



Work, Study and Leisure

A guide for patients

Getting back into the community after a spinal cord injury can be a daunting, but an exciting step on your route to recovery. Whether you want to get back into something you participated in prior to your injury, or an entirely new interest, getting back into activity can lead to new and exciting changes in your daily life. It can increase your self-esteem, independence, social and support circles, while allowing you to test new abilities and boundaries.

Below is some information to assist you in participating in community based activities, within the areas of leisure, study and work.

Leisure

There are various leisure options available to you and they extend as far as you want to go. Leisure is solely based on your interests and what you want to do, although you may not be able to be involved in a manner you may have previously been, involvement and enjoyment is still possible. People utilising wheelchairs get involved in the community everyday, including people competing in the Olympics in a sport of their choice, teams competing in various social sporting tournaments, parents becoming involved in school events and people volunteering to assist others in their community. If you cannot even imagine what options you might be able to pursue now, one of the websites which cover more general ideas from around the globe is **www.d-ability.org** – for extra ideas and some examples of people achieving amazing goals.

On the other hand you may want to be able to talk to others who have managed to cope with some of the challenges you are now facing. There are many blogs and forums on the web, along with some other organizations listed below.

- One such forum is www.disabilityforum.org.au which is coordinated by an individual who has tetraplegia and lives in Queensland.
- Another more globally based forum is **Apparelyzed** – the forum offers info on a range of Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) issues, the ability to enter into discussions with people with SCI from around the world, and sells humorous T-shirts aimed at ‘wheelies’.

Website: www.apparelyzed.com

Below is some information to help you get started on your search for leisure activities, however getting in contact with local clubs through the white or yellow pages or internet and asking questions or offering your services, is a great place to start.

The Companion Card is a wallet-sized card issued to people with a significant and permanent disability. The card has a photograph of the cardholder and identifies that person as someone who requires attendant care support from a companion. The Companion Card is presented when booking or purchasing a ticket, when the cardholder requires the assistance of a companion in order to attend that particular venue or activity. Participating (affiliate) organisations and businesses will recognise the Companion Card, and issue the cardholder with a second ticket for their companion, at no extra charge.

Phone: 1800 898 888 (information line)

Website: www.wa.companioncard.org.au

Arts Access Australia offers programmes funded by the government to support those interested in studying or working in the arts - whether as a student, a volunteer, an employee, or a professional practicing artist; as well as information and resources for those who run artistic events, on how to make them accessible and available to individuals with a disability.

Australian Athletes with a Disability

Responsible for the administration of three national sports organisations for people with disabilities – the Australian Sports Organisation for the Disabled, the Cerebral Palsy Sports and Recreation Federation of Australia, and Wheelchair Sports Australia.

All three organisations develop sport for athletes with a disability, and administer, promote and coordinate sporting opportunities.

Phone: (08) 9763 5819

Website: www.sports.org.au

The Australian Paralympic Committee (APC)

The peak national body responsible for Australia's elite athletes with a disability.

Phone: (02) 8736 2600

Website: www.paralympic.org.au

DADAA

DADAA stands for Disability in the Arts, Disadvantage in the Arts Australia, and is the peak body for arts and disability in Australia.

Phone: (08) 9336 4008

Website: www.dadaawa.org.au

Department of Fisheries

Department of Fisheries provides a fishing program with tuition and modified equipment for people with disabilities.

Phone: (08) 9432 8022

Website: www.fisherswithdisabilities.com.au

Department of Sport and Recreation

The Department of Sport and Recreation can provide information about Western Australian sporting and recreation organisations, as well as venues and facilities.

Phone: (08) 9492 9700

Website: www.dsr.wa.gov.au

Find a Club Directory from the Western Australian Department of Sport and Recreation lists a wide range of organisations, as well as venues and facilities. It also identifies groups that provide opportunities for people with a disability.

