

SWEP e-NEWS



5th EDITION FOR CONSUMERS

December 2017



To use an interpreter over the telephone – Ph: 131 450

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Operations Director

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The State-wide Equipment Program (SWEP) will close over the Christmas period from 5.00 p.m. on Friday, 22 December 2017 until 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday, 2 January 2018. An emergency repair service will be available during this period by phoning SWEP on 1300 747 937 and selecting the 'press 1' option. If your query is not urgent, you can leave a message on our message bank by selecting the 'press 2' option and we will call you back when we return.

We wish you all a safe and happy festive season.

Warmest regards and best wishes, SWEP Management and Staff



Welcome to the 5th Edition of SWEP e-News for Consumers

Hello everyone and welcome to the 5th Edition of our annual newsletter.

This year we celebrate our 7th year of operation as the State-wide Equipment Program. Roll-back to 2010 and we had a team of less than 20 staff and occupied 1 office suite. Our SWEP family has continued to grow over the years slowly taking up occupancy across 4 office suites. Having outgrown our previous tenancy in October this year our 75 staff were relocated to one large open plan office space. We also boast a broader 'extended' SWEP family having witnessed and celebrated numerous engagements, weddings and new babies over the years.

As always we have welcomed new staff to the SWEP family this year including Donna Markham as our Chief Allied Health Officer. Donna comes to us with a wealth of experience and (amongst other things) was instrumental in developing the Allied Health competency framework at a State-wide level and is a representative on the Ministerial Advisory Council Allied Health.

Commencing in January 2018 SWEP will be adding monthly blogs to our website to keep you better informed throughout the year; we will also be launching mini videos every month with a different focus ...so, stay tuned to this space!

1.



Ballarat Health Services
Putting your health first®

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Business Hours: M-F 8:30am-5:00pm, 24/7 after-hours emergency repairs



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This year we have worked closely with Craig Wilding, our Executive Director from Primary and Community Care at Ballarat Health Services (BHS) to review our service delivery model and some of our achievements include:

- Review and release of a revised Prescriber Registration and Credentialing Framework;
- Release of a new Home Modification Service Delivery Model;
- Steps to ensure that our clients are fully and meaningfully informed of their rights and responsibilities;
- Ensured all aspects of our service delivery model reflect a person-centred care approach;
- Expanded our oxygen package options;
- Implemented a strategy so that we can engage better with our stakeholders.

And many other initiatives that are highlighted in this Newsletter.

As some of our clients transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) it is an exciting time and we are endeavouring to support our clients and their families make this transition as seamless as possible.

I re-iterate each year that we are always looking for opportunities where we can do things better, and as such, we rely on your feedback to help us identify things that we can improve, so please continue to share your experiences with us. At the same time, we are always very grateful to receive positive feedback about the difference our service makes to you, and we've included a couple of these stories at the end of the newsletter.

I wish you and your families a happy and safe Christmas and New Year.

Jeni Burton - Operations Director, State-wide Equipment Program

SWEP Relocation

As the State-wide Equipment Program continues to evolve and expand into new areas of service delivery, our team continues to grow, with 75 current employees. We are very excited to report that throughout the week commencing 23 October 2017 our team was relocated to larger and open plan premises.

This involved months of planning by our 'relocation project lead', Hana, to co-ordinate a seamless relocation with as little interruption to our services as possible. This also involved a mammoth effort by the Ballarat Health Services Environmental Services team to move truckloads of desks and furniture over a four-day operation.

Our staff are all very pleased with their newly refurbished and open plan workspace, with a scenic outlook over Technology Park bushlands at Mt. Helen.





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Preventative Maintenance Pilot Program

In October SWEP and DHHS launched an exciting new Pilot Program for Preventative Maintenance. This Pilot has been introduced with a view to improving client and/or carer safety and the reliability of the equipment, through scheduled annual maintenance. The Pilot has been rolled out in the Barwon region and will be extended to Western Metro next year.

Only SWEP equipment out of warranty will be scheduled for annual maintenance and an electrical safety check (where required) and will ensure that equipment is maintained in safe working condition.

The following SWEP owned equipment is covered under the Pilot Program:

- Multifunction electric beds
- Change tables
- Patient lifters (including mobile floor hoists and ceiling hoists but excluding ceiling hoist tracking)
- Slings
- Mobile shower commodes
- Pressure relieving cushions and mattresses
- Scooters
- Electric lift/recline chairs
- Specialised seating
- Manual wheelchairs
- Power wheelchairs

Our Preventative Maintenance team will be making contact with clients as the Pilot rolls out in their area.

