

Included.

Inclusion Access Newsletter



Issue 4, November/December 2022

Meet the Team

Welcome to our November to December Newsletter.

Wow, that was a fast year!

My name is Coralie Graham. I am an Associate Professor in the School of Nursing and Midwifery at the University of Southern Queensland (UniSQ). I am dually registered as a Registered Nurse and Psychologist and have worked in a number of roles in both professional capacities. In collaboration with Griffith University's School of Pharmacy and Medical Science (as a visiting scholar) I am working on Perispinal Etanercept Treatment clinical trials as a new treatment for stroke. As a parent of a son with a disability following a brain injury, I am a strong advocate for equity for all people with a disability.



You'd better watch out!



It's Christmas time, and while this can be a joyful time to spend with family and friends, for some people living with disability (and let's not forget their carers), this season can bring a few extra challenges. Here are our hints to keep the season jolly...

1. Reach out.

With businesses closing for the break and many specialist and doctors appointments on hold, The holiday season can sometimes feel a little bit lonely. Make sure you organise time to chat with family and friends whenever you can. Everybody's busy, but not too busy for you. And don't forget the magic of Zoom, Facetime and other streaming platforms. A little bit of technology goes a long way.

2. Plan ahead.

Travel can be tricky enough but even a simple trip down to the shops can be much more of a challenge during the silly season. Organise with carers or family to get to the shops early in the day, before the madding crowd descends. You can also take advantage of many local stores that offer delivery services. Toowoomba is full of them. A simple phone call or email to your favourite store will get a catalogue to you in the mail or lead you to the right website. There are also lots of charities that offer present wrapping services for a small donation around Christmas time so keep an eye out for those in your local shopping centre. A gold coin donation is a small price to pay for a lot of effort saved.

3. Check in.

If there's somebody in your life or circle of friends that you are worried about, take the time to get in touch. If it's yourself that you're worried about, take some time out for yourself to destress. It's okay to admit

you're not coping with something. Asking for help or giving help to others is one of the best things we can do to fight the stress epidemic in our everyday lives.

4. Stay healthy.

Treats are great now and then, especially at Christmas time, but you have to look after your health all the same. Make sure you're keeping up with your routine exercises and try to eat at least one healthy meal a day. Remember, the better you eat, the better you feel.

5. Join in.

Your community is planning lots of activities and events this holiday season, and although some of these activities may not seem right for you, it might surprise you how many interesting ideas people can come up with to include more people. Take the time to search out what is happening in your area and contact the organisers to find out more. Many lighting displays now include soundscapes and access is improving at many venues. At Inclusion Access we encourage you to contact event



An example of the sort of inclusive displays you might find in your local area.

organisers and ask them about your accessibility needs. Remember, by asking the right questions to the right people, you can be part of the inclusion solution.

We're working with...

This month we were invited to present a proposal to work in partnership with peak tourism group, Southern Queensland Country Tourism. This major tourism group represents and reaches out to hundreds of tourism based businesses in Southern Queensland. They are keen to work closely with us in the future to make tourism more accessible and inclusive for all people who live in and visit our beautiful local area.



Our team with members of the Board of Southern Queensland Country Tourism at their AGM

Out and About With Liz

A few weeks ago, my husband and I took some time out for a Citystay in the heart of Brisbane. We found a discount rate to stay at the Grand Chancellor Hotel at the top of the Roma Street Parklands in Spring Hill. We found this to be a comfortable stay, although some amenities were missing and we had to go outside to get to the indoor cafe. The rooftop heated pool was unfortunately up several flights of stairs so that made it unreachable to those of us with mobility issues, but for our mobile members of the community it would make a real treat with an unbeatable view.

Although this was a bit of a disappointment, there was still plenty to do with the parklands just across the road and the brilliant, free, disability friendly Spring Hill circle line bus just outside our door! This gave us easy access to the Queen Street Mall where we found time for some pretty fancy coffee, some

even fancier window shopping and even a pop-up market at the river end of the mall.

The real highlights of the trip were revisiting my childhood memories at the Regent Cinema, which has now been cleverly converted into a disability friendly visitors information centre in the heart of the city. Not only was there a helpful volunteer who gave us an accessible map of the city, there was also an opportunity to venture (by elevator) into the amazing foyer of the old, carefully preserved Regent Cinema.

As a child I watched *The Empire Strikes Back* at this cinema, but as an adult, I can enjoy the cinema in an entirely new way. Who would have believed that the passing of time could bring an entirely new experience.

Contact Us

That's all from us for this instalment. If you have any stories to share with us, we would love to hear from you. Take care, friends and have a happy holiday season.

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