

SWEP e-NEWS

13th EDITION FOR CONSUMERS

December 2025



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 from 4.30 p.m. on 24 December 2025 for the Christmas and Boxing Day public holidays. A second two-day closure will occur for New Years Day and 2 January 2026.



We wish you a safe and happy festive season!

Warmest regards and best wishes, SWEP Leadership & Staff

Welcome to the 13th Edition of SWEP e-News for Consumers

Hello everyone and welcome to the 13th Edition of our annual newsletter. On behalf of SWEP, thank you to our State funded Victorians; NDIS participants and private consumers, who we have had the privilege to support during 2025. This year, we have received more than 26,100 applications for support through our programs, with over 20,700 consumers supported.

This year has brought some big changes to legislation about the Aged Care Standards, along with the introduction of the Commonwealth Support at Home Program on 1 November 2025, which replaces Home Care Packages. We've been working behind the scenes to make sure our services align with these updates and are staying connected with key stakeholders to understand what the new program means and how it might affect the way we currently operate. For now though it's business as usual.

This year our programs will be closed from 4.30 p.m. on 24 December for the Christmas and Boxing Day Public Holidays, as well as New Years Day and 2 January 2026. During these closures you will still be able to contact our team for emergency equipment repairs by phoning SWEP on 1300 747 937 and selecting 'Option 1'. If your query is not urgent, you can leave a message by selecting 'Option 2' and a member of our team will call you back when we return.



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On behalf of the SWEP team, we hope that you have a lovely time over the festive season, in whatever traditional manner you celebrate.

Jeni Burton
Director – State-wide Equipment Program

Our Programs

Safety Link Assist

Safety Link Assist has been in operation now for over 5 years providing services to NDIS participants and those consumers who are not eligible for support through the State funded programs.

Safety Link Assist has welcomed a new team member this year - Cathy, to support the ever-increasing demand for the services we offer through this program (including continence products; repairs, maintenance, hire & sales of assistive technology equipment).

This year our team has supported 776 NDIS participants and 588 privately funded consumers.

Our State funded Programs

This year our State funded programs have supported approx. 20,700 unique consumers with provision of over 90,000 individual pieces of equipment and/or products, repairs, or home/vehicle modifications. We received more than 26,100 applications for support (approx. 503 applications per week). We have also received nearly 31,250 incoming telephone calls during the year (approx. 130 calls every day we are open, answering most calls within approx. 25 seconds).

1. Lymphoedema Compression Garments Program (LCGP)

Since January 2025, SWEP have assisted approx. 4,200 eligible people with subsidised funding towards their compression garments.

Due to increasingly high demand, we have recently added some additional staff to the team. Our team now consists of Linda, Judy and Eve – with some back-up support from Toni and Katie from time to time.

We have been working with the Department of Health for some time, to consider an equitable way of supporting the many people applying to this program, within the constraints of our budget.

2. Domiciliary Oxygen Program (DOP)

The Domiciliary Oxygen Program has supported over 3,500 people over the year who require supplementary oxygen equipment including stationary oxygen concentrators and portable oxygen equipment. There is no wait for funding for eligible consumers to this program.



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3. Laryngectomy Consumables Program (LCP)

Over the past twelve months, the LCP have provided funding assistance to approx. 200 consumers for voice aids, laryngectomy consumables, and voice prostheses. This crucial funding ensures that Victorian Laryngectomy patients can access everyday items they need. There is no wait for funding for eligible consumers to this program.

4. Continence Team (CA)

This year the Continence Program has supported more than 3,900 people in receiving continence products, placing over 7,400 purchase orders. Once accepted by the program, consumers receive ongoing support for their continence products up to a maximum \$ value each year. The Continence team recently welcomed a new team member, Brent, who is working on a project to review and clear our waitlist.

5. Assistive Technology and Asset Management teams (AT)

The AT team continue to process a large volume of applications for an extensive range of equipment items, home, and vehicle modifications. In 2025 the team supported more than 8,500 people and placed more than 13,000 orders. The AT team have recently welcomed new team members, Bonnie and Tomika (Tam).

Throughout 2025, through our repairs and re-issue partnership with Chemtronics, we have facilitated approximately 4,380 repairs for both State funded consumers and NDIS Participants, as well as supplied more than 2,000 fully refurbished items of equipment through our extensive refurbished equipment pool.

Our Preventative Maintenance Program continues to provide ongoing maintenance to equipment, the goal being to improve reliability of equipment and consumer and/or carer safety, through annual check. This service has been provided to more than 850 consumers throughout the year, with servicing of over 1,150 pieces of equipment.

If you have any questions regarding any of the services we provide, please contact SWEP on 1300 747 937 or your Practitioner, regarding how we can support you.



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Your Voice Matters – SWEP Consumer Survey

At SWEP, we are committed to making sure our services truly meet your needs. Every year, we ask consumers to share their experiences with us so we can keep improving. Here's what you told us in the latest survey.

Who We Heard From

- 1,842 surveys sent
- 417 responses received (23%)
- Consumers from all SWEP programs, including Aids & Equipment, Continence Aids, Oxygen, Lymphoedema Garments, Vehicle Modifications, and more.