SWEP AND National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS)

This year has been another extremely busy year for the SWEP National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Team as SWEP continues to work closely with the NDIS as the Scheme rolls-out across the State. In the last 12 months, the SWEP NDIS Team have received and processed over 6,666 applications for 1,901 NDIS participants and have ordered over 6,332 pieces of equipment, home or vehicle modifications for these participants.

In 2016, SWEP developed formal 'Working Arrangements' with the Agency and continue to work closely with the Agency to ensure a streamlined pathway for the provision of Assistive Technology to people living in the community. As a part of this working arrangement, SWEP continue to have staff co-located in both the Vic West (Geelong), the North-East Melbourne Area (NEMA) and the Eastern Melbourne (VICEAST) National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA) offices.

SWEP are very excited to be launching our new NDIS brochure in early 2018. This will help to explain how SWEP works with the NDIS and the pathway to helping participants of the Scheme receive their assistive technology.

Over the remaining period of the NDIS transition, SWEP will continue to work closely with existing SWEP clients who are eligible for the NDIS to make their transition to the Scheme as smooth and simple as possible.



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PROGRAM UP-DATES CONT'D

Aids & Equipment Teams

In 2017 SWEP restructured the Aids & Equipment programs into equipment specific teams. This allows our staff to develop expertise across equipment categories.

The Aids & Equipment Program and the Supported Accommodation Equipment Assistance Scheme (SAEAS) is now managed by three equipment teams including:

- Low Complexity Equipment
- High Complexity Equipment
- Orthoses

These teams received a steady flow of client applications throughout the year and processed 7,575 **adult** applications, ordering 15,631 items benefiting 8,567 people living in their own homes. They also received 1,761 **children's** applications, assisting 968 children in obtaining 2,194 pieces of equipment.

Over 440 aids and equipment applications were received for clients living in supported accommodation during 2017. SWEP were able to order 780 items to assist more than 370 clients in supported accommodation facilities.

In late June SWEP received a non-recurrent allocation to fund items for people on our waiting list who were over the age of 65. Over 4,000 people benefited from this funding with over 6,000 items supplied.

SWEP continues to focus on budget management strategies in an effort to reduce waiting times for our clients.

News specific to the:

- Low Complexity Equipment Team

Voice Prostheses:

We are excited to announce that additional funding received from July 2017 now allows SWEP clients funding for three (3) voice prosthesis per year, up to a maximum of \$450 for each voice prosthesis.

Wigs:

A Wig application form has now been developed. This form, together with a valid quote, is to be used for all wig applications submitted after December 1 2017.

- Orthoses Team

The Orthoses Team has had a fantastic year and has partnered with the Australian Orthotic Prosthetic Association (AOPA) to create a new quotation template for orthotic applications this year. The template ensures clear, consistent quotation practice that allows SWEP and clinicians to separate services provided from assessment, prescription and supply.

- High Complexity Equipment Team

The High Complexity Team has had a very busy year joining forces with the Home Modifications Team and launching the new Home Modifications model.



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PROGRAM UP-DATES CONT'D

The team now process Wheelchair, Scooter, Bed, Mattress & Bed Accessories, Pressure Care, Top-up Fund for Children and Home Modification applications.

Home Modifications:

SWEP may be able to assist with funding for simple non-structural home modifications such as installing grab rails and hand-held showers. They can also assist with complex home modifications such as providing funding towards a modified bathroom for wheelchair use, or building and installing a ramp.

The new model has been revised to ensure focus on consumer centred outcomes and reduce risk for home owners. This model includes:

- Three home modifications options
- A tool kit for prescribers
- SWEP Home Modification Consumer Information Booklet.
- A Panel of Builders/Tradespeople

For more information and details regarding the above resources, please refer to the SWEP website [here](#). The 'SWEP Home Modification Consumer Information Booklet' will guide you through the process and answer some of those frequently asked questions. This can be downloaded from our website.

Beds:

SWEP has engaged our Clinical Advisors to review the requirements around the prescription of subsidised beds, mattresses and bedrails or bed sticks (bedding systems) through SWEP. We will shortly release new tools that have been developed to assist prescribers to identify the most suitable bed and mattress combinations for our clients that addresses Standards compliance and risk factors when prescribing this equipment.

Top-up Fund for Children Program

The Demand in the Top-up Fund for Children program continues to be very high. Over 152 applications for manual & powered wheelchairs, pressure cushions and walking aids were received and 143 children were supported. The team continue to focus on budget and demand strategies to reduce wait times.

