

A STEP AHEAD

SPRING EDITION 2026



CENTRAL OFFICE

Ben Mathews Playground Community Centre
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Friday 9:00am to 2:30pm

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From the Office!

Welcome to the Spring Edition of A Step Ahead!!

The year is going by so quickly, I cannot believe that we are in September already, before we know it Christmas will be here!



We have had a jam packed few months and will continue to be busy until the end of the year with our events, functions and information sessions. The biggest event we have coming up is our 40th Anniversary morning tea on 9 October, we are holding this during Amputee Awareness Week which runs from 4 to 11 October.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 29 August 2026 although it just feels like yesterday that we held the last one!

Let's welcome our new Management Committee:

Lindsay Isenberg, President
Darren Wyer, Vice President
Amin Gardner, Secretary
Susan Merry, Treasurer
Chris Rice, Committee
Shirley Collier, Committee

Congratulations to the new Committee, I look forward to working with you all.

I would like to make a special mention of Judi Corrigan who has been volunteering with Amputees Queensland for 9 years in both the office and as Secretary. Judi has been a great asset to Amputees Queensland, we wish her all the best and will miss her in the office.

We are so lucky here at Amputees Queensland to be surrounded by amazing volunteers and staff who go above and beyond throughout the year. I would like to specially thank Susan Merry, Judi Corrigan, Shirley Collier, Danielle Woods, Wendy Glass, Wendy Bailey, Sandra Franklin and Hayley Trend for their hard work, dedication and commitment throughout the year.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank all of our wonderful Peer Support Volunteers. Volunteers are at the heart of Amputees Queensland, they give generously of their time, knowledge, experience and personal stories to support others who are navigating life after limb loss. The value of peer support cannot be underestimated, and we continue to hear from members about how important it has been to their physical and emotional recovery and their journey towards living confidently with limb loss.

To every volunteer who has made a phone call, attended a meeting, supported an event, welcomed a new member, shared their experience, assisted another amputee or simply been there when someone needed to talk — thank you. Your contribution makes a genuine difference to the lives of others.

We hope to see everybody at our upcoming events and to help us celebrate Amputee Awareness Week from 4 to 11 October.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lynda". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized 'L'.