Phone: (08) 9492 9700

Website: www.dsr.wa.gov.au

Inclusion WA

Provides information and support to people with disabilities who want to become involved in community recreation and sport. They can put you in touch with activities and organisations in Western Australia, and have programme such as sportslink, recreation access, recreation advice information service, and community inclusion programmes which offer alternatives to employment.

Inclusion WA also facilitates two social clubs, The Meeting Place in Victoria Park and The Subi Club in Subiaco. People with disabilities wishing to broaden their skills and meet new people are welcome to join either, or both clubs. Clubs meet on Friday nights and Sundays with club members taking active roles in planning programs, and overall running of each club.

Phone: (08) 9201 8900 (Osborne Park)

Website: www.inclusionwa.org.wa

Infolink

A State Library of Western Australia database that provides information about community groups, including sporting groups, hobby and other special interest groups in the State.

Phone: (08) 9427 3111

Website: www.henrietta.lis.wa.gov.au

Local councils

Local councils will be able to put you in contact with sporting groups in your area. You can find contact details for your local council by visiting the Western Australian Local Government Association's website.

Phone: (08) 9213 2000

Website: www.walga.asn.au

NICAN

A national organisation that has information on recreation, tourism, sport and the arts for people with a disability.

Phone: (02) 6241 1220, 1800 806 769 (Free Call)

Website: mwww.nican.com.au

Riding for the Disabled Association

A voluntary, not-for-profit organisation, which provides horse riding instruction and other activities associated with horse riding and harness driving, for people with disabilities.

Phone: (08) 9296 4655

Website: www.ndawa.org.au

Rotary Sail into Life

An organisation sponsored by Rotary to provide an opportunity for all to experience the pleasure of sailing. This organisation also has links to Sailability, class yacht racing, and the Paralympics. The craft are designed for and can be handled by people of all ages and abilities. Sail into Life is wheelchair accessible.

Phone: (08) 9581 1516

Mobile: 0438 184 950

Sailability

Operates from the Royal Perth Yacht Club in Perth. Its primary function is to provide sailing opportunities for all people, regardless of their ability.

Phone: (08) 9423 5526

WA Disabled Sports Association (WADSA)

An umbrella organisation for disabled sport and recreation in Western Australia. Activities are provided in areas such as recreation, sport, physical activity, health and physical education. WADSA also offers sport equipment, resources and consultations on disability issues to the community.

Phone: (08) 9470 1442

Website: www.wadsa.org.au

The Wheelchair Sports WA Association (Inc)

Responsible for managing wheelchair sports within Western Australia. Athletes compete in state, national and international competition in many sports. The association also runs events, training, and competitions. The association also coordinates exciting recreational activities for those not so competitively minded.

Phone: (08) 9443 4833

Website: www.wheelchairsportswa.org.au

Gordon Reid Foundation for Recreation for People with Disabilities Grants

Grants from Lotterywest are to assist people to participate in community-based sport and recreation. Not-for-profit organisations or local government authorities can apply for a Recreation for People with a Disability Grant.

Phone: (08) 9340 5270

Freecall: 1800 655 270

Website: www.lottery.wa.gov.au

Travel

If you previously enjoyed travel it continues to be possible within the state, Australia and world wide. However, as with all travel, planning in advance will be essential.

Many websites cover the basics of disabled access to accommodation and facilities in places away from home, but we would recommend that you follow up checking web based information with a phone call to the place itself to check what exactly they mean by disabled access.

eBility

A website which covers topics such as adventure travel, hiring of vans, specific accessible locations and facilities, usually Australia wide.

Website: www.ebility.com.au

Airline Travel advice for travellers with disabilities, including issues such as taking your wheelchair on the plane, or how to address your bladder issues whilst flying is explained through the guide for airline Civil Aviation Authority operators in the website:

Website: www.casa.gov.au

Other individuals who have travelled will post blogs such as www.disabledTravelers.com which includes an Australian series covering each of the major centres in Australia, plus some outback travel experiences.

