A STEP AHEAD

AUTUMN EDITION 2024



CENTRAL OFFICE

Ben Mathews Playground Community Centre 47-55 Ellen Street, Logan Central Qld 4114 PO Box 31, Kingston Qld 4114

Monday to Thursday 9:00am to 4:30 pm Friday 9:00am to 2:30pm

T: 07 3290 4293 | W: www.afsg.org.au E: admin@afsg.org.au or lynda@afsg.org.au



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We would like to thank InHouse Print & Design for the printing of our quarterly newsletter. Please contact them for all your printing requirements.

Disclaimer: Amputees Queensland Inc does not provide specific medical advice or endorse any specific treatment, technology, company or device. Consumers are advised to consult with their healthcare professionals.

From the Office!

Welcome to the Autumn Edition of A Step Ahead!!

Unfortunately the start of 2024 has not been a happy one for a lot of our communities and members across Queensland!



It started with the horrendously hot weather and humidity, Cyclone Jasper and then the tornado that hit parts of the Scenic Rim, Logan and the Gold Coast during the storms at Christmas that hit South East Queensland! Our friends up North are now recovering from Cyclone Kirrily!

We have definitely had a very hot, humid and unpredictable summer, we can only hope that the weather calms down a little and we start to enjoy the lovely cooler autumn days.

This year we have information sessions on the first and third Wednesday of the month and then on the fourth Wednesday, we are continuing to hold our Grocery Bingo. If you visit page 7, we have our Dates for the Diary with upcoming sessions.

All out events, information sessions and news is kept updated on our website, socials and enews. To register for our e-news please visit our website home page and scroll to the bottom and enter your details. We are working on having this sent out more regularly, at least once a month.

QALS and MASS have several online webinars coming, you can see all events on their MASS Education Calendar which is on their website www.health.qld.gov.au/mass/education.

We have started a Facebook group *Amputees Qld - Peer Support*, the group is for online help and support. The group is specifically created for Queenslanders living with amputation or limb difference, their family or friends who need help, information and support from fellow amputees.

The office hours will be changing from this month, we will now be open from 9:00am to 4:30pm, Monday to Thursday and then 9:00am to 2:30pm on a Friday. We have needed to increase our office hours as we are very busy in the office. The increased operating hours will make it easier for people to contact us. As always we are contactable via email and our social media accounts after hours.

Throughout the year we like to share the journeys of our members, sharing helps to raise awareness of amputation or limb loss, it help support individuals who have just lost a limb by seeing the accomplishments, resilience and strength that people have and how they find new ways to accomplish every day tasks. If you would like to share your journey, please contact me so that we can include it in any upcoming newsletters.

We are looking forward to keeping you up to date with everything that 2024 brings!

Lynde

Lynda Tilley | State Coordinator

The Amputees Queensland Inc. is partially funded by Queensland Health.

Amputations in Australia

Limb amputation is one of the earliest forms of surgery, allowing a person to survive severe injuries and infections. Historically the main causes of amputation were trauma and wound infections.

However in first world countries trauma is no longer the main cause of amputations because:

- Emergency medicine has greatly improved and more limbs are saved because a person can be transported to hospital quickly.
- Some amputated limbs can now be reattached with microsurgery.
- The number of workplace accidents have dropped significantly due to Health and Safety laws.
- Surgical sterilisation techniques and antibiotics control most infections.

In a modernised country such as Australia the main causes of amputations are vascular disease and diabetes. Other causes of amputation are traumatic injuries, infections, tumours and congenital deformities.

Vascular Disease: Vascular disease occurs when the arteries in the legs become blocked. This condition can happen to anyone but is more severe in patients with diabetes. The narrowed arteries prevent the heart from pumping enough oxygenated blood to the feet, resulting in severe pain in the legs, foot ulcerations and ultimately gangrene of the toes/foot.

Diabetes: Diabetes is the cause of half of the amputations performed in Queensland. Diabetes does not just increase the severity of vascular disease it also reduces feeling in the feet and slows wound healing; resulting in foot ulcers. People with diabetes are more prone to skin infections and gangrene or sepsis may occur, resulting in amputation.



Trauma: Trauma resulting in amputation is most frequently related to motorcycle, motor vehicle and industrial accidents.

Other causes are home accidents and burns. Most upper limb amputations are caused by traumatic injury. Trauma is the most common cause of amputation for young adults.

