

Spire is a service division of AQA Victoria



Cruising: the new way to go

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Run Melbourne 2016

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Shoulder Exercises after SCI

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wheelchairtraveling.com

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Spire NewsLink is the official newsletter of AQA Victoria Limited, and is published bimonthly.

NewsLink 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.

Spire always welcomes articles for Spire NewsLink. 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

Wherever a line is drawn in law or policy there will be those on one side or the other. For the NDIS, age 65 is a key eligibility criterion; being the line Australia draws between Disability and Aged Care. There is lively debate as to whether in 2016 age 65 is an appropriate border crossing into aged care given life expectancy, shifts to retirement age and so on. However with the NDIA having adopted age 65 as a key eligibility criteria, what happens when in Victoria the decision is taken to roll out the NDIS progressively by geographic region and more specifically what is the effect for those who are approaching age 65.

In a nut shell:

1. Victoria has agreed that the NDIS will be rolled out progressively by region from July 2016 to 2019.
2. A key criteria for eligibility for the NDIS is that participants are aged under 65.
3. Many people receiving Victorian DHS funded disability supports had their package established in the context of tightly rationed DHS budgets and often for a single service type like attendant care rather than via an assessment of their aspirations and goals as per the full NDIS process.
4. We know from the Barwon experience that when people with SCI who were receiving rationed DHS packages go through the NDIS planning process, they have their

packages restructured and in some cases increased.

5. We now understand that where a person is receiving DHS funded disability supports as the result of an impairment before age 65, and who has since aged beyond 65yo – the agreement with Victoria describes the Commonwealth's responsibility as 'Continuity of Support' – essentially, the *person continues to receive only that which they have previously been allocated*.

As a result we understand that where a person is:

- Under 65 now,
- Receiving DHS supports / or on the DHS wait list, where these supports may well be restructured and in some cases increased under the NDIS planning process, and
- would be NDIS eligible now - but will be over 65 when their region comes on line; they will miss out on the potential advantages of the full NDIS process because of the decision to roll-out the NDIS to various regions of Victoria over time.

So, the person who is 64 now, will go through the full NDIS process if they live in Darebin, but the same person would not go through the NDIS process and only keep the supports they currently have if they live in Frankston. The decision to have age 65 as a key criteria is a line drawn by policy. The decision to roll out the NDIS progressively by



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region has the effect of shifting that line depending where you live.

An alternative is that people who can be shown to be NDIS eligible at the time of the signing of the bilateral agreement in Victoria, be treated as full participants and not recipients of 'continuity of support' thereby eliminating the injustice of the progressive roll out by region in Victoria.

We are raising this issue with NDIS and Community Advocates here in Victoria and will keep you informed of progress. If you have similar questions about this issue we are happy to hear from you.

HIGHLIGHTS

In May 2016 at ATSA Independent Living Expo, for the first time Spire will have a stall on the exhibition floor. Be sure to look out for us!

On page 8 in **Qantas Fare Reductions for Carers on Domestic Flights**, you can read about Qantas extending their 50% discount for carers to also include domestic discounted fares.

In **Shoulder Exercises after SCI**, the Victorian Spinal Cord Service (VSCS) have provided an exercise program that

can help keep balance in strength and length of key muscles to either manage or prevent shoulder pain. Please turn to pages 10 & 11 to view the stretching and strengthening exercises.

On pages 12, 13 & 14 in **Cruising: the new way to go**, you can read a recap of John's exciting cruise from Sydney to Singapore.

wheelchairtraveling.com is an online community and resource for international accessible travel

destinations. Please turn to page 15 to read what the website offers to the travelling wheelchair user.

Finally, below are this year's contribution deadlines for the upcoming editions of NewsLink:

June	1 st June 2016
August	1 st August 2016
October	1 st October 2016
December	1 st December 2016

ATSA Independent Living Expo - May 2016

In May 2016, ATSA will hold an Independent Living Expo at Melbourne Showgrounds on Wednesday 18th and Thursday 19th of May between 8.30am - 4.00pm.

The event will have over 100 exhibitors displaying a wide range of products and services in assistive technology, mobility solutions, pressure care, employment support, accessible recreation/holiday ideas, modified motor vehicles and a lot more.

For the first time this year, **Spire** will have a stall on the exhibition floor. Department representatives and Spire mentor volunteers will be sharing their experiences of life with SCI and networks. Be sure to look out for us if you come along!

ATSA Independent Living Expo is open to visitors of all ages, including those with a disability, seniors and their families, friends and carers.

A key feature of the Expo is the FREE Clinical Education Program – run over the two days in rooms conveniently located next to the exhibition floor.

Admission is FREE to the general public.

For further information please call ATSA on 1300 789 845 or 02 8586 6103 or visit their website at www.atsaindependentlivingexpo.com.au.

Run Melbourne 2016 - Pushing4Spire

Spire is putting out a **call-to-action** to our supporters for the Run Melbourne 2016 event, held on Sunday 24th July 2016.

We are looking for people who want to challenge themselves and at the same time, use their networks to help raise funds for "Community Participation" for people living with spinal cord injuries.

Run Melbourne is a great event, which not only encourages participants of all ages and abilities to get outside, get fit and have fun, but also allows you to do so while supporting people with spinal cord injuries through Pushing4Spire.

You have the option of taking part in the 5km, 10km, or a half-marathon challenge.

If you're interested in joining the Spire team or to find out more, please call on 03 9489 0777 or email info@spire.org.au.



Invitation: Professionals with SCI Network

In light of one of Spire's latest projects Pathways to Employment after SCI, we are aiming to set up a 'Professionals with SCI' network group.

