I’m very grateful to be recognised by The Deadlys for my contributions to Indigenous sport,” Coombs said.

“It’s a huge honour to be associated with the Ella name; they’re the sporting icons in Australia.”

Kevin Coombs was a member of Australia’s first Paralympic team that competed in Rome in 1960. Coombs was also Australia’s first indigenous Paralympian.



ADVERTISEMENT

Accessible Transportation Freedom a Reality!

For well over 10 years now, Freedom Motors Australia (FMA) has been at the forefront of the Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle industry in Australia. They are proud in bringing the most innovative, safe and reliable modified vehicles for the physically challenged needing transportation. FMA now service the Community Transport, Taxi and Private Sector with their Vehicles. FMA have also opened vehicle modification factories in the USA and Europe.

The research and development department continues to introduce new products to make more Freedom a reality for you and your family.

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The FMA “FREEDOMVAN” conversions bring you the ultimate in wheelchair transportation today and into the future. FMA conversions do just that as they have you and the wheelchair occupant in mind, when they say that they have the most cost effective & unique conversion of its kind in the market today. The easy opening of the rear door and gently sloping light weight rear entry ramp configuration provides a straight path in and out of the vehicle in a low floor that gives the wheelchair occupant the best panoramic vision possible out of the vehicle from their wheelchair. The rear entry conversion also gives you the greatest amount of seating configurations possible and not to forget about the ease of parking.

When you purchase a wheelchair accessible modification and or vehicle from FMA you will be taking delivery of the most reliable, safe and practical plus good looking wheelchair accessible vehicle manufactured right here in Australia today which is backed by the best customer service available and by our 3 year or 60,000klm warranty Australia wide. (Conditions do apply). See page 9 for more information.



FREEDOM VAN

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles

The Freedom Van range is designed and built by Freedom Motors, who deliver Australia's largest range of popular vehicles for conversion.

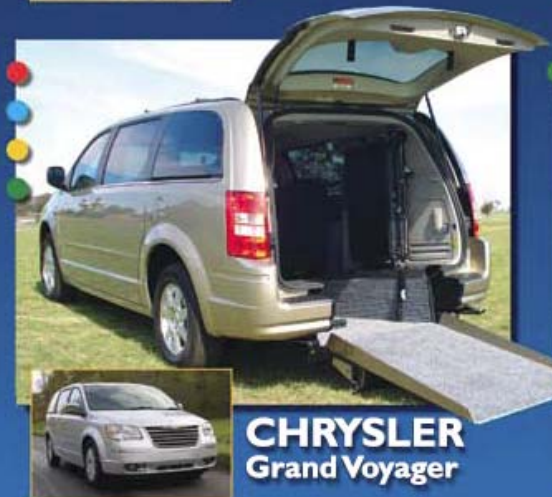
We've been in the forefront of the industry for over 10 years with our innovative designs and layouts. Others have copied but only the Genuine Freedom Van will give you the satisfaction you expect and deserve.



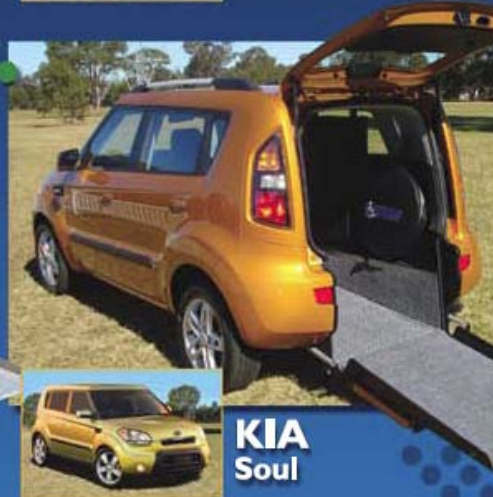
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- Wheelchair docking system
- Power transfer seat



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● Family



● Self-drive



● 2 seater

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FREEDOM
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BE Lifestyles Retreats

BE Lifestyle Retreats contacted us to spread the word about their fully accessible holiday house set on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. They cater for anyone who has a disability at exceptional rates. They can organise personal care during your stay as well as tours to see the many sights that the Sunshine Coast has to offer.



