

A STEP AHEAD

WINTER EDITION 2025



Amputees
Queensland

CENTRAL OFFICE

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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 Winter Edition of A Step Ahead!!

It has been very busy in the office and it feels like we've blinked and are already nearly half way through the year!!



Amputees Queensland have been busy advocating for changes to the Queensland Artificial Limb Scheme (QALS) Guidelines. QALS funds one standard prosthetic limb for each amputated limb for over 65's. The current guidelines do not take into account or consideration an individuals quality of life, health or lifestyle, we believe that the scope of the QALS guidelines must be expanded to provide people with the appropriate prosthetic for their individual requirements with a strong clinical justification. If you would like more information or to discuss this, please call the office.

We have continued with our information sessions on the first and third Wednesday of every month, we have also held some great events so far this year with several more coming up in the coming months.

Our Annual Christmas in July function is coming up and will take place on Friday, 18 July and our Annual General Meeting will take place on Saturday, 30 August followed by a delicious FREE BBQ lunch for members.

Just a reminder that we are also still holding our FREE adaptive exercise programs at our offices in Logan Central. We provide all abilities Tai Chi and a physio designed program called Fun & Fit which is also a fully adaptive program that anybody can join.

All our events, information sessions and news is kept updated on our website, socials and e-news, keep a look out for the new social/support group meetings near you!

It is also time for our Annual Membership Draw, all individuals who join between 1 May and 31 July will go into the draw to win one of four prizes. First prize will be a \$100 Coles Myer Voucher, second prize will be a \$50 Coles Myer Voucher, third prize will be a \$25 Coles Myer Voucher and the fourth prize will be 1 year free membership. The Membership Draw will be drawn on Monday, 4 August 2025 at our offices in Logan Central.

If you would like to share your limb loss journey in the A Step Ahead, please contact me. The sharing of your journey helps individuals who have just lost a limb by seeing the accomplishments, resilience and strength that individuals have and how they have found new ways to accomplish every day tasks.



Lynda Tilley | State Coordinator

PEER SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS

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Norm Urquhart
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BIRKDALE

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Lindsay Isenberg
0402 753 148

IPSWICH

Nathan Schuh
0434 067 299

"Any one of us could be affected by an unexpected life event or illness where peer support will be vital to our recovery and wellbeing"



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.

