



Short Circuit

ABN 73 104 198 752

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People with Multiple Sclerosis Victoria Inc.

Summer, 2019

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G'day Everyone,

I have finally found a new place to live, hurray! Long story short, from Centrelink I was told "you are not eligible for public housing because your income is too big", and from Community Housing that your income is too small. So, I went the old-fashioned way meaning DIY. Panic calls everywhere and finally I met a person who went the extra leg and convinced Community Housing to take us on board.



However, that journey was so stressful and took a toll on my family, so this is my last newsletter. I need desperately to find some paid employment (which means upskill first) because without it I am just a disabled person who is a burden to my family and to society. It was a lesson from this experience. So, wish me luck and good health in the coming year's 😊.

It has been a privilege to produce the newsletter for all of you, thank you.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Martin

If you would like to be the new editor, send an email to: admin@pwmsv.net.au

President's letter

First may I wish you all an enjoyable summer and festive season and hope that they don't bring us too many unpleasantly hot days. Please make sure you are well prepared and have a plan for coping with the heat when it comes to including things like: planning to eat cold food, keeping a drinking water bottle in the fridge, closing the curtains which face the sun during the day, opening windows at night, hanging a damp towel in front of an open window and so on.



It is exciting to see how much attention is being paid to the connection between diet and your gut bacteria and MS. Recent research has shown that there is a relationship between the bacteria in peoples' gut and the potential severity of MS but more work is needed to understand how that bacteria might be affecting the brain and the immune system.

*The good news is that studies have shown that changes in diet can lead to rapid changes in gut bacteria. Although there is still a long way to go, a number of foods are thought to generally help our gut bacteria, including fermented food (e.g. yoghurt), foods high in fibre, and eating foods of different colours (as some of the chemicals that make them colourful can be beneficial). For more information, you can google **ms.org.au** and look up Eat Well Live Well. And if you are thinking of changing your diet remember to talk to your doctor or healthcare team before changing.*

Also, a recent study (Published in Nutritional Neuroscience) led by Associate Professor Ingrid van der Mei from the Menzies Institute for Medical Research in Tasmania, along with research groups from Italy and Iran, has investigated the link between diet during adolescence and MS risk. The research findings show that a higher intake of foods that are considered healthy during adolescence is linked to a lower risk of MS. So, it is possible that a healthier diet, particularly during adolescence, may have a protective effect on whether someone goes on to develop MS later in life. Once again, this research highlights the importance of having a diet consisting of a range of fresh foods and minimally processed foods.

Turning to more prosaic issues I want to remind you that we are facing the real prospect that we will have to considerably reduce the mailing out of paper versions of this newsletter, for the simple reason that it is becoming increasingly expensive. We fear we will be forced to virtually limit ourselves to delivering it by email from this time next year.

Please try to work out how you can access a copy by email directly to your own PC or iPad or via a friend or family member. When you've worked it out let us know what Email address to send it to and we will start sending it by email. And remember when you do let us know your name will go into the hat for a draw to win a \$100 voucher!

Regards and compliments of the season

Nigel Caswell, President

***BECOME AN ON-LINE MEMBER,
HELP PwMS SAVE MONEY,
AND POSSIBLY WIN***

\$100 COLES GIFT CARD!

It is very expensive for PwMS to mail hard copies of Short Circuit to members, so we are keen to encourage new and existing members to receive their copy of Short Circuit electronically.

In each issue of Short Circuit until 10/2020, PwMS will announce the winning member who has agreed to receive Short Circuit electronically.

If you are willing to receive your copy of Short Circuit electronically please send an email to PwMS at admin@pwmsv.net.au, giving your name and the email address to which, you would like Short Circuit sent. Your name will then be entered in the lucky draw.

Last quarter winner of \$50 is: Miss Jennifer A Parkes

Congratulations!

Wheelchair Travel on Public Transport

Bus travel.