Spire would like to help form, resource and assist a group of like-minded people to set their own agendas around what is important to them in the professional community; from employment and further education to meaningful activity.

If this sounds like something you would like to be a part of you can find more information via the link below, as well as short survey in which to express your interest www.surveymonkey.com/r/PROFSCI

Once the survey results have been assessed we will set up an initial meeting. This meeting will be a chance to discuss how people would like the group to run, what topics they want to cover, and how we can work together to develop and support the groups success.

Every Australian Counts

NDIS | revolutionising disability services

Support 'Every Australian Counts' campaign for the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

The NDIS is a major national reform – comparable to the development of Medicare.

You can support NDIS by visiting www.everyaustraliancounts.com.au and spreading the word.

AQA Spinal Injury Info & Support

For news, information, photos and more...



Join us on
facebook

www.facebook.com/AQASpinalSupport



SpinalHub
.com.au

SpinalHub is a community website for people with spinal cord injury in Victoria and throughout Australia.

SpinalHub covers a wide range of subjects related to spinal cord injury including:

- What is a Spinal Cord Injury?;
- How to Keep Healthy;
- Support, Equipment & Funding;
- Work & Leisure;
- Transport & Travel;
- plus much more.

The SpinalHub website can be found online at www.spinalhub.com.au and by registering free members can comment on articles, upload images and receive access to the forum.

SpinalHub TV is a collection of 'how to' online videos that feature people from the spinal cord injury community in Victoria. The short 2-3 minute videos provide practical and safe advice with the aim to help people get back into life after a spinal cord injury. Go to www.youtube.com/spinalhub to view the full list of online videos.

SUPPORTING SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH A SPINAL CORD INJURY

Making a bequest...

Bequests provide a legacy to an organisation you already support or want to support in the future. Making a bequest to AQA in your will is a meaningful way of supporting people with spinal cord injury. All bequests help strengthen the services provided by AQA that promote independence, quality of life and inclusion of people with disabilities in the community.

If you have included AQA in your will, or you are considering making a bequest to AQA we would love to hear from you so that we can acknowledge your support.

We would also like to include you on our list of supporters who receive our bi-annual supporters newsletter that provides an update of our services, the year's events and other activities that AQA is involved in that support people with spinal cord injury.

If you would like more information about making a bequest to AQA please contact Peter Trethewey CEO or Robyn Canning Executive Assistant on 03 9489 0777.

GESAC unlimited attendant support program

GESAC (Glen Eira Sports and Aquatic Centre) now offers an Attendant Support Program for only \$35 per hour. The Program includes:

- mobility transfers;
- support during lessons;
- in water support;
- assistance with entering and exiting pools;
- personal care;
- accessible changerooms and pool deck;
- access to gym facilities and group fitness classes.

For further information, contact GESAC on 03 9570 9200 or email asp@gesac.com.au.

Wheelie Fit Boot Camp

Do you want to get fitter, stronger and be more agile?

Do you use a self-propelled wheelchair?

Then we want you to join Wheelie Fit Boot Camp!

When: Eight week program starting Monday 11 April
Mondays 10am-11am and Wednesdays 9am-10am

Where: Glen Eira Sports and Aquatic Centre, 200 East Boundary Road, Bentleigh East

Cost: \$8 per session. Free for GESAC members

For more information contact Cam Lee on 0423 200 027 or cameron.lee@marriott.org.au.

Training includes:

- cardio;
- agility;
- strength;
- boxing.

Empower Golf Clinics

If you are interested in playing golf and don't feel you're able, you need to attend one of the golf clinics held at Sandhurst Golf Club on the last Saturday of each month. It is run by arguably the best golf pro teaching the disabled in the country - Christian Hamilton.

As part of these clinics, there will be a variety of adaptive equipment available to try. You will get an opportunity to try the ParaGolfer, which raises those with mobility issues into a standing position to replicate the full golfing experience. For further information contact James Gribble:



T 0466 825 044

E james.gribble@empowergolf.com.au

W www.empowergolf.com.au

ArtAbility 2016

ADEC is currently seeking expressions of interest from individuals and organisations interested in participating in the ArtAbility 2016 Exhibition.

ArtAbility is an exhibition of art by people with disabilities from ethnic communities to be held at the Atrium Federation Square 12th- 22nd December 2016.

If you would like to be a part of ArtAbility 2016, please contact Clare Dillon, ArtAbility Coordinator, on 03 9480 1666 or email artability@adec.org.au for further details and Expression of Interest Form.

Please note the Expression of Interest Form must be completed and returned to ADEC by the 29th April 2016.

Work and SCI project

Do you have a spinal cord injury?

Are you looking for work?

If so, please consider participating in our research project!

We are trialling a free online job information package, aiming to encourage job-seeking behaviour.

Participation involves completing two brief surveys. You will also receive practical information on how to review and recognise your job skills, understand employers' needs, cope with work issues following a SCI, and plan your career development.

For more information, go to: www.surveymonkey.com/r/work_SCI

If you have any questions, please call Liz Potter (Research Officer) on 0498 599 320.



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Phone: 03 6272 8816
paraquadtas.org.au

Email: info@paraquadtas.org.au
glennmooreunits.com.au

Steps Neurological Therapy Services



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BLACKBURN SOUTH
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MORNINGTON
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For all the latest at Steps, check out our website: www.stepsphysio.com.au

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Get in shape and move well with your Steps **Exercise Physiologist**

Enjoy feeling fit and strong by joining a Steps **Exercise Group**

Explore Sports and more with Steps **Recreation and Leisure**

Get your new chair sorted at the Steps **Wheelchair and Seating Clinic**

Heal your muscles with Steps **Myotherapy**



Call Steps on 03 9568 5611 today to arrange an appointment

DO YOU HAVE A TRAVEL STORY TO SHARE?