PEER SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS

ACACIA RIDGE Mary Woods 0407 623 762

BRAY PARK Kevin & Ann Holding 0415 558 974 BUNDABERG

0456 995 358

BEAUDESERT

Norm Urquhart

Jan Baldock 0409 492 363

GYMPIE

Anne Barron

07 5481 1361

KINGAROY

07 4162 3126

MACKAY

Gina Bird

0414 915 540

Wayne Stenning

Marcia Andersen

TANAH MERAH

07 4942 2334

BIRKDALE Allan Churchward 0407 580 403

CAIRNS Bernie Wolland 07 4098 5607

GOLD COAST Tracey Prosser 5528 8190

LOGAN VILLAGE Kevin McIntosh 07 5546 3843

MARSDEN Chris Rice 0410 331 599

SUNSHINE COAST Peter Williams 0421 443 813

CARINA Phil Taylor 07 3398 8722

GREENSLOPES Sid Dyson

0435 898 043

ROCHEDALE Darren Wyer 0434 036 869

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Josh Jones 0499 773 788

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DATES

MARCH		APRIL			МАҮ		
	6th	Driving Safety	3rd	Health & Wellbeing		1st Exercise - Osteoporosis	
	17th	Sunshine Coast Group*	21st	Sunshine Coast Group*		10th Mother's Day Luncheon	
	20th	Logan Libraries	24th	Grocery Bingo	1	15th Advanced Care Planning	
	27th	Grocery Bingo				19th Sunshine Coast Group*	
		, ,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,				22nd Grocery Bingo	

All sessions will be at our offices at Ben Matthews Playground Community Centre, Logan Central unless otherwise marked.

* Sunshine Coast Support Group Get Together's will be held at Maroochy River Golf Club, 374-514 David Low Way, Bli Bli at 10am. Please RSVP sunshinecoast@afsg.org.au or call 0475 052 980.

ÖSSUR.

CONNECT WITH THE ÖSSUR FAMILY HUB

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alendar

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Join Össur's community for amputees and elevate your learning experience. Connect with other amputees, access exclusive information and resources, and stay up to date with the latest advancements in prosthetic technology. Expand your horizons with captivating user stories, event announcements, webinars, clinics, and technology updates. Embrace the future of possibilities and join our Össur Family Hub community today.

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Queensland Government concession information and contact details

The Queensland Government provides a range of concessions to eligible concession card holders. These concessions help you save on your household costs, energy, medical, travel and leisure costs.

This information sheet highlights some of the principal concessions. Further information is available at www.qld.gov.au/concessions

The information was correct at the time of printing and is subject to change. Please check the website for the most up-to-date information.

Household concessions

(PCC & Gold Card)

Pensioner Rate Subsidy:

To apply for the subsidy, contact your local council whose contact details appear on your rates notice.

South East Queensland Water Subsidy:

To apply for the subsidy (if you reside in the South East Queensland water grid area), contact your local water distributor-retailer or council whose contact details appear on your water account.

Energy concessions

(PCC, HCC, Gold Card (Veterans' Affairs Gold Card and receive the War Widow/er Pension or special rate TPI Pension), Seniors Card)

Electricity rebate: PCC, HCC, Gold Card (Veterans' Affairs Gold Card and receive the War Widow/er Pension or special rate TPI Pension), Seniors Card and Asylum Seekers

To apply for the rebate, contact your energy retailer whose contact details appear on your energy account.

Reticulated natural gas rebate: PCC, Gold Card (Veterans' Affairs Gold Card and receive the War Widow/er Pension or special rate TPI Pension), Seniors Card

To apply for the rebate, contact your energy retailer whose contact details appear on your energy account.

Electricity Life Support (PCC, HCC, Seniors Card) or Medical Cooling/Heating Electricity concession: (PCC & HCC)

- These concessions assist seriously ill people who use life support equipment or medically required air conditioning – conditions apply.
- For more information, contact Smart Service Queensland on 13 QGOV (13 74 68).

Medical concessions

(PCC, Gold Card, Seniors Card)

Spectacle Supply Scheme:

- Provides a range of free basic prescription spectacles.
- For more information, contact Queensland Health on 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84).

