

AQA News Link

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

October 2011



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SpinalHub is now live and ready for your use!



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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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From the CEO

Peter Trethewey

Chief Executive Officer

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As we head into our reporting season, I am pleased to let members know we have successfully completed our annual independent financial audit and the associated reconciliations with our Federal and State funding bodies.

A summary of the audit report will be made available in our Annual Report 2011 that will be launched at our AGM in November. Members will be receiving an official notice of meeting in the next couple of weeks.

This year, we will be combining a number of events into a general Celebration of 2011 to be held on the 17th November from 4:00 to 6:30pm at the Darebin Performing Arts Centre. We will commence with our AGM and then move to an informal get together of members, staff from our office and the community, Directors, clients and friends of AQA. During the gathering, we will be recognising the contribution of our staff and volunteers through a set of milestone awards and be entertained by singer songwriter Brian Hooper. Some of you will know Brian as an influential member and co-song-writer of two of Australia's premier alternative rock acts: Kim Salmon and the Surrealists (1988 – 1995) and the Beasts of Bourbon (1990 – 2009) with over 25 recording credits to his name.

We look forward to welcoming you to this event. To help us plan for catering, I encourage you to RSVP to the invitation included in this issue of News Link.



A Division of A.Q.A. Victoria Ltd
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Service Provider for Attendant Care throughout the State of Victoria. Attendant care provider to people with a disability who need assistance with personal care and/or day to day activities.

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From the Editor

Simon Damevski

News Link Editor

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G'day members, welcome to the October issue of News Link.

On pages 6, Mike Short writes to us about his experience of being involved in the SCIS project which is made up of a multi-disciplinary team including peer support workers, a vocational consultant, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, leisure specialist, building consultant, nursing, psychosocial worker and sexual health nurse consultant. The team provides community based interventions to people who reside in Victoria.

On pages 8 and 9, Wayne Bradshaw interviews a participant from the SCIPA program held at the Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre to get their experience of the trial. The trial is a five year study to investigate exercise in people with SCI, including the potential to recover neurological function.

On pages 11, Jodie from 'Can do Ability' writes about the innovative wheelchair ramp trial at Box Hill train station in Victoria. The ramp and platform section is raised to the level of the train floor to allow for uninhibited and easy boarding.

On pages 12-15 we have provided an extensive guide to the best 'applications (apps)' for people living with paralysis of any kind. The list was compiled by the Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation and it includes apps for SmartPhones such as iPhone, iPad, Android and BlackBerry.

The much anticipated Spinalhub website has now been launched online at www.spinalhub.com.au. This site aims to bring together useful resources about acute spinal cord injury, rehabilitation, community resources along with user generated content and social networking features to connect people and share ideas and experiences. For more information, please turn to page 16.

Finally, below are this years contribution deadlines for the upcoming edition of NewsLink:

December	1 st December 2011
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Peer Support

Spinal Community Integration Service (SCIS)

SCIS is a pilot project funded by the Transport Accident Commission (TAC) and the Department of Human Services (DHS). It is made up of a multi-disciplinary team, including Peer Support Workers, a Vocational Consultant, Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Leisure Specialist, Building Consultant, Nursing, Psychosocial worker and Sexual Health Nurse Consultant. The team provides community based interventions to people who reside in Victoria including working with the person in their own home, with a community service provider, in their local community, at their workplace or in a recreation facility.

Being Part of SCIS

Mike Short, who is one of the trained mentors in the SCIS program, writes to us about his experience of being involved in the program.

Seventeen years ago I broke my neck and one of the most difficult periods of the long path to recovery was the transition from rehab to home life again. I found myself out of the loop in regards to what was happening in the spinal community. I felt isolated and alone and had no idea as to who to call or seek assistance from in relation to what comes next in my life?

Recently I had the opportunity to take part in a pilot program to help ease the difficulties of the 'rehab to home' transition. Called SCIS the program involves several integration services such as, spinal nursing,

O.T., physio, building consultants, sexual health and mentoring or peer support which is the area I'm involved in. I was very keen to get involved with SCIS and the mentoring program as I believe I could have benefited a great deal from a program such as this during my first year at home.

I am currently studying a Bachelor of Applied Social Science with a view to becoming a counsellor. For me the SCIS program offered a perfect opportunity, to not only get a feel for what counselling some of my peers may be like but to also involve myself more in the spinal community and hopefully help a few people through a very difficult time.

Note: This is only a sample of this issue. To read the rest of this article, please subscribe by downloading a membership or subscription form at www.aqavic.org.au or calling us on (03) 9489 0777.

Board Focus

Risk Management at AQA

The purpose of this article is to explain our approach and expectations in relation to the management of risk across the organisation. The AQA Risk Management program is established by Management and overseen by the Risk & Compliance Committee and Board.

AQA maintains a risk management program to enable it to:

- ▶ Identify threats
- ▶ Maximize allocation of resources
- ▶ Enhance decision making
- ▶ Support planning processes.

Our approach draws on the Risk Management Framework developed by the VMIA for Risk Management in the Victorian Public Sector and aligns

with the Australian/New Zealand Risk Management Standard (AS/NZS4360).

Risk: the chance of something happening that will have an impact on the achievement of AQA objectives. It is measured in terms of **Likelihood:** the probability or frequency of an event occurring; and **Consequence:** the outcome or impact of an event or situation. It may be measured qualitatively or quantitatively.