Our readers love to hear about travel experiences and adventures! We encourage anyone wanting to share their story to contact Spire on 03 9489 0777 or by emailing info@spire.org.au.

Qantas Fare Reductions for Carers on Domestic Flights

Dear Members, long ago Qantas was offering concessions - 50% discount on full fare costs for a carer - on domestic travel but now have made extensions to discounted fares that provides better value for all.

For Qantas domestic travel within Australia, customers who require a carer to travel are eligible for a reduced fare for both themselves and their carer, provided that the customer holds:

- a current Carer Concession photographic identification card issued by People with Disability Australia Incorporated (PWDA)
- a current Carer Concession photographic identification card issued by the National Information Communication Awareness Network (NICAN.)
- a current Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card with blind entitlement

The Qantas Carer Concession Card is issued to people with disability and high level support needs who require the full-time assistance of a carer whilst they are on the aircraft. A person is eligible if:

- they need to have one-on-one support when seated on the aircraft for assistance with meals/drinks,
- transferring to the bathroom, orientation, communicating with the flight staff etc.

This card is a photo ID card which is valid for 3 years and has an administration fee of \$49.50 including GST.

Qantas Carer Concession cardholders and their nominated carer will receive the following discounts for Qantas domestic travel within Australia.

- **Economy Travel for Qantas Carer Concession Cardholders:** 10% discount on Domestic Red e-Deal and Flex Economy Class fares
- **For Nominated Carers:** 50% discount on Domestic Red e-Deal and Flex Economy Class fares
- **Business Class Travel For Qantas Carer Concession Cardholders:** 50% off Full Cost Domestic Business Class Fares (subject to availability)
- **For Nominated Carers:** 50% off Full Cost Domestic Business Class Fares (subject to availability)

Discounts are not available:

- on international travel (International flights are numbered QF1-399)
- on flights operated by any of Qantas' alliance partners or
- in conjunction with any other concessional airfare.

Notes: All discounts are subject to booking class availability. Bookings for the cardholder and

their nominated carer must be made at the same time and both bookings must be made using the Card in order to obtain the discount. The Qantas Booking Fee is not payable on bookings made using the Qantas Carer Concession Card. Fare conditions apply.

The Qantas Carer Concession Card was previously administered by NICAN, who ceased operation in July, 2015. All current cards issued by NICAN will be honoured until they expire. Holders of expired NICAN issued Carer Concession Cards wishing to renew can do so with PWDA.

Details regarding Carer Concession Card applications and renewals can be found on the PWDA website at www.pwd.org.au or by phoning PWDA on 1800 806 769.

101 Reasons to Marry a Quadriplegic

Many people might look at Tim and Rhonda Evatt sitting in a restaurant with their two children and feel sorry for them. They would see their 16-year-old get out her father's fork that is bent in a 90 degree angle and unstrap the safety belt placed around his chest as the red-haired 6-year-old hops off the wheelchair's footrests and up into his own chair.

The general public might wonder why members of this family are smiling and laughing. How can they have such joy in their lives when Tim is so disabled?

In *101 Reasons to Marry a Quadriplegic* by Rhonda Crozier Evatt answers the question.

Available at www.amazon.com.



Life! It Must Be A Comedy

Robert Florio lost the ability to use his hands after injuring his spinal cord in a diving accident at age 14, in 1996. 'Life! It Must Be A Comedy' is his autobiography, explaining how in his fight for life he overcame depression, his transformation, the loss of sense of touch and complete disconnection from his body, his struggle with faith, and more.

After injury and paralysis, Florio had to learn how to live a whole new way. His artistic ability emerged when he discovered he could paint lifelike and imaginative creations with tools held in his mouth. His artistic talents extend to music, poetry, and comedy.

(For information about his artwork, comedy and appearances, visit robertflorio.com.)

Available at www.amazon.com.



Don't Worry, He Won't Get Far on Foot

John Michael Callahan (February 5, 1951, Portland, Oregon – July 24, 2010) was a cartoonist, artist, and musician noted for dealing with macabre subjects and physical disabilities. Callahan became a quadriplegic in an auto accident at 21 years of age.

Overview

Is it possible to find humour corrosive, taboo-shattering, laugh-till-you-cry humour in the story of a 38-year-old cartoonist who's both a quadriplegic and a recovering alcoholic?

The answer is yes, if the cartoonist is John Callahan whose infamous work has graced the pages of *Omni*, *Penthouse*, and *The New Yorker* and if he's telling it in his own words and pictures. But Callahan's uncensored account of his troubled and sometimes impossible life is also genuinely inspiring.

Without self-pity or self-righteousness, this liberating book tells us how a quadriplegic with a healthy libido has sex, what it's like to live in the exit less maze of the welfare system, where a cartoonist finds his comedy, and how a man with no reason to believe in anything discovers his own brand of faith.

Don't Worry He Won't Get Far On Foot is available to buy online at various bookstores.

Shoulder Exercises after SCI

In the previous issue of NewsLink, the physiotherapy team at the Victorian Spinal Cord Service (VSCS) provided an article on how to best protect your shoulders and decrease the risk of injury. In this accompanying article, VSCS have provided an exercise program that can help keep balance in strength and length of key muscles to either manage or prevent shoulder pain.