For anyone who is looking for wheelchair accessible respite or holiday accommodation in the Sunshine Coast Queensland, BE Lifestyle Retreats has the place for you.

Belinda Wardlaw, the owner of BE Lifestyles Retreats, caters for people with disabilities who are sick and tired of going on holidays and discovering respite care and accessibility to all aspects of their holiday house is not what was explained or promised prior to their arrival.



Belinda has a disability herself – a rare limb girdle muscular dystrophy that accounts for her expertise and knowledge on what is required for people with disabilities. Several years ago Belinda opened a respite facility providing care for clients with high care physical

support needs. This has now expanded to a holiday house fully accessible, so there is no need to stress prior to arrival whether it is truly accessible.

“As a person with a disability I have been disappointed with the level of care available to me at times, so my definition of what ‘care’ means is different. My business has a lot of me in it.”

BE Lifestyles Retreats offers two types of accommodation for wheelchair users – respite and holiday home - on the Sunshine Coast, QLD. They have a range of personal care support packages, flexible respite packages, pamper packages and personalized tours around the Sunshine Coast. They also offer a wheelchair accessible pick-up and delivery transport service during the holiday period for all their customers.



The holiday home rates vary from \$120 a night to \$240 a night, depending whether it is low or high season. They even have specials rates throughout the year, so enquire if any specials are on during your time of stay.

The respite home has different rates for different care that is offered ranging from \$150 to \$350 a day depending on what is specifically required. There is low care – (minimum assistance 24/7 sleeps), medium care - (assistance and supervision) and high care - (hoist, trachea and sleeps).

BE Lifestyles Retreats have a policy of returning your enquiry within an hour of receiving the enquiry and can be contacted on the following:

Tel: 1800 4 RESPITE – (1800 4737 7483)

Email: enquiries@belifestyletreats.com.au

Web: www.belifestyletreats.com.au



Wheelie Easy

Supported Holidays and Tours

Wheelie Easy is an organisation based in the Cairns region of Tropical North Queensland, which is one of Australia's most attractive, wheelchair friendly holiday destinations.

Their business is to provide supported holidays and tours for people with disabilities. Some of the tours they provide include:

- Cairns and the World Heritage listed Great Barrier Reef
- Atherton Tablelands (Cairns Highlands) featuring volcanic history, idyllic rural landscapes, wineries and fresh farm produce
- Port Douglas and the Daintree World Heritage Rainforest to the north
- The Gulf Country to the west with vast stretches of outback Savannah and a surprising range of attractions
- Tropical Mission Beach and Dunk Island
- 4-WD Cape York Peninsula and the Torres Strait

Wheelie Easy has introduced a Facebook page, where, people who become 'fans' of this page, will get updates of coming holidays and can have their questions answered.

Director Irene Chapman instigated this idea as demand for information regarding wheelchair & other disability friendly holidays is increasing steadily.

Whilst many holidays on offer are based in tropical North Queensland (around the Cairns region), Wheelie Easy also offers cruises and overseas holidays.

You can be kept informed instantly about any upcoming holidays through their Facebook page. You can also view photo albums that show both past and upcoming holiday venues and activities.

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Atherton-Australia/Wheelie-Easy-Supported-Holidays-Tours/108396022760>.

Web: www.wheelieeasy.com.au/

Phone: (07) 4091 4876

AQA Community Forum

The first AQA Community Forum was held on Friday the 8th of October 2010 at the Darebin Arts & Entertainment Centre, Preston.

An energetic crowd of over 55 people attended the event which comprised of AQA staff, directors, rehabilitation workers, funding bodies, industry associates and members.

We heard Dr. Pat Dorsett speak about her 10 year study into how people cope after spinal cord injury and the importance of Hope and Hopefulness in this process. The topic was then opened up by a panel of five people with their own life experience of spinal cord injury. The discussion included insights into their own story and the importance of hope in their experience.

