



A.Q.A. VICTORIA LTD  
ABN: 90 006 691 185  
440 Heidelberg Road, Fairfield Vic. 3078  
PH: (03) 9489 0777 FAX: (03) 9482 4371  
PO Box 219, Fairfield Vic. 3078  
Email: [admin@aqavic.org.au](mailto:admin@aqavic.org.au)  
Web: [www.aqavic.org.au](http://www.aqavic.org.au)

## Supporters Update – June 2016

**Welcome to our Supporters Update highlighting activities that progress our vision of a community in which people with spinal cord injury have the opportunity to enjoy life.**



This year we are focusing on an important domain of life, employment. We commenced with the [Pathways to Employment post SCI](#) project which had an early result in the establishment of a network of [Professionals with SCI](#) (PROwSCI). This network provides a space in which people living with a SCI, who are or have been in employment are coming together to resource, not just each other, but also those new to the journey to employment and to use their professional networks to educate each other and inform employers.

### Regional Networks

We now have two regional networks up and running in Ballarat and Bendigo; with a third about to take place in Shepparton. The networks have worked with their communities to bring together a unique experience for people living with SCI. The resource has been a great asset to the regional areas that previously lacked this support.

**Ballarat** network have facilitated sessions including health and wellbeing, educational seminars and general catch-ups. They have set monthly meeting dates for the remainder of the year, scheduling different activities and events.

**Bendigo** network have arranged a variety of activities, with a visit from the Senior Disability Inclusion Officer from Bendigo Council, and a motivational workshop facilitated by the Spire team called Discovering the Power in Me; conducted over 3 days at the local Neighbourhood Hub.

**Ballarat April meeting with O.T's from the local Rehabilitation Centre**



**Bendigo group enjoy a BBQ lunch on the last day of their DPM workshop**

## Community Forums - Current and Emerging Technologies

**Spire**, in conjunction with Austin Health, hosted a lecture by Rehabilitation & Technology experts on current and emerging assistive technologies.

Lachlan McLeod an Arts / Journalism graduate and blogger shared his personal experiences utilising technology to help lead a **fulfilling and independent life**.

Having lived all of his life with a spinal cord injury Lachlan showed that he has been able to overcome many limitations and roadblocks along his journey. He also made the important note that with technology being an ever evolving entity, his use and the impact that it can have on his life is constantly changing; especially as his

needs and desires become more defined. The lecture was a great success; generating conversation and interest about how assistive technologies can provide greater options for people living with a spinal cord injury.



## Community engagement - ATSA Independent Living Expo – May 2016

This year was the first time Spire has had an exhibit at the [ATSA Independent Living Expo](#) at the Melbourne Showgrounds on the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of May.

We enjoyed the opportunity to share information about the peer-facilitated supports and resources that we offer to people living with a spinal cord injury (SCI). Many of our peer-support volunteers also came along to share their personal lived-experiences, stories, lifestyles and interests.

There were many different and diverse exhibits over the two days, such as assistive technologies, mobility solutions, employment support, accessible holiday and recreation ideas, modified vehicles and lots more!



Having launched **Spire** in 2015 it was a great way to gain some exposure and make our presence known in the wider disability field. The ATSA Expo is certainly something that we would recommend attending, and we look forward to being part of it again!

On behalf of the whole team at AQA **Spire** we thank you again for being a part of our activity. Your support makes these initiatives possible.