Stretching Exercises

Stretches should be completed daily. Hold each stretch for 20-30 secs each side, repeat 2-3 times. You should feel a strong stretch but it shouldn't be painful.

Trapezius

The trapezius attaches spine and neck to shoulder blades. Tight traps can encourage poor neck and shoulder posture and lead to headaches and shoulder pain.

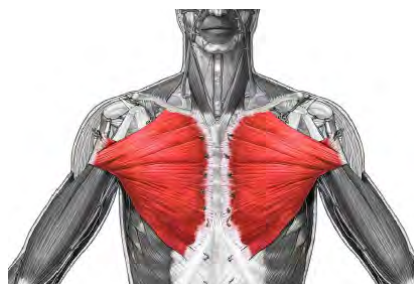
Sitting up tall, slowly lower ear toward shoulder. You should feel a stretch down the opposite side of your neck.



Pectoralis Major

Slumped sitting postures and overuse in heavy activities like pushing and lifting transfers make the pecs tight.

Position yourself with your hand on a doorway or wall with shoulder at 90-120 degrees. You should feel a stretch across the front of your shoulder and chest.



Shoulder Capsule

Overuse of the muscles at the front of your shoulder leads to tightness in the back of the joint. This changes the way the arm bone sits in the socket and can cause impingement with movement.

Straighten one arm across the body with palm down. Use the other arm to hold it there. You should feel a stretch across the back of your shoulder joint.



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Strengthening Exercises

Strengthening should be completed at least 3 times per week, with a rest day between sessions. Repeat each exercise 10-12 times, 2-3 sets.

Keep all the movements slow and controlled throughout.

Rotator Cuff External Rotation

Your rotator cuff act as deep stabilisers of the shoulder and keep large movements like reaching smooth and controlled.

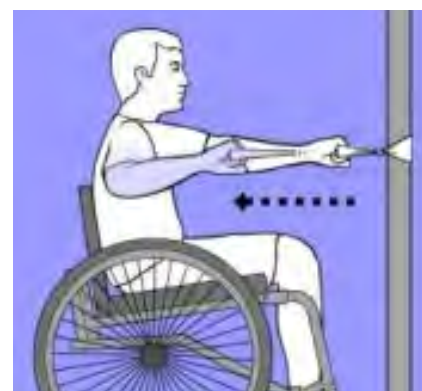
Attach theraband to wall at hand height. Sit side on to theraband, set your shoulder blade and rotate shoulder to pull hand out, keeping elbow by your side.



Shoulder Retraction

Rhomboids and middle trapezius attach shoulder blades to the spine. They help position the shoulder blade for efficient movement.

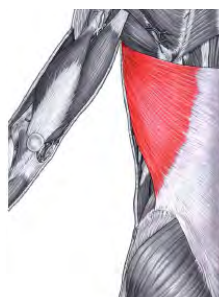
Sit facing theraband. Pull shoulder blades in toward spine and bend elbow in a rowing motion. Do one side at a time.



Shoulder Adduction

Latissimus Dorsi and Pecs help provide the downward force needed for transfers, pushing and other weightbearing activities.

Attach theraband around head height. Sit side on and stabilise shoulder blades. Pull hand down toward body, keeping the arm straight. Only do one side at a time.



Cruising: the new way to go

Keen traveller John not only provides a recap of his cruise from Sydney to Singapore but also provides many useful suggestions and travel tips on how to best prepare for the exciting journey ahead.

Almost two years ago I went on my first cruise with my carer - it was a 16-day cruise around New Zealand that began in Melbourne and docked in at eight ports that took us on some breathtaking views along the coastline. The fact that we started and finished our cruise in Melbourne made the holiday even more relaxing as we did not have to lug my medical equipment and supplies too far.

Now that I had the bug for cruising, I decided to find somewhere different and affordable for the next trip - this became the challenge.

After contacting a few cruise liner companies I found the ideal cruise and decided to book the one that cruised along the east coast and top end of Australia finally berthing in Singapore. A friend Jenni, who is an independent para, said she was interested in joining me. I'm in a power chair and Jenni is in a manual chair. We had to fly from Melbourne to Sydney, where we boarded the ship, and once we reached Singapore we were to fly back to Sydney then on to Melbourne.

A Brief Outline of our Cruise

Accommodation: Our room was suitable for people with disabilities - it had a bunk bed for the carer and was quite

comfortable for the entire cruise.

Entertainment: There is something happening day and night from exercise classes, BBQs, swimming pools, spas, movies, top deck walks, rock climbers, mini golf, gym, trivia quizzes, cover bands, karaoke, dances, hypnotist, comedy shows, piano bars, vocalist, impersonators, bands, jazz, brass to acrobatics and of course the casino. I could keep going but as you can see there's plenty of entertainment.

Sydney: Sydney has a magical feel about it with the Harbour Bridge, Opera House. The city was all lit up as we set off to our first stop - Brisbane. We

were assigned to one of the restaurants sharing a table with a couple who were great company. Our menu changed nightly and the food was top quality. There was also a buffet open from 6am to 12pm each day which we frequented every day and it had 10 to 15 types of meals changing daily.

Next dock - Airlie Beach: As we were unable to disembark because you could only get to shore with a tender boat, we explored the facilities on the ship.

Next dock - Cairns: We had enquired about the Skyline chairlift to Kurandra but the doorways were too narrow for our wheelchairs and unfortunately the accessible train was not running that day (I've travelled on it other times when in Cairns and recommend it). We decided to get a taxi and head to Palm Cove for lunch and then to



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the Wild Park Zoo. We were able to get extremely close to most of the wildlife - patting the koalas and kangaroos - although we didn't want to get any closer to the crocodiles.