Risk management: the logical and systematic method of establishing the context of risks and identifying, analyzing, evaluating, treating, monitoring.

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Research

Spinal Cord Injury and Physical Activity (SCIPA)

Full On trial

An exciting new trial to investigate the effects of exercise in people with SCI has just concluded at Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre. Although the full research project is not yet complete, we have been able to interview one of the participants to get their experience of the trial. Due to the confidentiality requirements of the trial we cannot not reveal his/her identity.

When did you here about this trial?

It was late last year when I read that Mary Galea, Director of the Rehabilitation Sciences Research Centre was awarded \$4.7 million for a five year study to investigate exercise in people with SCI, including the potential to recover neurological function.

What was it about the trial that interested you?

Part of the project used electrical stimulation on

patients muscles to drive the cycling of a bike and while in treadmill training patients will use their body to adjust when a therapist moves their legs beneath them in a walking pattern. The exercise will drive whatever potential the body has to repair. This really excited me because I have been in a wheelchair for nearly 20 years, keep fit and in talking to Mary about the trial, she seemed to think that people in my situation could still derive some benefit from this intensive exercise program. I thought it would be great to give it a go, lucky for me I was selected.

What did you do in regard to preparation?

In late February all the pre-testing started. First there was a physical assessment at Royal Talbot and Functional Electronic Stimulation (FES) scans done at the Movement Centre.

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Transport

Accessible Platform Trial at Box Hill Station

Jodie from 'Can do Ability' writes about the innovative wheelchair ramp trial at Box Hill train station in Victoria. Jody is a 25 year old wheelchair user who has accomplished a lot in her time. She enjoys helping others with a disability find answers and solutions through the website www.candoability.com.au.

We thought we'd share the news of the platform trial at Box Hill train station with other readers so you might like to trial it yourself. If you do, we'd love to hear your feedback.

There is currently a wheelchair ramp trial at Box Hill train station in Victoria. This

prototype could mark the beginning of something wonderful for people with mobility issues if it becomes permanent.

The wheelchair ramp consists of a raised platform, which is situated at the end of platform 3. The ramp is raised up enough, so when a train pulls up to the station, the platform and the train are at level heights, so people in wheelchairs, scooters or walking frames, can easily board or depart the train independently.

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■ **continued on next page**

Guide to the Best Apps for People Living with Paralysis

The Christopher & Dana Reeve Foundation has compiled a list of 'apps' for SmartPhones (mobile phones that combine the functions of a personal digital assistant and a mobile phone eg; iPhone, iPad, Android and BlackBerry) that benefit people living with paralysis of any kind. 'Apps' are features that expand the capabilities of a phone. There are thousands of 'apps', some of which are below.

For more apps & info please visit the Reeve Foundation website at www.christopherreeve.org.

Travel

This category was compiled to make it easier to find accessible routes and locations for individuals living with SCI.

1. **CitiRollers:** It's a guide to navigating cities specifically for wheelchair users. The tool allows users to locate, add and rate accessible points of interest such as restrooms, public transportation, restaurants, shops etc.

Optimized for: iPhone

Price: Free

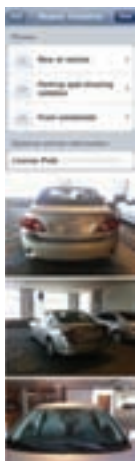
Link: www.citiroller.com

2. **Parking Mobility:** This app addresses disabled parking abuse. It works by taking a series of photos of the car without a disability placard and parking spot where the car is located. The information is then submitted to Parking Mobility where they review the data before sending it to the municipality, who then distributes tickets accordingly.

Optimized for: iPhone 3.0

Price: Free

Link: www.parkingmobility.com



3. **FastMall:** Gives step-by-step directions to wheelchair accessible routes by highlighting the location of elevators as well as bathrooms throughout shopping centres and districts. It has the capability to operate offline.

Optimized for: iPhone 2.0 and later

Price: Free

Link: www.fastmall.com

Related Products: FastMall is currently working

on the same type of app for other locations such as airports, hospitals etc.

Health & Fitness

This category offers a wide range of apps from exercises, breathing techniques, diet trackers to sleep.

1. **Physiotherapy Exercises:** This app displays over 600 exercises for people with SCI and other neurological conditions. You can filter the search through a variety of categories. It was created to promote an independent lifestyle by creating exercises that do not require manual handling from physical therapists.

Optimized for: iPod touch, iPhone 3.0 or later and iPad

Price: Free

Link: www.physiotherapyexercises.com

2. **RaceYourWorld Pro:** With a setting specifically for wheelchair users, this app organizes and saves paths from your workouts and records and stores your personal statistics of each workout. The information is automatically sent to raceyourworld.com where a user profile must be made in order to see the results of previous workouts.



Optimized for: iPhone OS 3.0 or later, iPod Touch

Price: \$2.99

Link: www.raceyourworld.com

3. **Myotomes:** This app tests neurological motor skills by administering self examinations that pertain to the movement associated with each vertebrae. Divided into categories of upper limbs, lower limbs and reflexes, the entire nervous system is covered by listing the muscle movement and nerves that are controlled by each vertebra.



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