Around 99% of buses carry people in their wheelchairs. The driver will tilt the bus sideways to reduce the angle of entry and then fold out the entrance floor onto the ground to form a ramp. The driver will, upon request, assist you up the ramp and onto the bus. There are foldup seats on either side of the bus close to the front of the bus that can be lifted to allow you space in which to park out of the way of other passengers. Don't forget to tap on with your Myki.

Train travel

Await the train arrival at or near to where the front of the train stops in plain view of the train driver when he arrives at the station. There is often a disabled sign painted on the edge of the platform approximately where the front passenger door will stop. The driver will get out of the train and set up a ramp for you to board the train. The driver will ask which station you wish to travel to and assist you to alight by laying down the ramp at your destination. Some stations have raised platforms which enable you to either board or alight on your own.

Tram travel

One can only travel with a wheelchair or scooter on Low Platform Trams on lines that have matching low platform stops. These are limited at the moment to lines that go from the City to Melbourne University, Box Hill and Port Melbourne. They are simple to board or alight from as the tram floors closely align with the platforms. The trams have designated open areas for wheelchairs and scooters.

Good advice from user experience:

Buses;

- Best (safest) to park with your wheelchair facing the rear to avoid being thrown forward if the bus is forced to brake hard,
- If you are riding a smaller scooter hang on to the side rail to help stability when going around corners,

Trains

- Move right into the wheelchair parking spaces and clear of the doorways,
- Note the arrangements are not the same in some other states.

Reminder NBN is coming and old phone lines will be cut off.

Elderly people could be left isolated in their home and unable to dial triple-0 in emergencies, as a result of NBN's "dire" plan to disconnect landlines and internet to millions of residences if they don't connect to the new network.

An advocate for the elderly hit out at the plan as the Australian Communications and Media Authority warned NBN Co was planning to roll out its network by June 2020, meaning the disconnection of your home phone and internet could be imminent.

Warning to register medical alarms

The NBN says on its website its network involves new technologies which some existing medical alarms may not be compatible with.

“Therefore, it’s vital that you talk to your device provider for advice, and to find out if your device or service will work on the NBN access network, or what alternatives may be available,” it warns.

Those with medical alarms are required to enter the Medical Alarm Register to ensure the NBN can identify homes where extra assistance may be needed.

VitalCall is just one emergency response alarm that will be compatible with the NBN, saying it will work for those who sign up to the network or do not have a landline. It operates using a SIM card and the new VitalCall EVE 3G runs on the mobile network.

So far there are 10.2 million homes and businesses in Australia able to connect to the NBN, and more than six million are already connected.

Some residences have received formal notices in the mail from their telco provider, saying their services will be cut off if they don’t order an NBN service by a certain date. Some were warned they could be disconnected from current services as soon as November.

A letter to a Telstra customer read “The NBN network will be replacing the copper network that delivers your current Telstra services,”.

“That means you’ll need to order an NBN service before the disconnection date ... or your current services will be disconnected.”

Check your devices at: <https://www.nbnco.com.au/learn/device-compatibility>

Am I eligible for the Medical Cooling Concession?

You may qualify if you are a Victorian resident.

The Medical Cooling Concession provides a 17.5% discount off electricity costs over a six-month period from 1 November to 30 April each year, for customers with medical conditions such as Multiple Sclerosis and Parkinson’s that prevent the body from regulating its own temperature.

Customers who are eligible for the Medical Cooling Concession will also receive the Annual Electricity Concession.

Eligibility is based on the following criteria:

To be eligible the account holder must hold one of the following concession cards:

1. Pensioner Concession Card - issued by Centrelink or Department of Veterans' Affairs.
2. Centrelink Health Care Card.

3. Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card.

The account holder or another occupant in the household have an inability to self-regulate body temperature, and If you have any of the following pre-approved conditions:

- Multiple Sclerosis
- Lymphoedema
- Parkinson's Disease
- Fibromyalgia
- Post-Polio Syndrome
- Poliomyelitis

An application form signed by the patient's doctor to verify the need for additional heating or cooling to regulate body temperature.