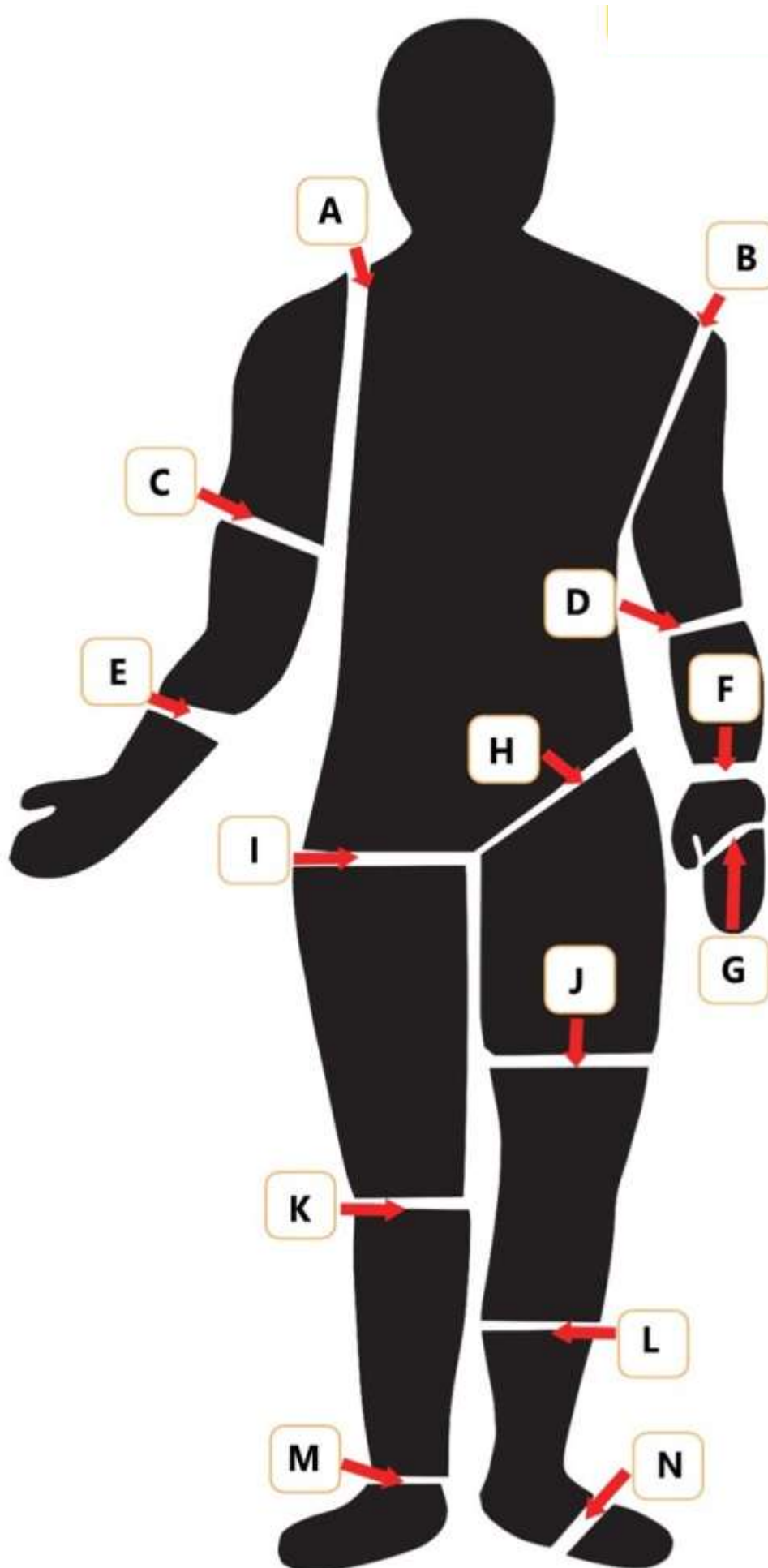
Diabetes: Diabetes is the cause of half of the amputations performed in Queensland. Diabetes does not just increase the severity of vascular disease it also reduces feeling in the feet and slows wound healing; resulting in foot ulcers. People with diabetes are more prone to skin infections and gangrene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

Amputation Levels & Names



A: Forequarter

B: Shoulder disarticulation
(through shoulder)

C: Trans-humeral
(above elbow)

D: Elbow disarticulation
(through elbow)

E: Trans-radial
(below elbow)

F: Wrist disarticulation
(through wrist)

G: Trans-carpal
(partial hand)

H: Hemiplevectomy
(through hip)

I: Hip Disarticulation
(through hip)

J: Trans-femoral
(above knee)

K: Knee disarticulation
(through knee)

L: Trans-tibial
(below knee)

M: Ankle disarticulation
(Syme)

N: Partial foot
(Chopart)

A man with a prosthetic leg is running on a paved path. He is wearing a light blue t-shirt, dark shorts, and a watch. The background shows a scenic view of a river and trees under a clear sky.

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DATES FOR THE DIARY

JUNE

4th Staying Nourished
15th Sunshine Coast Get
Together Luncheon
18th Staying Socially Fit
25th Grocery Bingo

JULY

18th Christmas in July
20th Sunshine Coast Get
Together
23rd Grocery Bingo

AUGUST

11th Logan Ekka Holiday
17th Sunshine Coast Get
Together
27th Grocery Bingo
30th AGM & Lunch

All information sessions and support group details will be updated on the website and in our socials!

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 admin@afsg.org.au or call 0475 052 980.



CONNECT WITH THE ÖSSUR FAMILY HUB

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, clinics, and technology updates. Embrace the future of possibilities and join our Össur Family Hub community today.



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Caring for the Caregiver

Being a caregiver is one of the most selfless roles a person can take on. It's a journey filled with love, commitment, and resilience - but it can also be exhausting, overwhelming, and, at times, isolating. Whether you're a family member, a close friend, or a dedicated support system, caregiving requires physical, emotional, and mental strength.

Yet, every caregiver needs to hear: **Your well-being is just as important as the person you care for!**

Taking care of yourself isn't a luxury - it's a necessity. When you prioritise your health, you're better equipped to provide the best care possible. Below are practical steps to help manage stress, avoid burnout, and create a balanced approach to caregiving.