Vehicle Modification

Over 165 clients were supported with assistance towards vehicle modifications this year. The modifications range from minor modifications such as hand controls, through to major modifications such as lowered floor conversions, hoists and permanent ramps. The types of modifications we can help with include both driver related modifications as well as modifications to allow a passenger to access and travel safely in a vehicle.

Following our recent organisational restructure, we now have a dedicated Vehicle Modifications team. You can call this team direct on 1300 747 937 by choosing option 4.



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PROGRAM UP-DATES CONTINUED

Domiciliary Oxygen Program (DOP)

Following a robust tendering process that commenced in September 2016, SWEP has contracted Air Liquide Healthcare P/L (Air Liquide) as the successful bidder to provide home oxygen for the Domiciliary Oxygen Program.

This new contract has maintained the high level of service provided for our oxygen consumers but has also enabled a new option with the introduction of a portable and stationary oxygen concentrator package for the first time within maximum subsidy levels.

The type of equipment that can be supplied include:

- Portable oxygen concentrators
- Stationary oxygen concentrators
- Portable oxygen cylinders and regulators
- Nasal cannula and tubing

We currently support over 3,500 people each year who require oxygen equipment to remain at home. On average, we supply nearly 5,500 cylinder refills each month and nearly two thirds of our clients are using oxygen concentrators.

Community Equipment Program (CEP)

Lymphoedema Compression Garment Program (LCGP)

In February this year, SWEP assumed responsibility for administering the Lymphoedema Compression Garment Program (LCGP).

The LCGP provides people who have been medically assessed as having either primary or secondary Lymphoedema with subsidised compression garments.

The LCGP program requires means testing and provides funding assistance for the purchase of up to 6 compression garments annually. LCGP contributes between 40% and 60% of the cost of the prescribed compression garment with the remaining cost met by the applicant/client or a third party.

Continuous Positive Airways Program (CPAP)

SWEP administers the CPAP Program on behalf of Ballarat Health Services (BHS) for people who reside in the Grampians Region, are patients of BHS and are listed on a Health Care Card or hold a Pension Concession Card. This year SWEP supported 129 people with provision of a CPAP unit.

Discharge Oxygen Program

SWEP administers the Discharge Oxygen Program on behalf of BHS for people who require oxygen therapy on discharge from BHS. This year we have supported 30 people requiring oxygen therapy upon discharge.



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PROGRAM UP-DATES CONTINUED

Continence Program (CA)

This year the Continence Program has supported more than 6,500 people in receiving continence products. While no children are waiting for support in this program, the team have been able to reduce the number of people waiting and wait times for adults.

SWEP Staff In-Services

The SWEP Leadership team are committed to providing our staff with ongoing training opportunities. To ensure that the staff maintain a client centric focus in all aspects of our service delivery, we have a 'Walk a Mile' professional development program where clients and their families are invited to visit SWEP and share their experience about their interaction with SWEP and the equipment they use with us. It is also important that our staff understand the types of equipment we supply so we also have in-services specific to the equipment categories.

Bi-monthly we hold 'whole team' meetings to discuss de-identified case studies from feedback received by our service. During these sessions, we 'unpack' de-identified case studies and look at how an application was managed, what we could have done better and what we did well. This is great tool for reflection/learning across our teams.

This year our staff also undertook mandatory Cultural Insight Training to raise awareness and understanding of Indigenous culture/history and the role our organisation plays in our local Indigenous community.

Our staff also undertook bi-annual communication training which allows us to develop our customer service skills and encourages thorough, informative, open and empathic communication with our various stakeholders.

SWEP Staff Community Engagement Activities

The SWEP Leadership team are committed to community engagement activities, and are happy to meet with prescribing organisations and community groups, to offer information and advice on the broad range of services we provide. This also gives us an opportunity to reflect on our systems and opportunities to improve, as we continuously seek ways in which we can contribute towards better client outcomes. This year we have attended a number of forums across the State and have presented at the Home Modifications Australia National Conference in Sydney. As the rollout of the NDIS continues within Victoria, SWEP have been actively engaging with transitioning clients and service providers across the State.

If you would like us to visit a group that you belong to, please contact us.



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SWEP Client Surveys – Your Feedback Counts !

Every month SWEP distributes surveys to our clients, to assist us in assessing the quality of our service delivery model. We really appreciate the time taken by our clients and their families to complete these surveys. Last financial year our client responses indicated:

- Overall Satisfaction with the SWEP Program - 92% satisfied
- How satisfied were you with SWEP staff? – 95% satisfied

Good News Story

In 2015, SWEP were approached to support Pinarc with their Humanitarian Work in Nepal, providing equipment from our re-issue pool, that had been written off.

We are pleased to share the below picture from the previous expedition of delivery one of SWEP's donations, to a child in need in Nepal.