Lynda Tilley, State Coordinator

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. ❤️



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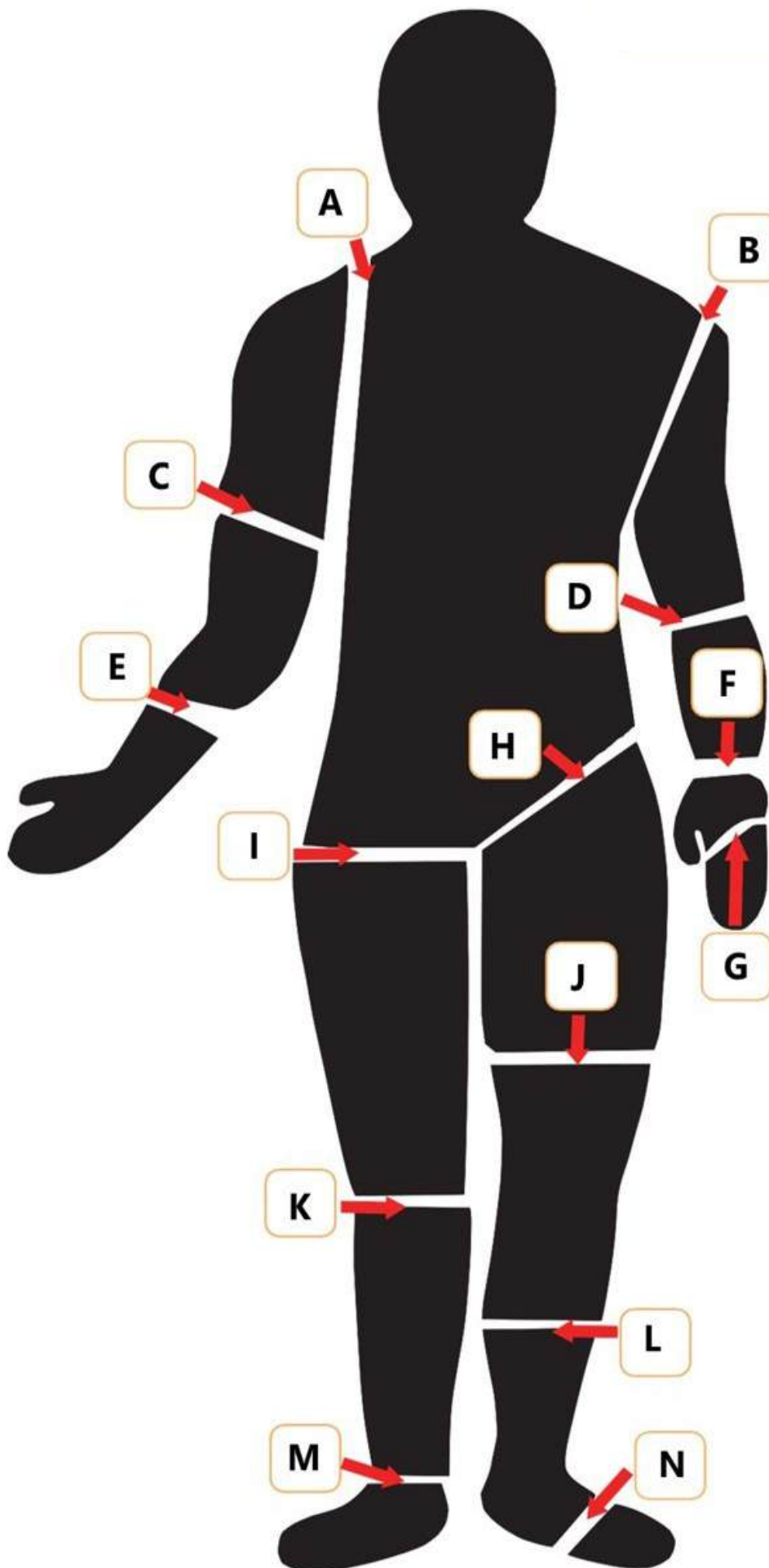


Contact Us



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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)



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A woman with a prosthetic leg is surfing on a wave. She is wearing a pink one-piece swimsuit and a prosthetic leg with a black and white pattern. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a blue sky with white clouds and a blue ocean with white waves.

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-  Gold Coast, Coolangatta (Visiting service only)



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DATES FOR THE DIARY

Weekly Activities

Mondays | **Tai Chi** (10:00am to 11:00am)

Mondays | **Chiropractors** (appointments 9:30am to 12:30pm)

Thursdays | **Fun & Fit** (9:30am to 10:30am & 10:45am to 11:45am)

Wear comfortable clothes and bring along a water bottle.

Monthly Activities & Information Sessions ...

October

4-11th Amputee Awareness Week
6th Fishability
9th 40th Anniversary Morning Tea
11th Sunshine Coast Get Together
28th Grocery Bingo