The Forum was well received and many people stayed on at the conclusion for refreshments and to chat and network.

Feedback since the forum has been extremely positive and we look forward to organising future forums that will benefit members, clients and other AQA stakeholders.

We welcome member suggestions for topics for future forums so please send in your ideas to info@aqavic.org.au





The Victorian Carer Card Program

The Victorian State Government has introduced a Carer Card program with many real benefits for those who are 'carers' to people with a disability. Benefits and discounts are available from not only government departments but also from the private sector.

Most people will know someone who is a carer. Carers include people like foster carers, kinship carers and primary carers. They can be a carer of a person with a disability, a severe or chronic medical condition, a mental illness or someone who is frail aged or in need of palliative care. Foster carers and kinship carers also provide care to vulnerable children who are unable to live with their own parents. Providing care affects people in many profound ways – financially, socially and emotionally and can present many challenges that can impact on the wellbeing of the carer.

In recognition of the significant social and economic contribution made by the estimated 140,000 primary carers, the Victorian Government has introduced the Victorian Carer Card. The Carer Card is a discounts and benefits card to provide recognition, understanding and support for carers throughout Victoria. A collaboration of Government, Community and Business, the card offers carers a wide range of discounts across the categories of House and Home, Lifestyle, Travel, Retail and Food, Automotive as well as various services. Carer Card holders will also benefit from a free Sunday travel pass as well as two return off-peak travel vouchers each year.

Eligible carers will be able to apply for a Carer Card. Assessment of applications will be conducted by the Department of Human Services according to carefully developed eligibility criteria.

To establish their eligibility for the Carer Card, carers must provide evidence they are a primary carer in receipt of a carer income support from the Commonwealth Government through Centrelink. For carers who are not

in receipt of Centrelink carer benefits, a health professional can sign Carer Card application forms to confirm the applicant is an unpaid primary carer.

Over 85% of carers eligible to receive a Victorian Carer Card are in receipt of Centrelink carer benefits such as Carer Allowance or Carer Payment, meaning that most carers applying for a card will simply provide their Customer Reference Number to be eligible to receive a Carer Card.

Primary carers not in receipt of Centrelink carer benefits are required to obtain the signature of one of the following health professionals on their application form:

- A legally qualified medical practitioner
- A registered nurse
- A physiotherapist
- A registered psychologist
- An occupational therapist, or
- An aboriginal health worker (in a geographically remote area)
- A mental health carer consultant

The Carer Card policy framework was developed by the Concessions Policy Unit within DHS. If you have any questions about how you should interpret these eligibility guidelines, a DHS officer can assist you. Enquiries can be made on 1800 901 958 during business hours. You can also visit www.carercard.vic.gov.au.



A Division of A.Q.A Victoria Ltd
ABN 90 006 691 185

Delivering individualised personal care and community access support to clients right across Victoria. AQA Qualcare specialises in the support needs of people with spinal cord injury and physical disability.

Phone: (03) 9482 4373
Email: qualcare@aqavic.org.au



Wheelie Wear

One of our readers thought this article might be of interest for people with clothing needs. Wheelie Wear is a company who designs and manufactures clothing for wheelchair users.

Wheelie Wear is a Perth based company that proudly designs jeans, board shorts, shirts and jackets for wheelchair users. This type of clothing is sometimes referred to as “adaptive wear”, but this is not a term they feel reflects their clothes as their garments have been designed specifically to flatter the seated figure.



Magnetic buttons

Wheelie Wear garments are crafted with both functionality and fashion in mind; incorporating features that make them easy dress and undress, while remaining stylish. Designed to avoid that baggy, crumpled look - common for wheelchair users who wear off-the-rack garments. Wheelie Wear customers look lean, sleek and smooth.

The garments have been designed and manufactured in Australia, and postage within Australia is free.

They are also a company that is innovative and functional, using magnets to replace buttons.