SWEP have once been approached to support the biannual expedition occurring again this year.





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SWEP Compliments



The following (de-identified) feedback was recently received regarding the SWEP NDIS team

'The SWEP-NDIA team have been so helpful with any of my enquiries. I am a new grad OT working with NDIS clients so I am learning. I have really appreciated the feedback and support that the SWEP-NDIA team have provided me. I have found them very helpful and supportive in their willingness to help with any of my questions.'



The following (de-identified) feedback was received regarding the Aids & Equipment, Home Modifications, Vehicle Modifications and SWEP/Chemtronics Repairs/Re-issue teams

'Thank you for your support with so much equipment supplied to my child this year – including AFO's, car modifications, a gravity chair and a hoist. It is a huge help to us and we appreciate all the work you do.'

'Dear SWEP, I would like to personally thank you for the supply of this pressure cushion for this client in such a quick turnaround time. I understand the pressures and was expecting to wait some time for this client to get any equipment. The client was in tears of joy at having this cushion delivered to her today. It means a great deal to her and the family. So for some positive feedback for your organisation and feel good email for a Monday - MANY THANKS for the work you have done with this client's equipment request. Kindest Regards'

'I'm writing to say thank you to your hard-working team at SWEP and Chemtronics who assist us with provision of equipment to improve the lives of clients and carers throughout Victoria. OT Australia's theme for OT week in 2017 was "Reach Your Potential" and without the dedicated work of numerous individuals at SWEP and Chemtronics, this would not be possible.

Thank you to your courteous team on the phone line, who are readily available to assist with queries.

I'd also like to pass on a special mention to the Senior OT and Rehabilitation Technician based at Chemtronics for going above and beyond, to ensure equipment is available to clients in need and for their creativity in developing individual solutions/customisations when no commercial alternative is available. They both provide the utmost care when completing reissue equipment trials with clients, and are always available to assist and problem-solve scenarios.

Recent equipment success stories include

- *Provision of a day chair which has enabled a 12-year old to sit with her family for mealtimes at the dining table, for the first time in her life, whilst maintaining safe postures for feeding.*
- *Provision of an air mattress has enabled a client's pressure areas to heal, preventing hospital admissions.*
- *Provision of a floor-line bed and mattress, which has prevented falls from bed for an 11-year old with epilepsy and an intellectual disability.*
- *Provision of a Power Assist unit, which has enabled its user to increase her activity and use of her manual wheelchair. The recipient of this item has returned to study and had an overseas adventure due to her increased confidence and ease of wheelchair use that this product enables.*
- *Provision of 4-wheeled mobility scooter, which has enabled a 72-year old to access her local shops and appointments. She is out of the home, three times a week, when previously due to poor mobility she travelled outside her home once a month at most.*

There are numerous examples of clients achieving goals and access to everyday life experiences that they would otherwise be unable to achieve due to their additional needs.

Thank you for providing equipment and modifications that enable clients to live – not just exist.'

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Procurement – it's not just buying stuff

Here at SWEP we do a lot of planning, and review of plans to improve outcomes. Much of it is probably invisible to you, but, like a duck on a pond, things may look peaceful but under the surface there's a lot of activity.

One of these areas is procurement. We take a strategic approach to how we purchase the items and services we are able to supply to our clients.

Our contracts allow us to ensure the equipment we provide meet Australian Standards, is assembled and installed (not just delivered), reliable and readily available – they are good quality and good value. We are also able to build relationships with our contractors to improve services.

And we won't just contract with anybody – we set high standards for our contractors to meet. Our current contracts are with suppliers of home oxygen, continence, repairs and maintenance of the equipment we provide to you, home modifications and a range of commonly prescribed equipment, such as manual wheelchairs, pressure cushions, shower stools, walkers, mobility scooters, mobile hoists, beds/mattresses, etc.

In the end, the point of it all is to stretch our budget as far as we can to provide as much quality equipment and service to our clients as we can. We do buy a lot of stuff, but there's a lot more to it.

Contacting SWEP

SWEP has recently updated our phone queues to accommodate changes to our teams. Please see below for the options you have when calling SWEP on 1300 747 937 (1300 PH SWEP).

- If you are an NDIS participant or have a query in relation to the NDIS program please press 0
- If you require repairs or maintenance to your equipment regardless of program please press 1
- If you are calling about Continence products please press 2
- If you are calling with an Oxygen enquiry please press 3
- For Vehicle Modifications please press 4
- For all other equipment enquiries please press 5 - (This option will then allow the caller to speak to a team about the specific equipment category they require advice about.)