November

15th Sunshine Coast Get Together
25th Grocery Bingo
28th Christmas Party

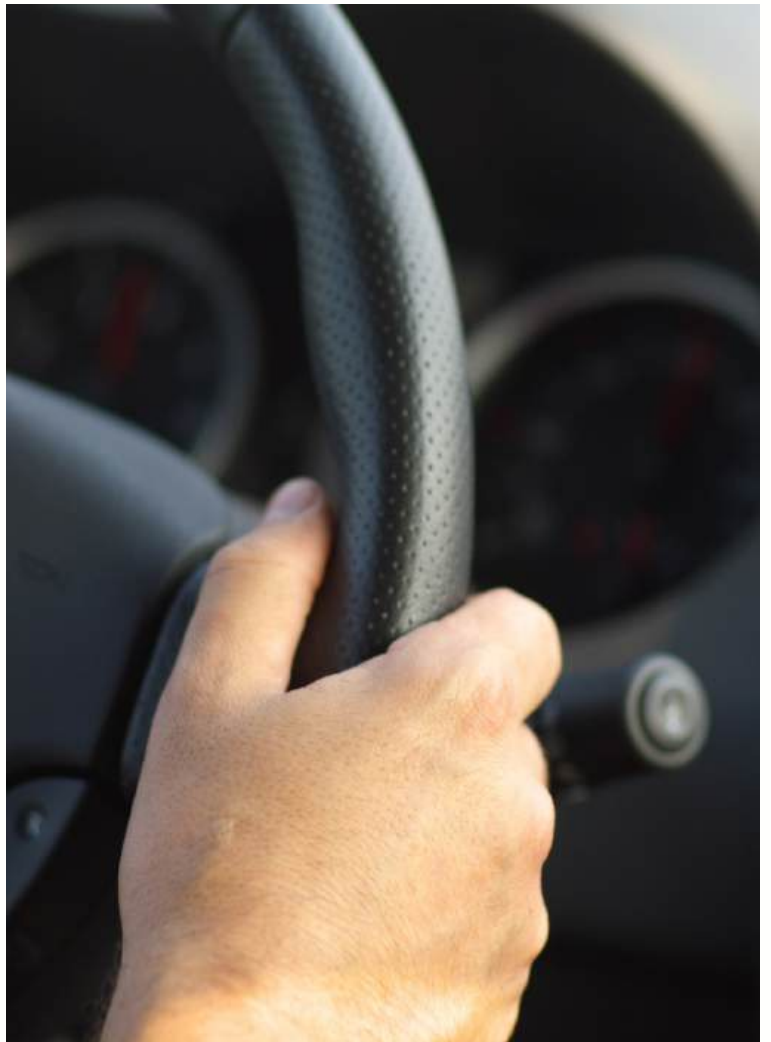
December

9th Community Christmas Morning Tea
18th Office Closure

Independence on the Move

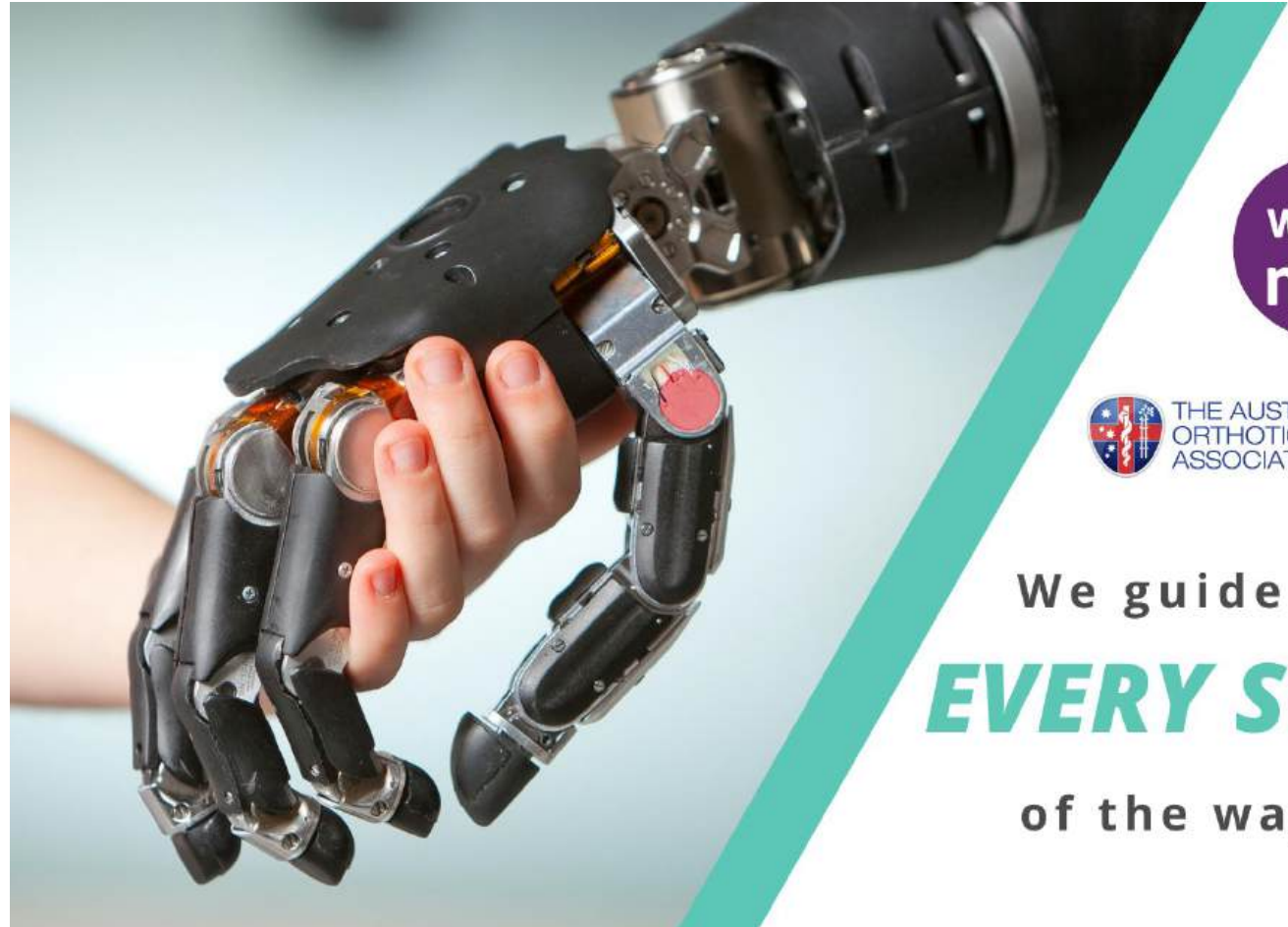
A guide to navigating transport funding and state taxi subsidies to help older loved ones stay mobile.