What You Told Us

- Overall satisfaction: 94% (Benchmark: 90%)
- Staff communication: 96%
- Ease of information: 92%
- Assessment experience: 95%
- Equipment & suppliers: 95%
- Meeting your goals: 91%

Most of you said the equipment helped improve independence and community access, and that our team was respectful, helpful, and easy to reach.

Challenges We Are Working On

- Ensuring obligations for timely delivery, set-up & education (where applicable) are met by all Suppliers.
- Small sample sizes for some programs make it harder to measure their performance.
- Continuing to offer both online and paper surveys so everyone can have their say.

Thank You

Your feedback helps us improve and ensures we deliver the best possible service. Thank you for taking the time to share your experience with us.



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SWEP Out and About – Community Engagement Activities



SWEP is committed to connecting with our community, both in person and online! We love hearing from you and sharing what we do, and our team is always ready to make those conversations meaningful.

Leading the way at most of our community engagement activities and Expos are our dynamic duo: Hana Hey (Operations Manager) and Kerry Etchell (Team Leader). You can't miss them, they're the ones with the big smiles, and answers to all your questions about funding and our range of products and equipment.

Hana and Kerry make every event fun and informative, whether it's explaining how SWEP works or helping you discover the right solutions, they're passionate about making sure you leave feeling supported. Plus, there are always some fun goodies waiting for you at the SWEP stand, because who doesn't love a little surprise to take home?



A sunny day in Ballarat for Hana and SWEP Director, Jeni

This year, Hana and Kerry proudly represented SWEP at several events, including:

Assistive Technology Suppliers Association (ATSA) Expo: 20 – 21 May

Melbourne Disability Connection Expo: 03 – 04 October

Melbourne Disability Expo: 21-22 November

International Day of People with a Disability (Ballarat Event): 03 December

Our Operations Manager, Sue Vincent, is a driving force behind our education sessions for community groups and prescribing practitioners. She's supported by our Team Leaders, Narelle, Karolina, and Paul. Together, they make learning about SWEP practical, interactive, and easy to understand.

If you would like us to attend a community group or online forum you are connected to, please do not hesitate to contact us by phone (1300 747 937) or email swep@gh.org.au



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Celebrating our People – Picture Board



Team member Bonnie win's 'Fashions on the Field' competition for the best race day fascinator



SWEP Team (Wetland's Warriors) take on Ballarat's Relay for Life 2025 raising \$8,000 for cancer research.



SWEP Team celebrate the end of another busy year – with a staff luncheon.



Team member Bec is acknowledged for 10 years of service.



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Our Consumer Partners Program



At SWEP, we're committed to ensuring that every part of our service reflects a truly consumer-centred approach. To help us achieve this, we established the SWEP Consumer Reference Group in 2021.

This group includes the SWEP Operations Manager, our Quality & Leadership Support Officer, and six current or former consumers of the SWEP program. Together, they bring a wealth of lived experience and valuable insights into the challenges faced by

people living with disability, chronic illness, and frailty.

The group meets quarterly to discuss key aspects of our service delivery and also provides input throughout the year on important projects, communications, processes, procurement, and organisation-wide accreditation.

We want to extend our heartfelt thanks to our Consumer Partners for generously sharing their time, expertise, and guidance to help us continually improve our service.

SWEP Feedback

As one of our consumers, clients, or NDIS Participants, you are the focus of our efforts. Your feedback helps us know what we are doing well and where we need to improve. If you have any compliments, suggestions, or concerns about any aspect of our service please visit our website <https://swep.bhs.org.au/providing-feedback.php>

We would like to share with you a few positive stories received by our team throughout 2025 (de-identified).

"Visited one of my clients today and I have to say, I don't think in all the years I've been here, that I've ever come across anyone who loves a piece of equipment so much. My client was absolutely ecstatic – he recently received his power lift recliner and the smile on his face was one of total joy.....he may have used the phrase – 'life changing' to try and convey just how much of a difference the chair has made to his life.

I thought I would pass on some positive feedback from an incredibly thankful client, who lives alone and has very limited support in Australia, so whilst he's had a hard life here in some respects, the nice things that happen (like the chair) bring moments of joy amidst the challenges. His powered mobility scooter has been ordered – I can't wait to see him when he's on it as I think it will surpass the joy of the recliner...."

"To the team at SWEP, I would like to thank you for the lift chair delivered to my home last week. I am extremely grateful for the support that chair provides and for the provision of equipment that makes an enormous difference to my safety, comfort and sense of wellbeing. I would also like to acknowledge the service of the team at Aidacare who delivered and set up my chair; the delivery process and communication was excellent. My husband and I appreciate your tireless support of myself and all older Victorians. Warmest Regards"



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"Many Thanks for your recent help in arranging for my Quantum Edge6 electric wheelchair to have its annual maintenance service and also to have a creaking noise investigated (the creaking noise was caused by a broken gas strut for which a new part has been ordered)

It is 27 years now since I became disabled through Multiple Sclerosis, and Swep has supported and helped me through all this time which I have really appreciated. Your service has helped to give me back my independence and mobility and made my life so much more enjoyable.

With Thanks again,

Best Wishes"

" Hello to all. We would like to express our thanks to both Safety Link Assist and [technician], from Chemtronics, for the repairs to our hospital bed. [Technician] chased up the correct part and repaired the bed last week. We really appreciate the work you all do to keep everything working. Please pass on our thanks to [technician] for his efforts."



Season's Greetings from the SWEP Team