Dental:

- Free dental treatment, including the provision of dentures, is available at public dental clinics and hospitals.
- For more information on available dental services, contact your nearest Queensland Oral Health Service directly.
- Contact details are available at www.qld.gov.au/health/ services/oral-eye-ear/dental-services#locations

Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme:

- Provides funding for a range of aids and equipment.
- For more information, visit www.health.qld.gov.au/mass or call Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme on Toll free number: 1300 443 570.



Transport concessions (PCC, DVA Gold/White Card, Seniors Card)

Local bus, ferry and Citytrain travel:

- A 50 per cent concession is available on the normal adult fare on public transport services.
- For more information, visit www.translink.com.au, call TransLink on 13 12 30 or contact your local transport operator.

Long distance train travel:

- A 50 per cent concession available on the normal adult fare on Traveltrain long distance services.
- Rail vouchers for specific pension types on intrastate rail travel.
- For more information, contact Queensland Rail on 1300 131 722.

Interstate public transport:

 Public transport concessions that apply to residents also apply to visiting pensioners and seniors when travelling in other states and territories.

Motor vehicle registration: (PCC, Gold Card, Seniors Card)

- A 50 per cent reduction on the registration fee component of the total registration amount payable is available for motorbikes, motor vehicles and motorised caravans.
- Available on one vehicle, registered in the owner's name for private use only.
- You and your spouse can receive only one concession between you.
- For more information, contact Department of Transport and Main Roads on 13 23 80.

Leisure savings

Recreational freshwater fishing permit:

- A discount is available on a Stocked Impoundment Permit.
- For more information, contact Department of Agriculture and Fisheries on 13 25 23.

Museums and art galleries:

- Concessions are available on the admission price and/ or some major exhibitions through the Queensland Museum Network and the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA), South Bank.
- For more information about the Queensland Museum Network, visit www.qm.qld.gov.au or phone 3840 7555.
- For more information about the Queensland Art Gallery and GOMA visit
 www.qagoma.qld.gov.au or phone 3840 7303.

Other important contact details

Services Australia (Centrelink) – Seniors services	13 23 00
Services Australia (Centrelink) -	6
Disability, sickness and carers	13 27 17
Department of Veterans' Affairs	1800 555 254
Regional callers	13 32 54

For information about aged care services and the supports available you can call My Aged Care on 1800 200 422.

In some areas the Australian Government now offers face-to-face advice about aged care services and supports. To find more go to servicesaustralia.gov.au/myagedcarefacetoface or call 1800 227 475.

Elder Abuse Prevention Unit	1300 651 192			
Legal Aid Queensland	1300 651 188			
Queensland Meals on Wheels www.qmow.org	1300 909 790			
Seniors Enquiry Line	1300 135 500			
Taxi Subsidy Scheme and Vision Impairment Travel Pass	1300 134 755			
Volunteering Qld https://volunteeringqld.org.au	1800 994 100			
PCC – Pensioner Concession Card				

HCC - Health Care Card

Gold Card – also known as Department of Veterans Affairs All Conditions Card.

Seniors Card – Seniors Card and Seniors Card+go (not including Seniors Business Discount Card).

For further information regarding concessions, please call 13 QGOV (13 74 68) or visit www.qld.gov.au/concessions

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Managing One Handed!

The loss of use of an upper limb (arm and hand), totally or partially, can occur through amputation, trauma to the limb or surgery, and some neurological, neuromuscular and congenital conditions.

If you have lost the use of your upper limb your ability to manage everyday activities might be affected in a number of ways. You may have only one upper limb, or have little or no function in an upper limb because of reduced strength, impaired sensation and poor muscle control. You may have lost the use of your previously dominant hand. If you have had a stroke, your memory, mobility, coordination, balance as well as the ability to do two-handed activities may be affected.

Whatever the cause, loss of ability to use an upper limb affects the way you are able to perform daily living and personal care tasks. There are many ways in which people have been able to adapt to the loss or use of their upper limb, and these often do not require the use of assistive aids. However, for some people, assistive equipment can greatly enhance their ability to perform everyday tasks.

Strategies for managing activities with one hand!

Stabilise objects

Stopping an object from moving will make it easier to perform a task with one hand. This could be achieved by securing the object to a firm surface with an aid such as a clamp, or by putting it on a slip resistant material. You may be able to use your residual limb, or body to hold the object in position.

Learn new ways of doing things

There are techniques for self-care, dressing, cooking etc and an occupational therapist will be able to assist you through this process in learning new ways to doing things. Over time you will develop your own way of doing things, whether this is with your residual limb or a prosthetic.