The ability to get up and go is something most of us take completely for granted. For an older person, handing in their driver's licence can feel like surrendering a vital piece of their independence and identity. It is a profound transition that often falls heavily on the shoulders of the person caring for them, who suddenly becomes the sole chauffeur for medical appointments, grocery runs, and weekly social outings. Ensuring reliable transport is not just about logistical convenience; it is fundamentally about maintaining a connection to the community and preventing the devastating effects of isolation. Fortunately, there is substantial financial assistance available across Australia designed specifically to help older people stay mobile and engaged. This guide breaks down the federal transport funding available through the Support at Home program, alongside the vital state-based Taxi Subsidy Schemes.



The Federal Landscape: The Support at Home Program

As of November 2025, the Australian Government replaced older Home Care Packages with a unified system known as the Support at Home program. This initiative is designed to provide older Australians with a clearer, more defined list of services to help them remain living independently. Transport is a heavily featured component of this system. If the older person you are caring for is approved for ongoing services, they will be assigned a funding classification based on their assessed needs. Within their allocated budget, funding can be specifically directed toward transport and community access. This means the government provides a subsidy to cover the cost of getting to the shops, attending medical appointments, and participating in social activities. Unlike clinical supports, transport falls under everyday living and independence services. Depending on the older person's financial situation, Services Australia may ask them to make a means-tested contribution towards these specific costs.



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Independence on the Move cont.

Expanding Beyond Taxis: Community Transport

It is important to note that Support at Home funding for transport is not limited strictly to commercial taxis. Providers can often use this funding to arrange access to local community transport networks. These services frequently utilise minibuses, modified vans, or networks of volunteer drivers to help older people reach local shopping centres or social hubs.

Community transport offers a unique, dual benefit. It provides a highly affordable way to travel, but it also creates an organic social environment. Travelling alongside other older members of the local community can turn a mundane trip to the pharmacy into a pleasant social outing. Discussing these options with your chosen aged care provider is highly recommended when drafting the initial care plan.