Fuel Your Body: Nutrition That Supports You

Eat well-balanced meals. A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains provides the energy you need to stay strong.

Plan ahead. Make extra portions when cooking and freeze them for quick, healthy meals.

Avoid fast food. While convenient, it lacks the nutrients your body needs to function at its best.

Stay hydrated. Water is your best friend—keep a bottle nearby and sip throughout the day.

Limit caffeine intake. If you rely on coffee for energy, try switching to water or a healthy snack instead. Too much caffeine can disrupt sleep and increase stress.

Rest and Recharge: Sleep is Essential

Prioritise sleep. A good night's rest isn't a luxury—it's vital to your health. Lack of sleep can increase stress and weaken your immune system.

Stick to a schedule. Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.

Avoid caffeine and alcohol before bed. They may interfere with sleep quality.

Try relaxation techniques. Deep breathing, meditation, or light stretching before bed can help ease your mind.

Talk to your doctor. If sleep issues persist, seek professional advice.

Move Your Body: Physical Health and Exercise

Schedule checkups. Your health matters. Regular doctor visits ensure you stay in top form.

Find activities you enjoy. Exercise doesn't have to be a chore. Whether it's a walk, swimming, or gardening, staying active boosts both physical and mental health.

Combine social time with movement. Invite a friend for a walk—it's a great way to stay connected while getting exercise.

Stretch daily. It's free, takes only a few minutes, and helps relieve tension.

Take short walks. A 35-minute walk several times a week can significantly improve your mood and reduce stress.





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Emotional Well-Being: Check In with Yourself

Acknowledge your feelings. Caregiving can be overwhelming. Take a moment to reflect on how you're doing emotionally.

Talk to someone you trust. Don't bottle up stress. Whether it's a friend, family member, or counsellor, sharing your thoughts can help.

Keep a journal. Writing down your thoughts can help you recognize patterns and identify areas where you need support.

Know your limits. When stress becomes unmanageable, it's time to seek help.

Try calming techniques. Deep breathing, yoga, or meditation can be powerful tools to reset your mindset.

Find an activity that brings you joy. Whether it's listening to music, reading, or taking a drive, find time for something that's just for you.

Avoid unhealthy coping mechanisms. Alcohol, excessive work, or other distractions won't solve the root of stress and may make things worse.

Spend time with pets. Studies show that time with animals can reduce anxiety and improve overall well-being.

Recognize the signs of depression. If you experience persistent sadness, loss of appetite, trouble sleeping, or difficulty concentrating, reach out to a healthcare professional.

Accept Help: You Don't Have to Do This Alone

Take breaks. Your well-being matters. Reach out to family, friends, or local organizations for respite care options.

Let others help. Keep a list of tasks that others can take on—whether it's grocery shopping, cooking, or household chores.

Be specific about what you need. Instead of a general request for help, identify exactly what would make your life easier.

Join a caregiver support group. Connecting with others who understand your journey can be a lifeline.



Prioritize Yourself: Self-Care is Non-Negotiable

Make time for yourself. Even a few minutes a day can make a difference.

Accept help when offered. It's okay to lean on others.

Reward yourself. Whether it's watching a movie, going out to dinner, or treating yourself to something small, recognize your efforts.

Nurture your spiritual side. If spirituality is important to you, take time to engage in prayer, meditation, or community activities.

Recognise the value of your role. You are making a difference. Caregiving is an act of love, and your dedication matters.

You are Not Alone

Support is available, and taking care of yourself is not just important—it's essential! Need support?

Arafmi QLD: A 24-hour Carer Support Line (1800 351 881) provides support, resources, and coping skills. Tel: 07 3254 1881

Carer Gateway: This service provides support planning, counselling, peer support, tailored support packages, and respite care. Tel: 1800 422 737

Carers QLD: Offers various support services, including a helpline and an email address for inquiries. Tel: 1300 747 636

Carer Support Line: A 24-hour helpline provides support and guidance to carers. Tel: 1300 554 660

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Raffles, lucky door prizes and more!
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Where: Ben Matthews Playground Community Centre
47-55 Ellen Street, Logan Central

When: Friday, 18 July 2025

Cost: \$25 per person (m) | \$32.50 per person (nm)

Time: 11:30am for 12pm lunch

RSVP: Monday, 7 July 2024 on 3290 4293 or email
admin@afsg.org.au



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Simply join or renew your current membership by 10:30am on 1 August to go in the draw to win one of the following prizes!

