



# Equipment Program Newsletter

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## Equipment Program Activity



Photo courtesy of Department for Communities and Social Inclusion

The Department for Communities and Social Inclusion (DCSI) state-wide equipment program services the equipment and home modification needs of clients of Disability SA, Disability and Domiciliary Care Services, Novita Children's Services and Minda Inc. Assessment and prescription is undertaken within the specialist areas of Disability Services, Domiciliary Care and Novita. Domiciliary Equipment Service (DES) then manages the supply and maintenance of all equipment and home modifications.

### Contact details

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DCSI and Novita continue to work closely with children who are transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). So far, 175 children with equipment needs have fully transitioned to the NDIS, with DES continuing to provide these services to children and their families during the trial in SA.

Demand for home modifications and equipment continues to increase for the Equipment Program. For children, there have been 82% more consumables supplied in 2013-14, most of the increase due to the Program now supplying splints that Novita previously provided via Variety fundraising. For adults there have been 38% more consumables (mainly continence) and 14% more customised items supplied in 2013-14. In contrast, services provided to older people and those using palliative services have dropped overall 8% on levels during 2012-13.

The Equipment Program continues to work with all our partners to improve services and provide better value for money in equipment provision. DCSI is working with the State-wide Equipment Program from Victoria on a joint equipment procurement project. This involves a comprehensive evaluation by clinicians and technicians, aided by consumers, of more than 50 commonly purchased item types that have been tendered by suppliers. Decisions on a range of items such as shower chairs, beds, and hoists will be guided by the quality and usability of the items. Together with pricing, this process will identify a range of value for money items for both programs to purchase for the future.

This type of strategic procurement project assists DES to maximise the number of items that can be refurbished. Each year more than 70% of the equipment items provided by DES have been refurbished to an "as new" standard. Apart from saving DCSI more than \$4.7 million dollars in 2013-14, having a range of stock of items on hand also means DES is better able to respond to urgent needs. DES will also purchase items for eligible clients whose specific equipment needs cannot be met by a stock item.

## International Wheelchair Day



*Photo courtesy of Department for Communities and Social Inclusion*

A free community event was held in Hindmarsh Square on Saturday 1st March 2014 to promote International Wheelchair Day, an annual day of celebration to acknowledge the positive impact wheelchairs have had in peoples' lives. DCSI hosted the event with the aim of raising public awareness of people living with a disability and using a wheelchair,

to encourage wheelchair users to engage with the general community and celebrate their achievements, as well as to showcase some of the emerging assistive technology that assists people with disabilities.

Over 50 attendees visited the event accessing a wide range of exhibitors including the Independent Living Centres (ILC) outreach caravan. Staffed by two occupational therapists the wheelchair accessible ILC display featured a broad range of equipment, technology and information sheets for clients to see and trial along with an onboard printer & lap top to enable visitors to take detailed information home for later consideration.

Highlights from the day include performances by the Sisters of Invention from Tutti Arts, presentations from Paralympic Athlete Nathan Arkley and Professor Ross Bensley from the University of Adelaide, and fantastic demonstrations of wheelchair sports.

## Independent Living Centre

The Independent Living Centre (ILC) of South Australia is a DCSI funded service which provides information and advice on equipment, technology and techniques to assist people to improve their quality of life and maintain their independence.

The service is staffed by Occupational Therapists and a Registered Nurse (Continence Resource Centre) and is available to all members of the public, including people with a disability, injury or illness, carers, community groups, health professionals, organisations and students. Services to the public are all free of charge.

People can phone the ILC on 1300-885-886 or email a health professional for individualised advice on [ilcsa@dcsi.sa.gov.au](mailto:ilcsa@dcsi.sa.gov.au). Staff will answer your questions, provide guidance in selecting the right equipment option for individuals and send information by post, fax or email. People can also visit the ILC website on: <http://ilcaustralia.org.au/>.

Alternatively people may browse through, and trial, an extensive range of equipment at the ILC site located at 11 Blacks Road, Gilles Plains SA 5086. Health professionals are available to provide assistance. Brochures, information sheets and product information are also available. Please book an appointment for detailed advice and to ensure staff availability. The ILC can negotiate to have specific items available on request where possible.

## Consumer Survey

The Equipment Program Consumer Survey was last conducted in 2012. It will now be run on a three year interval and consumers can expect therefore to be contacted in 2015.