Next dock - Darwin: We were at sea for two full days and docked in at 9am on the third day. Darwin was the only major city that I hadn't been to and it didn't disappoint. We thoroughly enjoyed it and would definitely recommend it. I will be going back as one day is not enough, you would need a week at least. We left Darwin at 5.30pm.

Next dock - Bali: We knew we were unable to disembark so prepared to be on the ship for five days.

Final dock - Singapore: After days at sea we finally docked at Singapore. Catching a taxi from the docks to our hotel was a little tricky as they only have London Cabs which only caters for one wheelchair. Jenni transferred into a normal taxi with the carer and we met at the hotel. The taxis have a fixed price so you know how much it's going to cost. We stayed at the Hotel Shangri-La which we had booked as an extra so we could stay in Singapore for three days.

Hotel Shangri-La is a huge hotel with almost anything you could want. The staff were always on hand to assist us with whatever needs we had. They were exceptional. The hotel was quite affordable at about \$400 per night including breakfast which



you would have to see to believe. There were 23 different types of food from different countries - we made it brunch each day, just fantastic.

Prior to our arrival, I knew the hotel didn't have a shower chair so I had organised for them to purchase one for me. I had emailed them a list of shower chair retail stores in Singapore that I had received from Spire. The hotel used the list and purchased a shower chair at a reasonable price of \$230. It was not a self-propelling chair but with a push from the carer it turned out to be an excellent investment. At the end of my trip I donated it to the hotel so other disabled travellers have it available to them.

Once showered and dressed, Jenni and I would head down for brunch. Afterwards we would head off to explore the sights of Singapore using the 'Hop On, Hop Off' buses. They were easy to follow because their colours

matched colours on the road and they came along every 20 minutes - a ramp was put out and you just wheeled on or off. We were told the rail system was just as accessible.

We did go up the Triple Towers and the Singapore Flyer (supersized Ferris wheel) is a must. The Gardens by the Bay is another place I'm coming back to. We went all over the place for three days and still only saw part of this beautiful and clean city with people to match.

We caught taxis to the airport and left Singapore around 10pm directly to Melbourne arriving in the morning then catching a Maxi Taxi home.

My suggestion for you to prepare beforehand

Contact different shipping agents to receive their email to discover the different types of packages and destinations, starting prices, leisure options, the different types of rooms etc. The disabled

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rooms are in big demand as they are much larger in size including the bathroom. The two I dealt with were Princess Lines and Royal Caribbean.

If you are intending to try cruising for the first time, here are a few problems that I came across on my second cruise. Hopefully these tips will help you.

The flight to Sydney was at our cost, so instead of flying our return flight from Singapore to Sydney which was included in the cruise we changed it to a direct flight from Singapore to Melbourne at an extra cost of \$100. This was more convenient and actually cheaper.

Cruise Liner Tips:

- Check all stops on your trip as some don't have docking facilities e.g. Airlie Beach and Bali were only accessible by tender boats with no wheelchair access.
- When booking your cruise ask them to supply a commode chair. There is a lot of competition out there so insist as I did and one was supplied without fuss. Don't presume a shower chair will be provided because you have booked a disability room.
- Excursions are not all accessible and not necessarily cheaper when purchased from the ship. We found that asking around or going to the Information Centre at the city or town you are docked at were extremely helpful.



- Once you have decided what you would like to see the Information Centre can contact a taxi for you. Usually the taxi companies are willing to negotiate a set price with you.

Travel Tips:

- When you have chosen a carer, go through your budget and agree on everything you need to pay e.g. excursions, taxis costs, fares, meals etc. and how much time they need to spend with you and action plans for times of emergency, then make a contract signed by both.
- When booking travel insurance, shop around as any pre-existing medical condition are not usually covered and the older your age the more the costs.
- Try to stay as long as possible in your own chair before transferring to the smaller aisle chair. Make sure you disconnect the battery on your power chair as this will assure

that it is not accidentally turned on when being loaded on the aircraft. Airline assistants are not very familiar when manoeuvring the chair into place.

- If possible have the manufacture's measurements and weight of your wheelchair especially motorised chairs. This saves a lot of time and enables you to stay longer in your chair.
- If you hold a Victorian Taxi Directorate card you will need to contact the Multi-Purpose Taxi program through the Taxi Services Commission. They will provide you with taxi vouchers that can be used under the same conditions interstate (Australia only).
- Estimate how many taxi vouchers you will need and this must be done in advance of your trip.

Wheelchair Travel

When travelling in your wheelchair for the first time or to a new destination in general, you may have all kinds of logistical questions. Whether you use a manual or powerchair, getting tips on reserving an accessible hotel room, finding out what you need to know about flying, how to be your own advocate when booking a cruise, the best ways to pack for solo wheelchair travel and what to take would be so handy to know.

If you have asked yourself the above questions, we have found a website that will answer all these questions for you: www.wheelchairtraveling.com has comprehensive information on all the essentials that a wheelchair user might like to know before taking the plunge and booking a trip.

Includes information on:

Destinations

Some places are more wheelchair accessible than others. Explore destinations from all over the world and find out the accessible features, or browse through the newest articles. You can also read the many travel journals on cruises and all kinds of adaptive outdoor activities like hunting, hot air balloon rides and more...

Accommodation

One of the most important aspects of travelling is figuring out where you are going to rest your head at night and bathe. What wheelchair accessible features does the property have? Does the room have an accessible bath tub, roll-in shower or both? Below are some accommodation suggestions for wheelchair travelers. Read the descriptions and view the photos

to determine whether or not a place fits your physical needs.