Washing, tumble drying or dry cleaning will not affect the magnets as Wheelie Wear uses magnets that have been coated to prevent corrosion. They can be heated to 300°C before becoming permanently demagnetised. Temporary demagnetization occurs at temperatures in excess of 80°C but their magnetism returns as they cool. The magnets are sewn into the garments as opposed to being glued, making dry cleaning possible. However garments with magnets are not recommended for anyone fitted with a pacemaker.



Extra longs zipper

Wheelie Wear decided against using Velcro as Velcro can present difficulty to some people with limited hand strength/dexterity. The hook portion of the tape tends to become matted and weaker, and may cause damage to other garments during the washing process.

They can also make ‘one-off’ clothes but the costs will vary depending on the complexity of the garment and fabric chosen.

For further information Phone: 0403 17 4506

Web: <http://wheeliewear.com.au/>

Email: info@wheeliewear.com.au

Board Focus

Welcome to another edition of Board Focus, where we introduce AQA Board Members and discuss the roles and responsibilities for the AQA Board on behalf of members.

In this issue Robyn & Nick take a look at key roles of the Board.

Nick Walker



Nick Walker joined the board in November 2009. Nick is currently a senior audit manager with a mid-tier accounting firm. Extensive experience in audit, financial reporting and due diligence reviews spanning corporate and not-for-profit sectors. Raised in Dareton

(south-western New South Wales) and having commenced his career in Mildura, Nick has a strong interest in the rural and regional sectors. As an experienced auditor who has worked on a number of audits for not-for-profit organisations in the health and community services sector, Nick had been looking for an opportunity to make a contribution to an organisation such as AQA Victoria. He joined the Finance and Audit Committee in September 2009 and has found his involvement with AQA Victoria both challenging and rewarding and has learned much about the disability sector over the past year.

Robyn Hunter



Robyn Hunter also joined the board in November 2009. Robyn has 20 years experience in the Australian health care industry. Robyn has held senior roles in Australia's largest health insurer in corporate strategy and planning, operational management, project

management and health service management. Career highlights include managing Medibank Private's preparation for privatisation and more recently in a senior executive role responsible for health services strategy and purchasing. Robyn originally trained as a

physiotherapist, has an MBA and is married with four children. Her interest in disability stems from her clinical experience in rehabilitation for ten years, although Robyn recalls her first positive encounter with AQA Victoria as being with the Information Services for her mother. Robyn was keen to make a contribution initially on the Risk & Compliance Committee, and now in the capacity as Director/Deputy Chairperson.

Roles of the Board

Clarifying roles & responsibilities

The role the Board of Directors plays in an organisation can often be confused with that of Chief Executive Officers (CEO's). This confusion may be held by the Directors themselves which is highlighted by attempts to micromanage the CEO's activities. For a Board and the CEO to operate effectively, however, it is imperative that all parties are clear on their roles

Governance: Management: Operations

Literature from the Australian Institute of Company Directors ("AICD") draws the distinction between the Board's role and that of executive management by asserting that Boards play a governing role as opposed to a managing role being the function of the CEO. In AQA Victoria's case, Peter Trethewey, as the CEO, is responsible for the day-to-operations including the development and implementation of strategies and processes for the provision of AQA Qualcare and peer support services. This would involve the management of staff, raising and monitoring of funds and identifying opportunities and risks.

The Board, on the other hand, has a governance role to act on behalf of the members to ensure their interests are safeguarded. Specifically, roles of the Board, as identified by the AICD, may be as follows:

- appointing, encouraging, assessing and, if necessary, replacing the chief executive officer;
- bringing an external, alternative perspective;
- representing shareholder (member) interests;
- questioning, encouraging and monitoring the management team,

Continued on next page...



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- ensuring bringing relevant competency, experience, legitimacy and ethical behaviour at the Board and management levels;
- ensuring proper corporate governance process is followed with integrity, including financial reporting and disclosure and compliance with the law and other requirements; and
- approving overall strategy, budgets and large financial decisions such as significant capital expenditure.

Board systems & processes

The matters discussed above form part of the AQA Victoria's Board's strategic calendar and are noted as key matters for discussion and resolution. The CEO is invited to all Board meetings to ensure the Directors are up to date with AQA Victoria's operations and ensure the CEO is involved in the matters discussed by the Board and the matters raised. At Board meetings the CEO provides a progress report and the Board interrogates the information, identifies achievements, gaps and compliance issues.