1st prize: \$100 gift voucher

2nd prize: \$50 gift voucher

3rd prize: \$25 gift voucher

4th prize: One year free membership

All memberships paid between 1 May and 31 July 2025 will automatically be entered into the draw!

The prizes will be drawn at our offices at Logan Central on Monday, 4 August 2025

Winner will be notified by phone.



Amputees
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www.amputeesqld.org.au/membership



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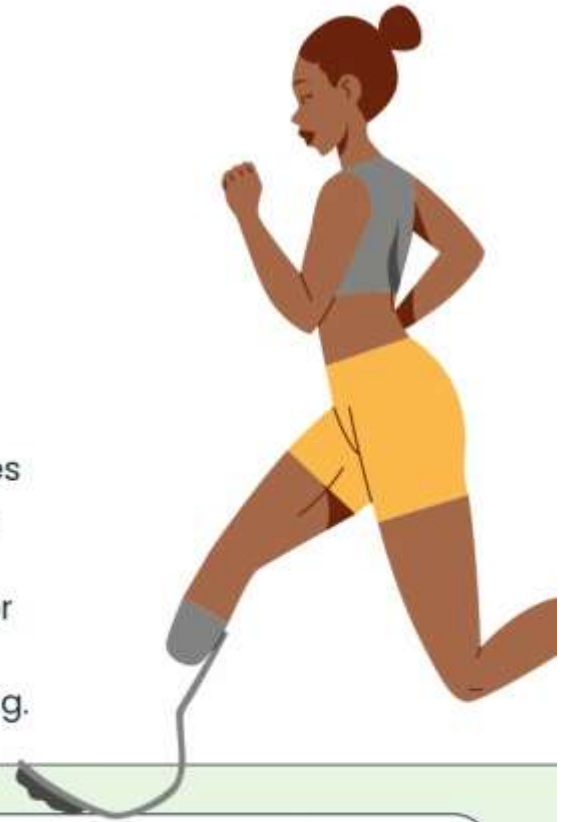
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FOOT HEALTH: WHY IT MATTERS MORE THAN EVER

By Judi Khun, Podiatrist, Solemate Podiatry

Foot care often goes unnoticed—until something goes wrong. But for amputees, maintaining healthy feet is not just important, it's critical. Whether your amputation was due to diabetes, vascular disease, or trauma, proactive foot care plays a vital role in protecting your remaining limb and overall well-being.



WHY FOOT HEALTH MATTERS

Up to 50% of amputations are linked to diabetes-related complications like foot ulcers or infections. For those with limb loss, the risk of developing similar problems in the remaining limb is significantly higher. Preserving the health of your foot helps you stay mobile, independent, and pain-free.

Seeing a podiatrist early can also help protect your remaining limb, prevent serious complications, and maintain mobility.



COMMON FOOT ISSUES AMPUTEES MAY FACE

Living with limb loss often leads to additional stress on the remaining foot. Common problems include:

- Calluses and pressure sores from uneven weight distribution
- Foot ulcers, especially in people with diabetes or reduced sensation
- Infections that can escalate quickly due to circulation problems
- Ingrown toenails, which can become serious if not treated
- Joint pain or arthritis, caused by gait changes or prosthetic use
- Peripheral Artery Disease (PAD)—reduced blood flow that slows healing and increases ulcer risk



ESSENTIAL DAILY FOOT CARE TIPS

- ① Wash and dry feet daily, paying attention to areas between the toes
- ② Inspect feet for cuts, redness, swelling, or blisters - Tip: Use a mirror if you can't see the bottom of your foot
- ③ Moisturize the skin, but avoid applying between the toes
- ④ Trim toenails straight across, not too short
- ⑤ Wear properly fitted shoes to prevent friction and blisters
- ⑥ Avoid walking barefoot, especially if you have reduced sensation

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Can I claim my private health?

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Every Dollar Counts...What is Available!

Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Scheme

The Medical Cooling and Heating Electricity Concession Scheme helps with electricity costs for people who have a chronic medical condition, such as multiple sclerosis, autonomic system dysfunction, significant burns or a severe inflammatory skin condition, which is aggravated by changes in temperature.