State-Based Lifelines: Taxi Subsidy Schemes

While the federal Support at Home program is excellent for planned, budgeted transport managed through an approved provider, it does not always cover ad-hoc, spontaneous trips. This is where state and territory governments step in with Taxi Subsidy Schemes, frequently referred to as “Taxi Cards”. These programs are entirely separate from federal aged care funding. They are state-funded initiatives designed specifically for individuals with severe and permanent mobility restrictions who cannot safely use standard public transport. A Taxi Card allows them to hail a cab, book a rideshare, or schedule a wheelchair-accessible vehicle at a heavily discounted rate. Because these are state-run initiatives, the names of the programs and exact discount rates vary. In Victoria, for example, the Multi-Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) offers eligible members a 50 percent discount on their fares, covering

up to \$60 per trip. The Victorian program is notably progressive in its integration with modern technology, allowing members to use their MPTP card not just in traditional metered taxis, but also with major rideshare services like Uber and the Oiii app.

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Independence on the Move cont.

To apply for this program, a medical assessment must be completed online by a doctor through Safe Transport Victoria. Residents in other states have access to similar, vital schemes. The New South Wales Taxi Transport Subsidy Scheme (TTSS) and Queensland's Taxi Subsidy Scheme (TSS) both offer 50 percent discounts capped at \$60 per trip. Programs like the South Australian Taxi Subsidy Scheme (SATSS) and Western Australia's Taxi User Subsidy Scheme (TUSS) take this a step further, offering up to 75 percent subsidies specifically reserved for individuals who are permanently confined to a wheelchair, acknowledging the higher costs of accessible vehicles.

The Carer's Respite: Why External Transport Matters. It is vital to acknowledge the immense pressure transport places on the carer. While you may want to drive your loved one everywhere they need to go attempting to juggle their transport needs alongside your own work, family, and personal life is a fast track to burnout. Utilising government-funded transport is not just about giving the older person independence. It is also a legitimate and necessary form of respite for you. Allowing a community transport driver or a subsidised taxi to take your loved one to their weekly appointments frees up valuable hours in your day. It allows you to step out of the chauffeur role and return to simply being a supportive family member.

How Federal and State Funding Work Together

An older person can hold both a Support at Home package and a state-based Taxi Card concurrently, but they must be used strategically. Support at Home funding is typically managed directly by your chosen provider. For regular, scheduled appointments, the provider might arrange the transport and pay for it directly out of the allocated federal budget.

Conversely, if the older person decides on a whim to visit a local cafe to meet a friend, they can use their state-based Taxi Card to subsidise the fare out of their own pocket. The Taxi Card provides the vital flexibility for independent travel they cannot always be scheduled weeks in advance. Helping an older loved one maintain their mobility is one of the most empowering things you can do in a caring role. By unlocking these funding streams, you are providing them with the practical means to stay deeply connected to their community and retain a crucial sense of personal independence.



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An Amputees Guide to Summer Fun

Ready for some fun in the sun? Or maybe you're happiest staying inside where the air conditioning runs around the clock. Either way, summer offers plenty of opportunities to enjoy the season—and with a little planning, amputees can safely make the most of everything it has to offer.

Whether your bucket list includes fishing, boating, kayaking, swimming, or simply relaxing at the beach, many favourite summer activities revolve around the water. While that can mean extra exposure to heat, humidity, and sunlight reflecting off the water, it doesn't have to keep you from enjoying the outdoors. A little preparation goes a long way.



Summer also brings challenges many amputees don't experience during cooler months. Increased sweating inside the socket and liner, limb volume fluctuations throughout the day, added friction, skin irritation, blisters, pressure sores, and more frequent prosthetic sock adjustments can all make outdoor activities more difficult.

Talk with your prosthetist about ways to minimize these issues. Washing your liner daily can help prevent rashes and fungal infections, and it's always a good idea to keep a small supply bag in your vehicle or nearby. Include extra prosthetic socks, a small towel, prosthetist-approved antiperspirant, bandages, skin barrier wipes, and, most importantly, water.

Staying hydrated is especially important during the summer. Dehydration can lead to limb volume changes, increased fatigue, muscle cramping, balance issues, and a socket that suddenly feels loose or uncomfortable. Sometimes what feels like a prosthetic problem is actually your body telling you it needs more water.