Board composition & self appraisal of performance

The Board is responsible for the composition of the Board and establishes and monitors performance of Directors against AQA Victoria Roles and Responsibilities Policy. The Board selects and appoints the CEO and monitors the CEO's performance against key performance indicators.

To ensure the Board performs effectively, certain skills and attributes are sought to ensure there is an appropriate range skills. These skills may be from a number of backgrounds including health, legal, corporate governance, marketing and finance. Practical and hands on experience with the services provided by AQA Victoria is, of course, vital in respect of the Board's effectiveness. Importantly several Directors of AQA Victoria have first hand experience living and working with spinal cord injury.

To ensure effective governance the Board has established committees governed by Charters. Directors are appointed as members of committees that best leverage their skills and experience. The committees and

the Board are there to help the organization achieve what it has set out to do.

Office Bearing Directors

Certain Directors hold positions on the Board requiring them to perform specific roles in addition to their general duties as a Director. These Directors are referred to as office bearers. In the case of AQA Victoria's Board, these roles include the following:

- **Chairperson** – Chairperson of the Board of Directors is Kerry Durrand and she is responsible for convening the Board meetings and provides leadership to the Board.
- **Deputy Chairperson** - Robyn Hunter is the Deputy Chairperson and she acts as Chairperson should Kerry be absent and assists Kerry in her role as Chairperson.
- **Company Secretary**. Terry Smith has recently been appointed as Company Secretary and it is her responsibility for keeping the records of the Board including ensuring appropriation documentation is maintained and forms, and accompanying documentation, are lodged with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission.
- **Treasurer**. The position of Treasurer is presently held by Nick Walker and he has the fiduciary responsibility of maintaining AQA Victoria's funds.

Whilst the office bearer's hold the official title, under the *Corporation's Act 2001* all Directors are equally responsible to safeguard the interests of the AQA Victoria and its members.

The effectiveness of the Board as a whole

The Board has established and approved a policy that describes the roles and responsibilities of the Board, Board Directors, the Chairperson and the Company Secretary. Importantly, the effectiveness of the Board and executive management requires Directors clearly understand their governance duties, exercising independent decisions and acting in the best interests of AQA Vic and its members.

Most importantly, there are human aspects which impact the effectiveness of the Board as a whole, which come down to the contribution of each member, working relationship between Directors and relationship of the Board to the CEO. In this respect AQA Victoria has a bright future.



Ladies Day Out at the Botanical Gardens

“Ladies Day Out” have been very successful and a great way to meet others in similar circumstances with a chance to make life long friends. The recent Botanical Gardens was another huge success. It was held at the Observatory Cafe in the Gardens.

We have two accounts of the day – the first written by Lynne Panayiotis and Georgina Fiorentino, and the other written by Chrissie Rowe. Thank you ladies...

Ladies Day Out

By Lynne and Georgina

Ladies Day No 4 at the Botanical Gardens started off beautifully with a sunny weather forecast of 25 degrees. People started rolling in at 11 am at the meeting point which was the Observatory Cafe (opposite the Shrine of Remembrance).

Very few ladies managed to stroll around the gardens before lunch as they were either too eager to meet up with friends that were made in the previous ladies days or hunger had already set in! A section of the Observatory Cafe was set aside for our group of 20 ladies (and a handful of gents).

The pre-set menu was delicious covering all possible tastes whilst the staff were very friendly and attentive. Our area was loud with everyone happily chatting away and the rest of the cafe was buzzing with bus tourists stopping past for a bite to eat.

We were at the cafe until around 2 pm when people commenced their chosen paths to stroll around the beautiful, tranquil and sometimes forgotten gardens. It was a wonderful day to remember and I am sure most were eager to return sometime very soon.