Transportation

When travelling to a new destination, you need to know how you are going to get around. Will you have your own vehicle or will you be renting? Public transport like trains, subways, taxis or boats will vary in wheelchair access everywhere you go. Will you be wheeling the city at all? Don't get stranded, prepare your mobility.

Travel Journals

There is a lot to experience in this world from the viewpoint of a wheelchair. We all have different needs, desires, things we are or not willing to put up with. But perhaps reading about what other wheelchair travelers have done, discovering what is possible, will drive you to stretch your wings and experience more. Take that cross-country trip,

cruise or exotic excursion you have been dreaming about. Go hiking. Go skydiving. Go scuba diving. Get out there! If there is a will there is a way.

Travel Tips

When travelling in your wheelchair for the first time or to a new destination in general, you may have all kinds of logistical questions. Whether you use a manual or powerchair, get tips on reserving an accessible hotel room, find out what you need to know about flying on an airplane, and how to be your own advocate when booking a cruise, the best ways to pack for solo wheelchair travel, what to bring and so much more.

Equipment

Travelling in a wheelchair means packing added accessories, gear and equipment with limited space, so the question becomes, what to bring and what to leave home. There are all kinds of adaptive equipment for the wheelchair user and travelling is no exception. Here you will find some suggested products to fit the wheelchair travelling lifestyle.

There is also a very handy Travelling Forum so you can read about other wheelies escapades while on holiday.



I want to get fit but I don't want to go to the gym

Guest writer Curtis Palmer regularly shares his wealth of knowledge and experience around health, fitness and mindset. In this issue Curtis provides five alternatives to reaching a fitness goal without going to a gym.

Going to a gym can be daunting. Getting in and out of the car just to get there can be a workout in itself plus did you ever get the feeling that everyone is looking at you when you go to a gym. I hate that feeling. It's like I'm not supposed to be there.

Gyms can be intimidating places, especially if you're not quite comfortable or used to how your new body works post accident. Even for veterans like myself, who have been using a wheelchair for many years, gyms can be a place where you can feel very different. They are not exactly set up to cater for wheelchairs apart from an accessible toilet, and if you're lucky a hand crank machine to warm up on.

But on the other hand, gyms can be wonderful places where you find a strong community of people to support you in reaching your goals, whatever they may be. They can be a place where you find empowerment and you get to experience that infectious feeling of success. I love gyms because they are a place where I can push myself further than what I usually do. In my experience gyms are usually happy places and the staff are always on the better side of positive.

In all the gyms I've been to I have only seen very limited numbers of people with a disability attend them. I'm not exactly sure why but the reasons above are probably a good guess, they're not welcoming places for people with a disability. It's really surprising to me because as a group the disability community is extensive

and a market that gyms really should be targeting because of its size and diversity. I'd be interested to learn about how you feel about gyms and why the numbers are so low.

Personally I'm not a fan of major gyms. I don't like being surrounded by that many people. I actually find them hard places to connect with people. In a way I feel lonely and like I'm being watched in these big places. I prefer small, boutique, local gyms or personal training studios where I get to interact with the trainer on a much more intimate/personal basis but also with the community of people that come to the gym. I like the family atmosphere but I also like the idea that I can explore exercise options without being judged or watched. I feel free to get on the floor and roll around or play with balloons and do non-traditional movements that would be weird to do in a regular gym.

I also like gyms where there is lots of space and specialised equipment I can use without feeling like I'm going to fall off it. I hate a cluttered gym. In fact I prefer to not use machines at all apart from a cable machine. You'd be surprised at what you can do in a space with very few machines.

Society has been conditioned to think that gyms need to be full of treadmills and machines if they are to be regarded as a good gym. It's simply untrue and all that 'stuff' adds to the intimidation factor for people who use a wheelchair.

So what's the solution? We all have



a choice in how we deal with our health and fitness so not doing anything because you don't want to go a gym isn't really an option, so here are some tips.

- Workout from home in private.
- Find a trainer that can send you an online program.
- Go to a small local gym where they specialise in one-on-one training.
- Boxing studios can offer awesome one-on-one training.
- Play a sport.
- Get some friends together and go for a push along the beach paths or around a park.
- Play with your kids.
- Get a hand-cycle.
- Adapt exercises you see on social media designed for people who can walk.
- Blow up some balloons and keep them in the air. You'll be surprised at how high your heart rate will increase and the different dimensions your body moves in.

So it really is as simple as making a decision to just do something.

Please contact me via www.pivotalfitness.com.au if you have any questions or need some advice on health, fitness or SCI life. I'm more than happy to help out!

Research Study. The Secret of Success: Exploring the experience of ageing well with a disability or impairment

Would you like to help improve levels of understanding of what it means to age well with a disability or impairment and the supports that need to be in place to help people achieve this? Spire is currently supporting a Melbourne University PhD project that's looking to do just that.

Older adults are now the fastest growing segment of the population. And as medical treatments improve, we are now seeing more people with differing levels of physical disabilities live beyond age 65.

Unfortunately, so far very little research has looked at how individuals with a long term disability or impairment maintain a sense of ageing well, or the supports that need to be in place to help people achieve this. It is anticipated that this research can be used to develop effective interventions that can assist other people ageing with a disability to age well over the longer term.

The researchers are now looking for volunteers aged 40 – 80 who incurred a spinal cord injury 15 years or more ago and who are willing to share their experiences and thoughts about what it means to age well with a long-term disability or impairment.

As part of the study participants will be asked to take part in an individual interview, which can be conducted either in your home or another convenient location. The interview will last about 45 – 60 minutes.