It currently provides \$502.98 (including GST) per year to eligible applicants (eligibility is reviewed every two years).

Eligibility

You must be a Queensland resident and have a qualifying medical condition and need cooling or heating to stop your symptoms becoming significantly worse. Qualifying medical conditions include:

- o multiple sclerosis
- o autonomic system dysfunction
- o loss of skin integrity or sweating capacity
- o severe compromise of functioning such as mobility at extremes of environmental temperature
- o hypersensitivity to extremes of environmental temperature leading to increased pain or other discomfort or an increased risk of complications and
- o live at your principal place of residence, which has an air-conditioning or heating unit.

The applicant and/or legal guardian of a minor with a qualifying medical condition must:

- hold a current Services Australia or Department of Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card or a current Services Australia Health Care Card and
- be financially responsible for paying the electricity bill.

If you are already receiving the Electricity Rebate or other energy concessions, you can apply for this concession.

Full details of eligibility for the concession including qualifying medical conditions, are listed on the application form. Your medical specialist must fill out the medical certification section.

How to apply

To apply, complete the MCHCES application form online or call 13 QGOV (13 74 68).

If your application is successful, you'll receive \$502.98 per year, with pro-rata quarterly payments into your bank account.

For more information, visit the website: <https://www.qld.gov.au/community/cost-of-living-support/concessions/medical-concessions/medical-cooling-heating-electricity-concession-scheme>





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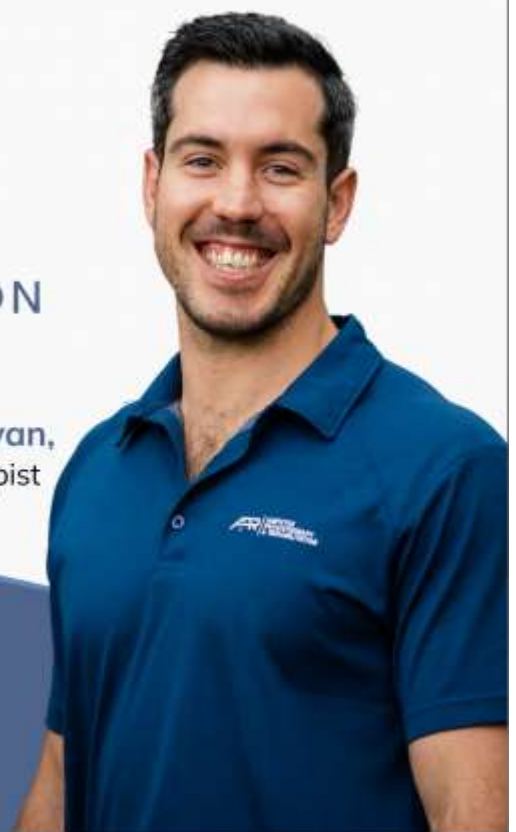



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Shea Teevan,
Physiotherapist



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Medicinal Cannabis

Is Medicinal Cannabis for you?

Rise Dispensary have given us some general information on medicinal cannabis to share! Always speak to your health professional in relation to your own personal needs and requirements.

Do your Research

It is a good idea to research Tetrahydrocannabinol (*THC*) and Cannabidiol (*CBD*) so that you are familiar with the effects and side effects of these cannabinoids (cannabis components).

CBD and THC

Cannabinoids are naturally occurring compounds found in the Cannabis Sativa plant. Of over 480 different compounds present in the plant, only around 66 are termed Cannabinoids.

The Cannabinoids are most abundant in the female flower head which is used in the manufacture of medicinal cannabis products. The most well-known among these compounds is THC, the main psychoactive ingredient in cannabis.

The main Cannabinoids in cannabis are THC and CBD. THC is the most well-known due to its psychoactive properties and therefore its prevalence within the black market which has been specifically cultivated to get its user 'high.' THC may also be responsible for some of the medicinal effects of cannabis, such as reduction of nausea, vomiting, pain, and muscle spasms as well as improvements in sleep and appetite.

CBD has been found to reduce the 'high' and may be effective for seizures, pain and may also reduce anxiety. CBD causes no 'high' feeling and patients can drive when using CBD.