Eatability

Provides a website which identifies suitable restaurants, arts and leisure venues which offer easily accessible options,

Website: www.eatability.com.au

Universal Access – City of Perth

This website offers visitors to the City of Perth information on the range of easy access facilities within the city e.g. hotels, restaurants, car parks, cinemas, theatres, gyms or shopping areas.

Website: www.cityofperth.wa.gov.au
& go to the link for Universal Access.

Contact your local councils for specific information relating to your local area.

Qantas Carer Concession

A person is eligible to apply for this concession if they need to have ‘one on one’ support once seated on the plane. They will not be eligible if they only required help in boarding and disembarking the plane. Qantas carer concession cardholders receive discount fares with Qantas travel within Australia and New Zealand.

Applications can be made through NICAN (National Information Communication Awareness Network)

Phone: (02) 6241 1220

Website: www.nican.com.au

Easy Access Australia by Bruce Cameron

Easy Access Australia is a travel guide for people with a mobility disability. It is written by Bruce Cameron a C5/6 tetraplegic who travelled extensively in Australia to produce this guide. He covers accommodation, transport, provides information on equipment hire and how to arrange attendant care.

Available at good book stores – ISBN
0-9577510-1-X Cost approximately \$27.45

Website: www.easyaccessaustralia.com.au

NICAN

Nican provides information on recreation, tourism, sport and the arts, for people with a disability. It is a national site with information on accessible venues etc. for all States and Territories, and has information on community groups, equipment hire and transport services. This is an excellent site for people wishing to travel interstate.

Phone: (02) 6241 1220

Website: www.nican.com.au

Study

There are various study options within Western Australia to assist you in obtaining new skill levels and qualifications. It is best to get into contact with the educational institution and progress from there. Emailing or calling and requesting a list of their courses can help you to get an idea of what is on offer. You are often able to get a tour of the facilities so you can see if they meet your needs, otherwise go along on their information or open days and have a look for yourself. Below is a list of educational institutions in Western Australia.

You can also speak to your Occupational Therapist about your options, and how to find more information on specific study options.

Curtin University of Technology

Curtin University has well established services for students with disabilities or medical conditions, with each campus having disability coordinators whose role it is to assist in an easy transition into university life and assist with any other issues which may arise.

Phone: (08) 9266 7850
Email: disabilityservices@curtin.edu.au
Website: www.disability.curtin.edu.au

Edith Cowan University

ECU is able to assist all students with a disability to access their services at both campuses. For further information see their website or call them.

Phone: (08) 9370 6960
Email: enquiries@ecu.edu.au
Website: www.ecu.edu.au

Notre Dame University

The University of Notre Dame supports the rights of students with disabilities and medical conditions to have access and participate, as fully as possible, in all areas of campus life. To this end, Notre Dame, will look to adapt services and make accommodations to ensure that they meet the individual needs of people with disabilities and medical conditions. In

accordance with this objective, the university will provide an accessible, supportive and safe environment for students with disabilities within the limitations of its buildings, surrounds and services.

Phone: (08) 94330 578
(Equity Liaison Officer: Nina Ishtar)
Email: nishtar@nd.edu.au
Website: www.nd.edu.au

TAFE

TAFE offers a variety of short courses, many of which do not require previous experience, and can offer an introduction or re-entry into the education system. TAFEWA colleges aim to provide access and equity of participation, for people with disabilities, to enable them to be involved in all aspects of college life. Students are advised to make contact with your preferred college to identify what support services can be arranged. This may include information in audio or large print format, support in the learning environment, and alternative assessment and examination arrangements. Some TAFEWA campuses have disability services officers or disability liaison officers. At others, information is available from student services.

Phone: (08) 92246500.
Freecall: 13 23 98
Website: www.tafe.wa.edu.au

Work

For some individuals it is possible to return to previous employment with adaptations to the work place, or to the duties. Services such as Job Access (contact details below) can assist with modifications to the workplace, and will often offer advice about the types of duties which might be suitable. Many organizations have individuals employed through occupational health services who negotiate a graduated return to work, and to select duties on your behalf. Funding may be available to your employer for taking you on with a disability, and also for modifications needed to your workplace or equipment. Employment agencies should be able to advise you about this.