Try equipment

Martin Jansen, OT

Some adapted or specialised devices make tasks easier. Choose items carefully. Buy equipment that will help you overcome the limitations imposed by your limb loss and enable you to function more efficiently. All equipment should be versatile, durable and easy to clean. Some items can be purchased from large hardware outlets, houseware shops and department stores, or ordered from suppliers online.

Speak to your prosthetist in relation to your prosthetic requirements, there are many options depending on your level of amputation or lifestyle.

Reference: A Handy Guide to Managing Everyday Activities with One Hand. Ilctas How to Live One-Handed After an Injury or Amputation. By

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Managing One Handed cont.

Practical Tips!!

Self Care - Bathing and showering

Long handled brushes and sponges, with shower gel applied, can enable you to wash hard to reach places.

Soap in a wash mitt can help you to manage soap with one hand. Soap can be suspended in a stocking tied to taps, rail or wrist, this is useful if you have difficulty bending to pick up soap.

Items in pump style bottles with one touch or touch free sensors can supply liquid soap, toothpaste, hand lotion, shampoo and other personal cleansing products.

A single lever mixer tap can be operated with one hand. Mixer taps can be installed in showers or over basins and sinks. Electronic sensor taps regulate water flow without the need to physically turn taps.

Toileting

If bottom wiping is difficult, a bidet unit which replaces a conventional toilet seat can be fitted. These fit most standard toilets.

Hair care

Flip top or pump action shampoo and conditioner bottles may be a helpful alternative to screw top bottles.

A portable stand holds a hair dryer steady for one-handed styling or drying.

Use a one handed hair tie for longer hair.

Medication management

Pill splitters can come in handy as can a long handled aid to assist in applying creams and lotions.

Dental Care

Toothpaste dispensers are available for the wall. Toothbrush holders are also available so that you can squeeze toothpaste onto the brush.

Alternatively you can place your brush on the bench and squeeze the toothpaste onto it first.

Electric tooth brushes are also available to make brushing your teeth easier.

Floss picks allow you to continue flossing even with one hand.

Adaptive Clothing

Getting dressed is one of the most frustrating tasks to do with one hand. Regular clothes with buttons and other tricky closures simply need two hands to operate. Some assistive devices, such as one-handed button hooks, can make the process feasible, but are still time-consuming and can be frustrating to operate. There are options that you can consider like adaptive clothing that is designed specifically to be donned with one hand. These clothes feature pull-on styles that skip closures altogether or employ innovative closures such as magnets to make it easy to get dressed with one hand.

Shoe Tying

Tying shoes is another difficult task to do with one hand. However, one handed shoelace tying is possible! If lacing your shoes doesn't sound appealing, individuals can replace their standard



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Practical Tips!!

Kitchen

Gadgets -There are a plethora of kitchen gadgets designed for one-handed use. Some of the most popular devices are automated jar and can openers and cutting boards with stainless steel pins to hold things in place while you chop, but there are many different ones available to suit various needs. "Regular" automated kitchen products, such as electric mixers and automated vegetable peelers, will also make cooking easier on you.



Non-slip silicone pads - One of the most difficult things about living with one hand is not having an extra hand to stabilise an object while you work with it. To remedy this, get non-slip silicone pads and leave them on surfaces around your house such as kitchen counters, bathroom counters, nightstands and end tables. Then, whenever you need to open a jar or something else, you can use the silicone pad to hold it in place and prevent it from slipping.



Driving

You may still be able to drive your car, with a few modifications. A steering wheel knob will give you a better grip, especially during turns (it's also great for people with arthritis or other limited mobility in the hands).

If you have trouble working your lights or wipers, you may be able to get your vehicle modified so that the controls are on the floorboard and you can operate them with your foot instead of your hand.

You may also be able to find an adapted vehicle that already has these controls built in instead of trying to find a mechanic to make the modifications for you.

Whether you are in recovering and learning to embrace the aftereffects of an injury, amputation or limb difference, performing everyday tasks with limited arm function is challenging - but not impossible!

With the right planning and a little creativity, you can (and will!) adapt to your body's capabilities, and continue to live an independent, joyful life.





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When: Wednesday, 28 February 2024 Wednesday, 27 March 2024 Wednesday, 24 April 2024

Time: 9.00am (9:45am heads down)

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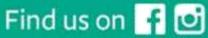
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