Different cannabis strains contain different ratios of THC to CBD. Medicinal cannabis with THC is considered a controlled drug under Schedule 8(S8) of the Poisons Standard. From 1 June 2015, CBD has been included under Schedule 4 (S4) Prescription Only Medicine of the Poisons Standard when preparations for therapeutic use contain 2% or less of other cannabinoids found in cannabis.

Medicinal cannabis comes in a variety of forms with varying combinations of cannabinoids (ie THC/CBD), flower, bud oils, liquid capsules, oromucosal spray, patches and gels. Administration of dosages is either orally through spray, oils, capsules or tablets, inhaled via vaporisation, using a vaporiser approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) as a medical device or sourced by the patient or through the skin with patches, topical gel or a topical cream.

There are two types of medicinal cannabis dosing, regular dosing for control of a consistent symptom/condition or required dosing for an intermittent symptom/condition. In both cases, patients should try to use the minimum effective dose. This is achieved by starting at a low dose as instructed by your doctor and gradually increasing your dose until you either have symptom or condition relief, you have a side effect, or you reach the maximum dose prescribed by your doctor.





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Medicinal Cannabis cont.

What's Next

The first step is to talk to your regular GP about using medicinal cannabis as a treatment. If the condition is new, your GP is likely to recommend that you try other conventional treatments first. Before prescribing medicinal cannabis, the doctor will assess each patient to decide if the treatment is appropriate for their condition and individual circumstances. The doctor will also consider the patient's current medications and any other things that may interact with medicinal cannabis prescriptions.

Access

Access to medicinal cannabis is generally via the Federal Government's Special Access Scheme B (SAS B). Approval or authorisation for patients to access medicinal cannabis is granted on a case-by-case basis and governed by the TGA. In order to access medicinal cannabis, the TGA will consider any chronic condition that has lasted 3 months or more and has not responded to conventional treatments/ medications.

Consent

You will need to give informed consent and sign that you will not drive a vehicle or operate heavy machinery if the medicinal cannabis contains THC.

Driving

THC is the main psychoactive component of some cannabis. Some medicinal cannabis products have no THC and thus are non-psychoactive. Research has shown that THC use has an effect on a person's ability to drive. Unlike alcohol, there is currently no specific concentration of THC that authorities can use as an indicator of impairment.

It is illegal for any patient being treated with medicinal cannabis containing THC to drive while undergoing treatment.

Each dispensary will have their own access process and to establish your eligibility under the regulations you will need a referral letter from your GP.

This information is very general and any further questions or queries should be directed to your GP.





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How to Protect Yourself from Identity Theft!

Australian's reported 20,939 instances of identity theft to Scamwatch in 2020 which totalled to \$3,072,287 in losses. According to Scamwatch's raw data, Australian's reported losing \$10,159,930 in 2021. This is a 230% increase in just one year.

What is Identify Theft?

Identity theft is the term used when a person uses another person's identity without their permission.

Scammers may trick you into giving them your personal information. Examples of this include: phone call from "Telstra" wanting to update your account details; a text message from "Australia Post" wanting to confirm your delivery details.

Depending on the information the Scammer has access to, they may be able to:

- ♦ gain access to your bank account and steal your money
- ♦ open new bank accounts, take out loans or lines of credit in your name
- ♦ open phone plans in your name or other contracts
- ♦ buy expensive goods in your name
- ♦ gain access to your superannuation
- ♦ gain access to your government online services
- ♦ access your email to discover even more sensitive information
- ♦ access your social media accounts and impersonate you to scam your family and friends



BBQ LUNCH

**Join us for a BBQ lunch
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BBQ lunch | Dessert Buffet | Cheese & Crackers

Lucky Door Prize | Raffles

Live Entertainment

Where: Ben Matthews Playground Community Centre
47-55 Ellen Street, Logan Central

When: Saturday, 30 August 2025

Time: 11:30am to 2:30pm

Cost: FREE (members)
\$10 (non member)

RSVP & Bookings Essential.
Telephone: 07 3290 4293



How to Protect Yourself from Identity Theft cont....