There are endless opportunities to work within Western Australia, but it requires finding something you want to do, and an organisation with a position for you to fill. Prior to obtaining work, further study, work experience or voluntary work may assist you in gaining a position. There are many main stream and disability specific services you can access to assist you in finding work. Through them you can help with work related skills, resume writing, interview skills and job searching. Below are some of the services in WA:

The Paraplegic Quadriplegic Association of WA (Inc)

Phone: (08) 9381 0111
Email: PQA@paraquadwa.asn.au

Provides assistance with resume preparation, interview skills training, vocational counselling, workplace assessments, advice on workplace modifications and job search.

Career Information Centre

Phone: (08) 9464 1305

Free service offered by Centrelink to the general public either individual or groups (by appointment) to assist with making decision on future study for employment choices or industry specific information. Offering information on job hunting and resume writing.

Access Employment

Phone: (08) 9443 0341
Website: www.accessemployment.com.au

106 Bradford Street
Coolbinia WA 6050

Open employment agency for people with disabilities.

Activ Foundation Inc

Phone: (08) 9387 0555
Email: record@activ.asn.au

327 Cambridge Street,
Wembley WA 6014

Career Network Karratha

Phone: (08) 9144 1115
Fax: (08) 9144 2520
Email: career-network@kisser.net.au

Unit C, 8 Headland Place
Karratha WA

Choice Program - PEP Employment Services

Phone: (08) 9470 3096.
Fax: (08) 9355 3208
Email: choice@pep.org.au
Website: www.pep.org.au

400-404 Albany Hwy
Victoria Park WA 6100

EDGE Employment Services

Phone: (08) 9286 6600
Email: edge@edge.org.au

38 Hood St
Subiaco WA 6008

Employment agency which assists people with disabilities into open employment.

Employment Esperance

Phone: (08) 9071 5358
Email: ee@wn.com.au

Lot 1 / 125 Dempster Street
Esperance WA

Workability

Phone: (08) 9228 9999
Email: contact@emtech.asn.au

1 Brewer Street
Perth WA 6000

Places and supports young people with a disability in open employment.

Essential Personnel

Phone: (08) 9622 3476.
Fax: (08) 9622 5975
Email: ep@avon.net.au

262 Fitzgerald Street,
Northam WA 6410

(4 Offices in total Merriden, Moora and Midland)

Forrest Personnel

Phone: (08) 9791 1672
Email: forrest@gateway.net.au

4 Plaza Street
Bunbury WA 6230

Geraldton Personnel

Phone: (08) 9964 3525
Email: gpi@wn.com.au
Website: www.geraldtonpersonnel.org.au

Geraldton WA

Good Samaritan Industries

Phone: (08) 9455 1222
Email: kevin.ross@gsi.org.au

47 Magnet Road
Canning Vale WA 6155

Goodwill Industries of WA

Phone: (08) 9249 3444
Email: eric.jarvis@goodwillind.com.au

337 Victoria Road
Malaga WA 6090

Supported employment opportunities

Great Southern Personnel

Phone: (08) 9842 1510.
Fax: (08) 9842 1544
Email: gsp@iinet.net.au

15-21 Aberdeen Street
Albany WA 6330

Hedland Personnel

Phone: (08) 9172 2966.
Fax: (08) 9172 2988
Email: empgdl@norcom.net.au

3 Hunt Street
South Hedland WA 6722

Hotham Personnel

Phone: (08) 9881 3211.
Fax: (08) 9881 3457
Email: peter.hotham@westnet.com.au

Suite 2, Paringa Professional Centre,
2 Williams Road,

Narrogin WA 6312

Intework – Inc

Phone: (08) 9344 7667.
Fax: (08) 9344 7516
Email: russelt@intework.org

32 Cedric Street,
Stirling WA

Provides employment training and assists young people with a disability to secure, and maintain employment.