For further information, contact your electricity retailer, or call The Concessions Information Line on 1800 658 521 (toll free) to have an application form sent to you.

Need a carer just Hireup!

As an online platform, Hireup is built to revolutionise the way people with disability find, hire and manage support workers by harnessing technology and connecting people with shared interests.

For too long, people with disability have had to accept support on someone else's terms. At Hireup we decided to fix that, by investing in technology and our community and bringing together as many Australians as possible to share in our vision. Together we are redefining what it means to be connected. To be supported. To be a community empowered by a system that matches people not just on qualification but on shared interests. We know that finding the right support is about finding the right relationship.

We have a better future in our sights and we're putting our stamp all over it. One support work relationship at a time. For us, that's the Hireup story.

What support can I find on Hireup?

Find a range of support, from in-home personal care to support at work or in the community. The support you receive is entirely up to you and is most effective when you get creative. Think about what you want to achieve and the skills you want to develop, and how a worker can support you to do that. Are you looking for a social coach? Workplace mentor? Swimming teacher? Study buddy? Match with support workers who meet your needs and share your interests.

How do I hire my workers?

There are three ways to connect with Hireup support workers.

1. Post an ad on the Hireup job board
2. Search and message Hireup support workers in your area
3. Recruit someone from within your existing networks

When you have found the right fit for you, hire your worker by creating a booking with our simple online booking form. Choose when and where your booking will take place and finalise the details with your worker directly.

How am I protected?

To ensure the ongoing safety of our community, we screen and verify all users before they join; request feedback on every shift booked through the platform; and offer round the clock support over the phone and via email. Our Community Support team is equipped with health and safety expertise and a swift and discreet incident response procedure. All Hireup users are covered by our comprehensive insurance policy and we have an active user removal policy.

For more information and signing up to the platform visit: hireup.com.au

I have been personally using this platform for more than 6 months and I was able to find a support worker who is going with me every week to the swimming pool. We swim, chat and have fun, no other agency could find me this type of person.

What is the Housing Hub?

The Housing Hub is a new way for people with disability to find suitable housing. Advertising vacancies from a range of housing providers, The Housing Hub also hosts a library of useful information about housing options and planning your move.

At the moment, the Housing Hub lists vacancies from housing providers in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria. Vacancies may include existing SDA properties (Specialist Disability Accommodation), new SDA builds, non-SDA supported accommodation, private rental, and properties for sale. The range of vacancies will continue to grow as the website develops.

The Housing Hub was funded by the Department of Social Services (DSS) Sector Development Fund as a pilot project in 2017, and in the first year has expanded from a few small regions to include housing located in many states across Australia. It is essential to try and capture the sort of

accommodation people are seeking, so that information about housing demand can be provided to government and private developers, leading to more accessible housing builds.

Community Board

B2C Community IT Recyclers is a 'social enterprise' of The WERX Foundation Inc, a non-for-profit charity that is focused on the recycling and refurbishment of donated, discarded or unwanted IT goods, and their re-marketing and re-deployment through its IT projects into communities in need.

B2C handles the collection and processing of all forms of e-waste and redundant IT equipment. We recycle regardless of age, specification or condition, working, non working including the following:

computers big and small, servers, all forms of IT equipment, IT peripherals (cables, discs, software), all digital equipment (iPads, iPods, tablets), office printers and cartridges.

You can buy cheap IT equipment from them or donate yours and decrease ewaste, win win for everybody.

B2C Community IT Recyclers - 03 9005 0101

If you like our work please consider donations, which can be made by:

cheque payable to:

PwMS-V Victoria Inc.

PO Box 1035

CRAIGIEBURN VIC 3064

or by direct payment to:

NAB

PwMS Vic. Inc.

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Account number 04-636-6841

(include your name in the bank transfer)

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