It is really important to protect our personal information in order to prevent being taken advantage of. Here a few ways we can protect ourselves:

- ♦ Be cautious of who you share your personal details with
- ♦ Be suspicious of all incoming communication and verify their identity
- ♦ Do not open any suspicious incoming communication - delete suspicious emails and text messages. Block phone numbers of suspected scammers.
- ♦ If you are asked to grant access for someone to remote access your device, decline
- ♦ Choose difficult to guess passwords, update regularly and do not share them with anyone
- ♦ Use anti-virus software and secure your networks and devices with passwords
- ♦ Place a padlock on your mailbox
- ♦ Shred or destroy any personal documents you no longer require
- ♦ Consider what you are sharing on social media.

Referral Pathways

If you are concerned your personal information has been shared or that someone has used your identity without your permission, you can call the Seniors Enquiry Line to discuss your concerns and make a plan.

Some steps we may recommend include:

- ♦ Contacting your financial institutions immediately.
- ♦ If you have shared copies of your identification, you may need to contact the relevant identification issuer ie. Department of Transport and Main Roads, Medicare, Centrelink, Australian Taxation Office.
- ♦ IDCare - which is a free, government-funded service which provides support to people who have been affected by identity theft or cyber scams.
- ♦ Get a free copy of your credit report. Credit reports detail our credit history and we should review them occasionally to ensure that no one is applying for lines of credit in our name.

For more information you can contact:

Seniors Enquiry Line
Phone: 1300 135 500
Email: sel@uccommunity.org.au
Website: www.seniorsenquiryline.com.au

The Seniors Enquiry Line is a free, telephone helpline which provides information and referral support to Seniors, friends and family.





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GROCERY BINGO

**Grocery Prizes | Lucky Door Prize | Raffles
Lunch | Onsite Parking**

When: Wednesday, 25 June 2025
Wednesday, 23 July 2025
Wednesday, 27 August 2025

Time: 9.00am (9:30am heads down)

Cost: \$15 per person (includes 20 games, lunch & a lucky door raffle ticket)

Where: Ben Mathews Playground
47-55 Ellen Street, Logan Central

RSVP is essential for catering purposes.

RSVP to Lynda on 3290 4293 on the Friday before each Bingo session.





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Mindful Movements

Mindful Movements enhances balance, strength and coordination as well as physical and mental health. Join Phil Hopes from Ambient Training for a morning of FREE seated or standing Tai Chi, meet new people and have some fun!

You will need a water bottle, small towel and wear nice comfortable clothing that is easy to move in.

Mindful Movements is a **Healthy Ageing Hub** event, empowering older people to confidently manager their own health and wellbeing in the community.

Date: Every Tuesday

Where: Ben Matthews Playground Community Centre
47-55 Ellen Street, Logan Central

Time: 9:30am - 10:30am

RSVP: Please contact Lynda on 3290 4293 or email admin@afsg.org.au if you have any enquires

This activity is supported by funding from the Australian Government through Brisbane South PHN.





FREE

Chiropractic Care

Did you know that Chiropractors may help with neck pain, headaches, shoulder pain, back pain, arthritis, stiffness and soreness.

Date: Every Tuesday

Where: Ben Matthews Playground Community Centre
47-55 Ellen Street, Logan Central

Time: 10am to 1pm (by appointment only)

Please contact Lynda on 3290 4293 for an appointment.



MEMBERSHIP FORM



Amputees Queensland

Date: _____ ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Name: _____

Partner: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Limb/s amputated: _____

Cause of amputation: _____

Membership Contribution

Yearly membership - (1 July to 30 June)

☐ \$15 Individual ☐ \$20 Families/ Pensioner Families ☐ \$25 Organisations

☐ I would like to make a donation of \$ _____

☐ I would like someone to contact me about volunteering.

☐ I have paid via direct deposit to Heritage Bank | BSB: 638070 | Account: 11471050.
Please us first initial and surname in the reference field.

☐ I have paid via pay pal at www.amputeesqld.org.au

☐ I enclose my Cheque / Money Order to the value of \$ _____
for membership and/or donation.

Signature.....Date:.....

Complete application and return with payment to:

Amputees Queensland Inc.
PO Box 31, Kingston QLD 4114
Email: admin@afsg.org.au
Telephone: 07 3290 4293

A man with a prosthetic leg is surfing on a blue surfboard. He is wearing a black wetsuit and is captured in a dynamic pose, leaning forward as he rides a wave. The background shows a sunset or sunrise over the ocean, with a bright sun low on the horizon and a cloudy sky. The overall mood is one of freedom and adventure.

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Caleb

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