Job Access

Phone: 1800 464 800
Email: online form on website
Website: www.jobaccess.gov.au

Free information and advice service about employment of people with disability.

Kimberley Personnel

Phone: (08) 9193 6631
Email: perskimb@wn.com.au

Broome WA

National Disability Services

Phone: (08) 9242 5544
Email: ndswa@nds.org.au

PO Box 1428
Osbourne Park WA 6916

ParaQuad Industries

Phone: (08) 9381 0139.
Fax: (08) 9382 3687
Email: pqi@paraquadwa.asn.au

Selby Street
Shenton Park WA 6008

Peel Personnel

Phone: (08) 9581 8800.
Email: admin@peelpersonnel.org.au

Mandurah WA

Rocky Bay Employment Services

Phone: (08) 9228 2511
Website: www.rbes.com.au

Rocky Bay Employment Services run several programs which are all located at East Perth WA

Soundworks Armadale

Phone: (08) 9497 4994
Email: soundarm@iinet.net.au

Armadale WA

Soundworks Rockingham

Phone: (08) 9592 3753
Email: soundroc@iinet.net.au

Rockingham WA 6168

For people living in the Rockingham area.

Disability Services Commission – Alternatives to Employment

Admin: 9426 9273
Freecall: 1800 998 214
Email: psop@dsc.wa.gov.au www.
disability.wa.gov.au/
forindividuals/disabilityservices/
postschool.html

Warren Blackwood Personnel

Phone: (08) 9761 1155
Email: welcome@warrenblackwood.com
Website: www.warrenblackwood.com

Bridgetown WA 6255

Phone: (08) 9771 8999.
Email: manjimup@warrenblackwood.
com.au

Manjimup WA 6258

The people who use our service live in either the Shire of Bridgetown, Greenbushes, Manjimup, Boyup Brook or Nannup.

Getting out there

Worksheet: How to make a decision and first step

Getting back into the community after a spinal cord injury can be a daunting but exciting step on your route to recovery with your changed abilities. Whether you want to get back into something you participated in prior to your injury, or an entirely new interest, getting back into activity can lead to new and exciting changes in your daily life. It can increase your self-esteem, independence and social and support circles, while allowing you to test new abilities and boundaries.

Start by assessing your skills; physically what can you do independently and what do you require assistance with?

Independent

Assistance Required

Make a list of occupations you enjoyed prior to your injury. Include voluntary and paid work, hobbies, interests, clubs, committees and day to day tasks. Indicate which ones you are still interested participating in. Your Occupational Therapist and Physiotherapist will be able to assist you in answering any questions you may have concerning how you can participate with your new abilities. Things to consider may include:

Self care skills - Do I need assistance with self-care? Could this be arranged at work?

Mobility - Is the building/campus/area wheelchair accessible? Is there parking nearby? Is there an accessible bus?

Support networks - Are my friends and family able to assist in my initial transition? Am I able to rely on other people involved?

Carer issues - Do I need to have a carer with me? Are they able to join me? Can I be ready in time?

Community access skills - Distance required to push wheelchair. Locality to public transport. Accessibility to group transport.

Possible barriers - Is there anything stopping me from trying it out?

Getting out There

Worksheet: How to make a decision and first step

Try to choose one or two options to begin with. Remember that getting back into it may require some time and patience. Attempting an easier activity initially, can help in identifying any areas you may not have previously considered. For example, enrolling in a short-term community education course prior to returning to full time study, can assist you in building up stamina and give you time to problem-solve any issues that arise.

Now try to make contact with the appropriate group you want to get involved with, usually they are the best people to talk to regarding what they have to offer, and what you can offer them. Your Occupational Therapist will be able to assist you both in answering questions regarding your abilities, and find solutions to your limitations.

The outline below may help you plan the first phone call. Even if you decide not to join in straight away, it is useful to have the information for future reference.

Group/Institution/Workplace

Contact Name _____ Contact Number _____

Questions to ask

Information to give them about you

Other notes