Ladies Day Out – Botanical Gardens

By Chrissie

Another successful Ladies Day Out was held at the Botanical Gardens. The weather was stunning 26 degrees and very sunny. The observatory Cafe organised a large table which allowed room for our wheelchairs, the group also used a couple of smaller tables. We had a choice of three menus, everyone seemed to enjoy their lunch and there was plenty of chatting going on. Georgina was clicking away with her camera through the day. Hopefully we get to see some of the shots.

Later in the afternoon groups of people decided to take a stroll around the gardens - I hope everyone enjoyed the sights without getting too much sun. Robyn, husband David, Rod and myself set off in search of the rose pavilion. We agreed we were looking for a mass of roses in a pavilion. We went up hills, we went down hills, and all the time Robyn and I laughing and joking then agreed we were getting a bit hot. By the time we asked a gardener where we could find the 'Roses' he informed us a small concrete pavilion was just around the corner and up another hill, this was named 'Roses'

We decided to head for home, when we reached the flat ground as I realized David and Rod were thoroughly

exhausted and to say the least 'feeling the heat'. Robyn and David were staying in Melbourne for the night, Rod and I headed for home.

Thanks to the organisers of the day, it was great.

Hope to see you all next time.



News Link Delivery

Did you know that many of our members now receive News Link via email?

Emailing News Link in PDF format to members cuts our costs considerably and you can view the publication in colour. If you have email facilities and are happy to receive the newsletter via email rather than mail, please let us know. If you have any queries or would like to change your mailing arrangements, please contact us on (03) 9489 0777 or info@aqavic.org.au.



Can you give me a push?

A man and his wife were awoken at 3:00 am by a loud pounding on the door. The man gets up and goes to the door where a drunken stranger, standing in the pouring rain, is asking for a push. "Not a chance," says the husband, "it's 3:00 in the morning!"

He slams the door and returns to bed. "Who was that?" asked his wife.

"Just some drunk guy asking for a push," he answers.

"Did you help him?" she asks.

"No, I did not, it is 3:00 in the morning and it is pouring rain out there!"

"Well, you have a short memory," says his wife. "Can't you remember about 3 months ago when we broke down, and those two guys helped us? I think you should help him, and you should be ashamed of yourself!"

The man does as he is told, gets dressed, and goes out into the pounding rain.

He calls out into the dark, "Hello, are you still there?"

"Yes," comes back the answer.

"Do you still need a push?" calls out the husband.

"Yes, please!", comes the reply from the dark.

"Where are you?" asks the husband.

"Over here on the swing!" replies the drunk.

The Lawyer's Lexus!!!

A very successful lawyer parked his brand new Lexus in front of the office, ready to show it off to his colleagues. As he got out, a truck came along too close to the curb and completely tore off the driver's door.

Fortunately, a cop in a police car was close enough to see the accident and pulled up behind the Lexus, his lights flashing. But, before the cop had a chance to ask any questions, the lawyer started screaming hysterically about how his Lexus, which he had just picked up the day before, was now completely ruined and would never be the same, no matter how the body shop tried to make it new again.

After the lawyer finally wound down from his rant, the cop shook his head in disgust and disbelief. "I can't believe how materialistic you lawyers are," he said. "You are so focused on your possessions that you neglect the most important things in life."

"How can you say such a thing?" asked the lawyer.

The cop replied, "Don't you even realize that your left arm is missing? It got ripped off when the truck hit you!"

"OH, MY GOD!" screamed the lawyer. "MY ROLEX!"

Men do remember anniversaries

A woman awakes during the night to find that her husband was not in their bed. She puts on her robe and goes downstairs to look for him.

She finds him sitting at the kitchen table with a hot cup of coffee in front of him. He appears to be in deep thought, just staring at the wall. She watches as he wiped a tear from his eye and takes a sip of his coffee. "What's the matter, dear?" she whispers as she steps into the room, "Why are you down here at this time of night?"

The husband looks up from his coffee, "Do you remember 20 years ago when we were dating, and you were only 16?" he asks solemnly. The wife is touched to tears thinking that her husband is so caring and sensitive. "Yes I do," she replies.