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You're invited

to join us to celebrate

40 years

Join us for morning tea to celebrate 40 years of supporting, empowering and connecting people living with limb loss

Date: 9 October 2026

Time: 10:00 am

Venue: Ben Matthews Playground
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An Amputees Guide to Summer Fun cont.

One of the best parts of summer is the variety of accessible activities available today. Fellow amputees shared some of their favourites, including swimming, adaptive kayaking, fishing, camping, outdoor concerts, state fairs, botanical gardens, nature photography, accessible hiking trails, community festivals, flea markets, and even bowling. Today's adaptive equipment and inclusive recreation programs continue to make these experiences more accessible than ever.

One of my favourite places to spend time is my local state park. I even helped the staff select the right four-wheeled all-terrain mobility device so visitors with disabilities can travel the trail to the park's main attraction. During the warmer months, it's in use almost every day—a wonderful reminder that accessibility opens doors for everyone.

I also love spending time near the water. Beaches, lakes, rivers, and pools have become much more accessible over the years. Many beaches now offer mobility mats that make it easier to walk or roll across the sand, while pools often feature lifts or zero-entry ramps that allow more people to enjoy the water safely.

Kayaking and other paddle sports continue to grow in popularity, offering low-impact exercise while strengthening the upper body. Many lakes and recreation areas now have adaptive docks and equipment



designed specifically to make these activities easier and more enjoyable for people with disabilities.

Before heading out for the day, consider putting together a small summer kit to keep in your vehicle or beach bag. Protective prosthetic foot covers can help shield your device from dirt, sand, and water, while products such as the Dry Pro Prosthetic Sleeve make it easier to enjoy water activities without worrying about your prosthesis. Cooling towels can provide relief on especially hot days, and those who spend time in the water may benefit from water legs, swim fins, or water-resistant prosthetic components designed specifically for aquatic activities. If you don't own adaptive equipment, don't let that stop you. Many parks, beaches, and recreation areas now rent mobility scooters, power wheelchairs, and adaptive paddle sports equipment, making it easier than ever to explore somewhere new.

A little research before you leave home can also make your outing much more enjoyable. Look for destinations that offer accessible parking, beach wheelchairs, accessible restrooms and changing rooms, pool lifts or zero-entry access, and mobility mats that make navigating sand or uneven terrain easier. If you're unsure what accommodations are available, don't hesitate to call ahead. Many locations are happy to answer questions and help you plan a successful visit.

Article: Kim Ousley, *Living With Amplitude*.

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Summer Safety Tips for Amputees

Summer is about experiences. Whether you choose to swim, kayak, fish, float in a pool, or simply relax lakeside with friends, recreation doesn't have to look the same for everyone. Success isn't measured by how far you swim or how adventurous the activity is. It's measured by participation, enjoyment, and the memories you create.

The key is practicing in a safe environment and understanding that balance and buoyancy may feel different than you're used to. Before heading out, think about the environment around you. Is the pool deck slippery? Are there uneven entries? Is it crowded? How much extra energy will your day require?

A little preparation can make a big difference, especially at the beach. Deep sand, hot surfaces, long walks, and saltwater exposure can all present unique challenges for amputees. Pack extra prosthetic socks, towels, sunscreen, water bottles, skin wipes, prosthetic cleaning supplies, a



waterproof phone pouch, a dry bag, a change of clothes, and a small first aid kit so you're ready for whatever the day brings.

If fishing or spending time at a lake is more your style, many state parks now offer accessible docks, trails, and recreation areas. Call ahead or check the park's website before your trip. If the temperatures climb too high, consider visiting a nature center, museum, aquarium, botanical garden, or zoo. Many offer excellent accessibility while providing a welcome break from the summer heat.

Outdoor festivals, flea markets, and concerts can also be great ways to enjoy the season. Most are affordable, but it's worth checking ahead for accessibility, parking, steep hills, or uneven terrain before you go.

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Summer Safety Tips for Amputees cont.

Summer Safety with Diabetes

For amputees living with diabetes, hot weather requires a little extra attention.