If you're interested in participating or finding out more about this project please contact Niki Heath:

T 0458 894 674

E nheath@student.unimelb.edu.au

Bowel Management Study

The Bowel Management Study is testing the safety and effectiveness of a new drug to facilitate emptying the bowel of spinal cord injured people. This study will be conducted at Austin Health, Melbourne.

Many spinal cord injured people lose voluntary control of bowel function: this means they are unable to open their bowel when they wish, and often have bowel accidents. For some people this is a devastating problem.

A new drug has been developed that stimulates the defaecation centre in the lower spinal cord, which remains intact after cervical or thoracic injury. A trial to assess the safety and tolerability of the drug has previously been completed at Austin Health.

We are currently recruiting participants aged 18 - 60 years, who have sustained a SCI above T12 within the last 1 - 10 years. The study drug will be administered in tablet form to potentially assist the participant's current bowel management regimen.

Participants will be required to attend Ward 3North at Austin Health on several occasions.

For further information or enquires please contact Melinda Millard on 03 9496 5906 or melinda.millard@austin.org.au.

This study has been approved by the Austin Health Human Research Ethics Committee and is funded by the Institute for Safety Compensation Recovery Research (ISCR).

Short Jokes

- Two cows are in a field eating grass.
One cow turns to the other and says "Hey, what are your thoughts about Mad Cow Disease"
The other cow replies "I couldn't care less. I am a sheep"
- two fish swim into a concrete wall
One looks at the other and says "dam"
- A man was caught stealing in a supermarket today while balanced on the shoulders of a couple of vampires. He was charged with robbery on two counts.
- When you get a bladder infection, urine trouble.
- A guy takes his Rottweiler to the vet.
"My dog is cross eyed. What can I do"
The vet says "Let me have a look" and he goes over and picks up the dog and starts examining its eyes.
After a while the Vet says to the man "I am going to have to put your dog down"
"Why? Because he is cross eyed?"
"No" says the vet. "Because he is really heavy"
- Paddy and Murphy are working on a building site.
Paddy says to Murphy. "I need to have a day off. I am going to pretend I am mad and get a day off"
So he climbs up the rafters, hangs upside down and starts screaming "LOOK AT ME I AM A LIGHTBULB. I AM A LIGHTBULB"
The foreman sees this and shouts out "Paddy you're mad. Go home"
A few minutes later Murphy starts packing his stuff to leave as well.
The foreman says "Where the hell do you think you're going"
Murphy says "Well I can't very well work in the dark can I?"
- There was a man who got into a car accident. He was soon rushed to the hospital. The left side of his body was completely paralyzed. The doctor said, "He was going to be all right."

Paralympians

Three disabled guys (a blind man, an amputee, and a guy in a wheelchair) are flying back with the USA team from the Paralympic games in the Middle East when their plane crashes in the Sahara Desert. The three disabled guys (the only survivors) are now stranded and wait for someone to rescue them, but no one showed. They start to get real thirsty, so they decide to seek out water. The amputee leads the way, with the blind man pushing the guy in the wheelchair; and, eventually they find an oasis. The amputee leader goes into the water first, cools himself down, drinks a load of water, walks out the other side and lo and behold, he has a NEW LEG! He gets excited and encourages his friends to do the same. The blind man offers to push the guy in the wheelchair, but he gets refused because the guy in the chair wants to be Mr Independent and insists the blind man goes ahead first. So he goes into the water, cools himself down, drinks a load of water, walks out the other side and lo and behold, he can SEE! Now the guy in the wheelchair's getting really excited, starts pushing with all his might, goes into the water, cools himself down, drinks a load of water, and wheels out the other side. Lo and behold, NEW TYRES!!!

I know 10 facts about you

- Fact 1: You are reading this.
- Fact 2: You can't say the letter 'm' without touching your lips.
- Fact 3: You just tried it.
- Fact 4: You're smiling.
- Fact 6: You're smiling or laughing again.
- Fact 7: You didn't notice I missed fact 5.
- Fact 8: You just checked it.
- Fact 9: You're smiling again.
- Fact 10: You like this :)

FOR SALE

Magic Mobility Powerchair "Frontier"

Mid wheel drive; tilt in space; adjustable backrest; fold up footplate; swing away controller; upholstery in excellent condition; new tyres on drive wheels with liquid tyre sealant; vehicle anchor points; battery charger.

Price: \$1,950

Phone: 0429 846 290 (Laureen) (03/16#a) J

Pride Q 600Z Electric Wheelchair

Heavy duty custom built chair with heavy duty motor, batteries and charger; tilt in space; power elevating leg rests; head rest; curved back rest; adjustable height arm rests; seat belt; Ro-Ho cushion; attendant controls; seat dimensions: 650mm wide x 500mm deep - can be extended to 600mm.

Price \$10,000 ono

Phone 03 5243 2351 (Joan) (12/15#a)\

Glide Light Weight Manual Wheelchair

Harnesses / headrest; tie down points; folding frame.

Price \$1,000

Phone 0409 132 537 (Trish)

Email mrspuppets@bigpond.com (12/15#a)

Rugby Wheelchair

Built by Melrose in 2007; only used for 1 year; wheelchair is built for a high point attack, 2point +, comes with wheels and wheel bag.

Price \$1,000 ono

Phone 0414 715 591 (Nathan) (11/15#a)

Magic V6 Frontier Powerchair

12 months old; left-hand controls; comes with spare motor; mint condition.