The husband paused. The words were not coming easily. "Do you remember when your father caught us in the back seat of my car making love?" "Yes, I remember," said the wife, lowering herself into a chair beside him. The husband continued. "Do you remember when he shoved the shotgun in my face and said, 'Either you marry my daughter, or I will send you to jail for 20 years?'" "I remember that too" she replied softly.

He wiped another tear from his cheek and said....."**I would have gotten out today.**"

Don't you just love this story.....

A case of when you are on a good wicket, keep your mouth closed and stick to it .

Outside England's Bristol Zoo there is a parking lot for 150 cars and 8 buses. For 25 years, its parking fees were managed by a very pleasant attendant. The fees were £1.40 for cars and about £7 for buses. Then one day, after 25 solid years of never missing a day of work, he just didn't show up. The Zoo Management called the City Council and asked it to send them another parking agent.

The Council did some research and replied that the parking lot was the Zoo's own responsibility. The Zoo advised the Council that the attendant was a City employee.

The City Council responded that the lot attendant had never been on the City payroll.

Meanwhile, sitting in his villa somewhere on the coast of Spain or France or Italy ... is a man who'd apparently had a ticket machine installed completely on his own and then had simply begun to show up every day, commencing to collect and keep the parking fees, estimated at about £560 per day — for 25 years.

Assuming 7 days a week, this amounts to just over 7 million pounds ... and no one even knows his name.

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale

House for sale - Bendigo

Architecturally designed, Brick veneer, Wheelchair accessible home, 10 old, Approx 30 squares, 4 bedrooms, Games room, 2 bathrooms, one large spacious main with ensuite, Electric double garage + double carport, Solar panel, Set on 2.5 acres, approx 7kms from Bendigo CBD.

Phone: 0421 550 062 (Ben)

Price: \$450,000

Wheelchair Accessible Caravan

No expense spared, luxuriously appointed, Excellent condition, Custom built, Year 2005, SIZE 23' x 8', Accessible for: Wheelchair user - Quad - Para or limited mobility, slide out ramp, wheel-in shower. This caravan is featured on AQA website by video link, Please call for further details as too many to list here.

Phone: (03) 59419218 or 0417 348 134 (Harry)

Price: \$45,000 MUST BE SOLD

2004 Mazda van

Very low 25,000kms All ties down belts are supplied Auto A/C front & rear Power windows Professional modified by Flash-Cab RWC

Phone: 0411 660 867.

Price: \$36,000ono (Yael)

Wheelchair, Sunrise Breezy

Tilt and recline Elevating leg rests, ROHO cushion and foam cushion. Pneumatic tyres front and back. Very comfortable for indoor and outdoor use

Phone: Greg (03) 98982914 ,M 0409967492

Price: \$2000 ono

E.Fix motorised wheelchair

Can also be used as manual, German design, As new with little use, cost \$7,000 when new. Can provide photo on request

Phone: Brendon 5482 6182 (Echuca)

Price: \$2,500

Wheelchair

M1 Roller 2004, excellent condition, suitable for hilly area.

Phone: 0447 681 117 (Michael)

Price: \$4000

For Sale

Magic Mobility Electric Wheelchair

Frontier model, comes with ROHO cushion, excellent condition, paid \$9000.

Price \$5000 ono.

Phone 9850 1283 - after 7pm

1999 Holden combo

Wheelchair accessible vehicle, Colour of vehicle is white, 11 years old vehicle, RWC, Travelled a very easy 186,000kms Excellent condition. Serviced regularly, Manual gearbox, A/C, Tie down straps to tie down wheelchair. When new cost \$45,000

Phone 9748 6437

Price: \$11,000 ono

Wheel chair

Glide 6 series electric wheel chair ROHO cushion, waterfall arm rests, extendable attachable foot rests, add on head rest. Reclines lifts, freewheel feature. Cost new \$8000.

Phone: (03) 9787 1566 (Cheryl after 6.00pm)

Price: \$4,500

Plega 3 wheeled Scooter

Columbus model, Very Good Condition Carry basket 8 years old

Phone: (03) 5798 5544 (David)

Price: \$1000 Seymour area

Qanum 600 power wheelchair

2007 model, 18 x 18 seat.