High temperatures can increase fluid loss through sweating, making dehydration happen more quickly. Dehydration can also contribute to elevated blood glucose levels, creating a cycle that's harder to manage.

Watch for signs of dehydration, including increased thirst, dry mouth, fatigue, dizziness, headaches, and dark-coloured urine.

Many people are surprised to learn that heat can also cause blood sugar to fluctuate unexpectedly. It may increase insulin absorption, affect how medications work, change appetite, and increase the risk of both high and low blood sugar episodes. Checking your blood sugar more frequently during hot weather can help you stay ahead of these changes.

Don't forget to inspect both your feet and your residual limb regularly. Look for redness, blisters, skin breakdown, areas of increased pressure, or signs of infection. Insulin and some medications are also sensitive to heat, so store them in a cooler and never leave them inside a hot vehicle.

Living with diabetes and limb loss often means thinking one step ahead. Summer doesn't have to be something you avoid—it simply calls for a little extra planning so you can focus on what matters most: enjoying the season.

Article: Kim Ousley, *Living With Amplitude*.





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Savings for seniors (2026–2027)

The Queensland Government provides a range of concessions to eligible concession card holders.

For more information, visit qld.gov.au/concessions

Energy concessions

Available to PCC, HCC, DVA Gold Card and Seniors Card holders.

☐ Electricity rebate:

To apply for the seniors rebate, contact your household energy retailer.

up to
\$399

☐ Reticulated natural gas rebate:

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

up to
\$96

Rates and utilities

Available to PCC and Gold Card holders.

☐ Pensioner Rate Subsidy:

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

up to
\$200

☐ 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.

up to
\$120

Seniors Card discounts

- Discounts on goods and services are available at participating outlets throughout Queensland.
- For more information, visit www.qld.gov.au/seniors

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- One concession per household.
- To apply and for more information, contact Department of Transport and Main Roads on **13 23 80**.

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☐ Long distance train travel:

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☐ Interstate public transport:

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

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- For more information, contact Smart Service Queensland on **13 QGOV (13 74 68)**.

☐ 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**.

Recreation savings

Available to Seniors Card holders.

☐ Recreational freshwater fishing permit: (Seniors Card, PCC, HCC, Gold Card)

- A discount is available on a Stocked Impoundment Permit.
- For more information, contact Department of Primary Industries on **1300 575 359** to purchase a permit.

☐ 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, call **07 3153 3000**.
- For more information about the Queensland Art Gallery and GOMA, call **07 3840 7303**.

Other important contact details

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Seniors services 13 23 00

Services Australia (Centrelink) —

Disability, sickness and carers 13 27 17

Department of Veterans' Affairs

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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 out more, call **1800 227 475**.

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Card definitions

PCC — Pensioner Concession Card

HCC — Health Care Card

Gold Card — also known as the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) Veteran Gold Card

Seniors Card — Seniors Card and Seniors Card+go (not including Seniors Business Discount Card)

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Two course luncheon
Lucky door prizes | Mega Raffles

\$25m | \$35nm (adults)
\$15m | \$25nm (children under 12)
(Children under 5 free)

Date: Saturday, 28 November
Time: 11:30am for 12pm lunch
Where: Ben Mathews
47-55 Ellen Street
Logan Central

RSVP: admin@afsg.org.au





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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION



☐ New

☐ Renewal

Name: _____ Surname: _____

Partner: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ Post code: _____

Mobile: _____ Email: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Amputation level/s: _____

Cause of amputation: _____

Membership Contribution

Yearly membership - (1 July to 30 June)

☐ \$20 Individual ☐ \$30 Families/ Pensioner Families ☐ \$50 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.
(Reference use first initial and surname).

☐ I have paid via paypal at www.amputeesqld.org.au

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

Signature.....

Date:

Please complete application and return 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 wave. He is wearing a black wetsuit and has a prosthetic leg on his right side. The background is a sunset sky with clouds and the sun low on the horizon. The man is looking back over his shoulder at the camera.

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Caleb

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