Price \$5,500 ono

Mobile 0490 067 334 or 0468 339 541 (Sue) (07/14#a)

Glide G2 Portable Wheelchair

Never used; no armrests; paid \$2,600.

Price \$500 ono

Mobile 0490 067 334 or 0468 339 541 (Sue) (07/14#a)

LIKO overhead hoist

Maximum 200kg, comes with motor, rail and sling.

Price: \$2,000 ono

Phone 0434 923 189 (Andrew) (12/15#a)

Double Bed with Single Air Pressure Care Mattress

Double Bed with single air pressure care mattress (Ultimate 75); comes with raised sides, electric remote and repositioning.

Price \$3,000

Phone 0434 923 189 (Andrew) (12/15#a) W

ROHO Cushion

Rarely used. Suit large person.

Price \$250 ono (Sue Ouzas)

Phone 0490 067 334 or 0468 339 541 (7/14#a) W

FOR SALE

1990 Mercedes 300ce-24v Couple

Hand controls; 12 months reg; RWC; 180,000 kms; great condition.

Price: \$8,000 ono

Phone: 03 9038 8890 or 0414 715 591 (Nathan) (04/16#a)

2005 Citroen Berlingo

Manual gearbox; silver grey colour; new tyres; 42,500kms; regularly serviced and in excellent condition; reg till March 2017; cost \$47,496.

Price: \$12,000

Phone: 03 9481 8573 (Brian)

Email: bstaff@optusnet.com.au (03/16#a) W

2002 Citroen Freewheeler Berlingo

Heritage green; 5speed manual; air-con; 3 seats plus wheel chair; 1440mm headroom in rear of vehicle; smooth riding air suspension; vehicle lowers down for easier loading; retractable locking wheelchair restraints; CD player with controls accessible to wheelchair occupant; 101,000 km; one owner; very good condition.

Price \$15,500

Mobile 0409 212 842 (Jeni) (12/15#a)

2007 Chrysler Grand Voyager Limited

Dark khaki, converted into a Activan by Capital Special Vehicles; LHS push-pull hand controls; remote controlled ramp on left hand side; many drive options e.g. carer driver, Self drive and docking station to enable you to drive; luxury features; leather interior; DVD player for your rear passengers; car and modifications serviced regularly; 210,000 kms; one owner; good condition.

Price \$16,000 ono

Mobile 0419 708 434 (Matt)

Email mattingram@y7mail.com (12/15#a)

2001 Nissan Maxima ST

4 speed Auto; dual airbags; ABS; climate control; cruise control; central locking remote control; power front seat driver; power steering+windows+mirrors, seat belt pre-tensioner; radial style hand control R/H side Push/Pat; flip up accelerator mod; spinner knob; easy spin unit with function controls for left cancel indicators & HI /LO beam on spinner knob, removable instructor brake, Sto N Go roof mount wheelchair hoist system roof rack, fabricate skeleton ladder frame to mount roof hoist to roof rack; ADR, AS compliance; VASS certification not require for this modification; 121,000 kms.

Price \$14,000.00 ono

(08/13#a)

Mobile 0466 55 13 55 (Cranbourne)

1999 Holden Combo

Manual ramp access; 5 speed transmission; regularly serviced (160,000 km); Seats 3 and wheelchair passenger; tie downs; wheelchair seatbelt; CD player.

Price \$7,999

Phone 0409 132 537 (Trish)

Email mrspuppets@bigpond.com (08/15#a)

CLASSIFIEDS

ITEMS FOR FREE

Electric Bed

Electric bed in the Albury Wodonga area; owner is in nursing home but can organise pick-up of bed.

Phone 02 6057 3189 (Elizabeth) (10/15#a)

6 x Conform Support Bed Panels

- 1 x panel: 700mm x 500mm (15 nodules x 10 nodules) high profile.
- 4 x panels: 830mm x 500mm (18 nodules x 10 nodules) high profile, plus joining strips for same.
- 1 x foam panel: 830mm x 500mm with joining strip. Normally used with 3 panels to make a complete mattress.

The foam panel goes under your pillow which is fine for a person of average height. Tall people need 4 inflatable panels.

Phone 03 8838 2866 (Ed or Livia)

Car Roof Wheelchair Hoist

Wymo car roof wheelchair hoist; never used.

Mobile 0417 378 905 (Dani)

Magic Mystic Electric Chair

10 year old electric wheelchair; left hand controls; fair condition.

Phone 0490 067 334 or 0468 339 541 (Sue) (#9/13)

MORE CLASSIFIEDS ON PAGE 19

For a full list of classifieds and items for free, please visit www.spire.org.au/classifieds or contact us on 03 9489 0777 or info@spire.org.au.



Qualcare is a division of AQA Victoria Limited and is an industry recognised provider of high quality personal care services. For over 20 years Qualcare has delivered personal care and support throughout the state of Victoria to people with a disability, injury or illness in their homes and communities.

T 03 9482 4373

F 03 9482 7933

W www.qualcare.org.au

E qualcare@aqavic.org.au

SUPPORTING SERVICES TO PEOPLE WITH SPINAL CORD INJURY

Making a donation... (Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible)

With community support Spire continues to make a difference in the lives of people who sustain spinal cord injury and for the family that support them. You can provide support with a donation.

By Phone – please ring Spire on 03 9489 0777 and have your credit card details available. (Mastercard, Visa, American Express)

By Mail (cheque or credit card) – fill in the slip below and send with your cheque to:

AQA Victoria Ltd
 PO. Box 219
 Fairfield VICTORIA 3078

Name: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ P/Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

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Card Type: Visa Mastercard Amex

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Name on Card: _____

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