Phone: Elizabeth 0400 168 167 or Michelle 0403 352 481

Price: \$5000

Exercise Bench

Good height to transfer onto from wheelchair (60 cm high). The measurements are 2 metres by 1.2 metres. It's made from a light green vinyl. I paid \$1,200.

Phone: Jerry on 8774 2017 or 0409 380 765

Commode Shower Chair

Front opening, self propelled, anti-tip wheels, as new.

Phone: (03) 9386 9818

Price: \$800 (Colin)

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale

Roho Cushions X 8

8 x Roho cushions, 9 x 9 cells, very good condition, no cover.

Phone: (03) 9386 9818 (Colin)

Price: \$200 ono (for 1 Cushion only)

Wheelchair MobilityPlus Glide

17 inch, rigid frame, excellent condition, red and yellow in colour, fold down back.

Phone: (03) 9386 9818

Price: \$600 (Colin)

Electric Tilt Table

Excellent condition limited use, cost new \$3700

Phone: (03) 8774 2017 or 0409 380 765 (Jerry)

Price: \$2500

1994 XG Ford Falcon

Wheelchair accessible Panel Van, modified for wheelchair use. Room for driver, 2 passengers and wheelchair. T-bar automatic. Only done 120,000 kms

Phone: Lee (03) 5433 2701 (Heathcote)

Price: \$10,000 ono

4 wheel Dream Rider Scooter

VGC Includes battery charger Basket Operating manual

Phone: Pam (03) 9481 4904 or 0408 814 904

Price: \$700.00 ono

2000 Holden Combo Free Wheeler

Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle, VGC reg April 2011 one owner, 69,000kms

Phone: Julie (03) 5447 8018

Price: \$17,500 ono

Wanted

Pressure Relief Cushion - Looking for any type of Pressure Relief Cushion up to \$100.

Phone: Hamza 9306 3634 (9/10/#a)

Freebies

Comfort pads & Undergarments

'Tena Comfort Plus', 2 Packs of 20 items = 40

'Depend Undergarments', 3 Packs of 8 items = 24

Phone: (03) 9489 0777 (ask for Naz)

For Sale

Pool Hoist

Hydro-workx Aqua Lift, Water Wheelchair provided, (hoist lifts aqua chair into water/pool), Rescue board & floatation aids. Used only once.

Phone: (03) 9813 5313 (Geoff)

Price: \$4,000 ono

Power Wheelchair

Aspire 10 Captain Seat, Very manoeuvrable, comfortable chair. Joystick control for user, or hand control for carer. External battery charger. Grey upholstery. Excellent condition.

Phone: 0413 089 598 (Faye)

Price: \$2,600 ono

Quickie LX Manual Folding Wheelchair

Quickie LX Manual Folding Wheelchair Wheels easily removed. Lightweight, fit into car boot. Purple frame, black upholstery. Left leg support customized and adjustable. Excellent condition.

Phone : 0413 089 598 (Faye)

Price: \$500 ono

1995 Nissan Pulsar

Hand controls, roof hoist, excellent condition, electric roof mounted hoist. The colour is grey, automatic gear box, Supplied with RWC, 12 months reg, regularly service and maintained.

Phone: 0408 806 841 (Grant)

Price: \$5,000 ono

Tilt Table / Stand up-right table

Excellent condition hardly used. 240volt & battery back up

Phone: Michael on (03) 97025102 or 0409196713.

Price: \$2000

Toyota Avalon, 2001 model

only 128,000 kms, hand controls, automatic, pale green in colour (silver leaf), new tyres, registered to January 2011, very good condition.

Phone: Kathy (03) 9746 8202

Price: \$8000 ono

Ford Transist Van

4 seater with wheel chair lift and restraints, Diesel T-Bar auto, tow bar SWB, 163000 Kms, RWC with 10 months reg, one owner in new con.

Phone: Andrew Nicholson (03) 5278 6685

Price: \$10,000