

Surf Life Saving Queensland Magazine

ISSUE THREE



Queensland

# SHORELINE



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SLSQ acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country throughout our State and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past and present.



**QLD**

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we embark on another chapter of our journey within Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ), we should all be proud to reflect on the remarkable milestones and achievements that define our organisation. At our core, SLSQ is 58 community-based Clubs, united in a common cause: To Save Lives. In doing this, we also Create Great Australians and Build Better Communities. In my mind, these three pillars encapsulate what our organisation is about. Combined, we are the largest volunteer organisation in the State and a very vibrant part of the largest in the nation.

Over the span of 108 years since the inception of formal surf lifesaving in Queensland, SLSQ has honed unparalleled skills and capabilities. Our dedication to saving lives extends far beyond the beach, permeating through the fabric of our communities at local, regional, and State levels.

The collective efforts of our Members, particularly within Operations Support, underscore the incredible commitment that defines our red and yellow family. It is through their unwavering dedication that SLSQ continues to thrive, adapting and evolving to meet the dynamic challenges of our time.

Recent events, such as the North Queensland floods, serve as poignant reminders of the pivotal role SLSQ plays in emergency response alongside various government and volunteer agencies. The recognition from the State Government, evidenced by strategic reforms and long-term funding agreements, underscores the invaluable contribution of our volunteer force to the broader emergency services landscape.

As we navigate the exciting prospects outlined in our new funding agreement, it is imperative that we tread with caution, ensuring alignment between

our capabilities and commitments. The forthcoming discussions with the Queensland Police Service (QPS) herald a new era of collaboration and innovation, promising enhanced training, equipment, and infrastructure to bolster our emergency response efforts. We need to be careful, however, to ensure we bring you, our volunteers, along on the journey and do not overcommit ourselves.

However, as we embrace these advancements, it is crucial to remain cognisant of the need to engage and empower our volunteers. The journey ahead may necessitate internal restructuring and strategic realignment, but rest assured, every decision will be guided by a steadfast commitment to transparency and accountability.

As members may be aware, the CEO recently announced the establishment of a new position of Director SLSQ Emergency Response as part of a wider organisational restructure. This is an initial step in seeking to build on both the incredible capability we already have and to leverage the support we have both organisationally and financially from QPS.

I am immensely grateful for the ongoing dedication of our Members and the steadfast support of our partners. Together, we stand poised to confront the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead, secure in the knowledge that our shared vision of saving lives will continue to inspire and unite us.

Yours in Lifesaving,

**Gerard O'Brien**

President, Surf Life Saving Queensland

Our dedication to saving lives extends far beyond the beach, permeating through the fabric of our communities at local, regional, and State levels.

PRESIDENT,  
Surf Life Saving Queensland



**GERARD O'BRIEN**

## CEO'S MESSAGE

As we embark on this latest edition of our Member magazine, I'm pleased to see our spotlight shining on a topic that resonates deeply within our community: health – encompassing both the physical and mental aspects. As our President mentions, our organisation is ever evolving and to manage this - we need strong, resilient people driving us forward.

In this issue, we're delving into the critical importance of maintaining robust well-being, particularly focusing on men's health. Did you know that in Australia, men are statistically more likely to experience poor health outcomes compared to women? According to recent data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, men have a higher risk of developing chronic diseases, such as heart disease and certain types of cancer, and are less likely to seek help for mental health issues.

Against this backdrop, our magazine seeks to empower our male Members with practical insights and strategies to prioritise their health. Through candid interviews with men on the front lines, we're gaining valuable perspectives on how they navigate the journey towards wellness. Australia may at times have a 'blokey' culture of ignoring our own health, but it's time to shift the dial on this. It's time to realise that self-care comes in many forms, and it's essential men find what works for them.

Our exploration of resilience leads us to the remarkable story of Derek Baldwin of Tallebudgera SLSC, whose unwavering commitment to surf lifesaving not only saves lives but also serves as a lifeline for his own mental and physical well-being. Derek's journey is a testament to the transformative power of community and sense of purpose within our organisation. A great Club Member, a fantastic servant to SLSQ and all round top gentleman.

Shifting our focus to sports, we're celebrating the achievements of Rhiannon 'Minnie' Smith from Tannum Sands SLSC. Her outstanding performance at the recent Aussies in the inaugural Adaptive Competition, not only showcases Queensland's dominance on the national stage but also underscores the positive impact of sports on overall health and well-being.

We're also shining a spotlight on some of our Queensland sporting heroes gearing up for the Olympic Games 2024 in Paris. Their dedication to excellence serves as a source of inspiration for us all, and we're proud to rally behind them as they represent our State and country on the global stage.

Amidst these triumphs, it's crucial not to lose sight of the importance of supporting our mental and physical health. As we navigate life's challenges, let's remember to prioritise self-care and reach out to one another for support. Whether it's having a chat, engaging in physical activity, or seeking professional help when needed, let's commit to nurturing our well-being together.

Remember, my door is always open for anyone needing support. Together, let's continue to uphold the values of surf lifesaving both on and off the shore, fostering a community of strength, resilience, and support.

Stay strong, stay healthy, and stay safe.

Warm regards

**Dave Whimpey**  
CEO, Surf Life Saving Queensland

Remember, my door is always open for anyone needing support. Together, let's continue to uphold the values of surf lifesaving both on and off the shore, fostering a community of strength, resilience, and support.

CEO,  
Surf Life Saving Queensland

**DAVE WHIMPEY**

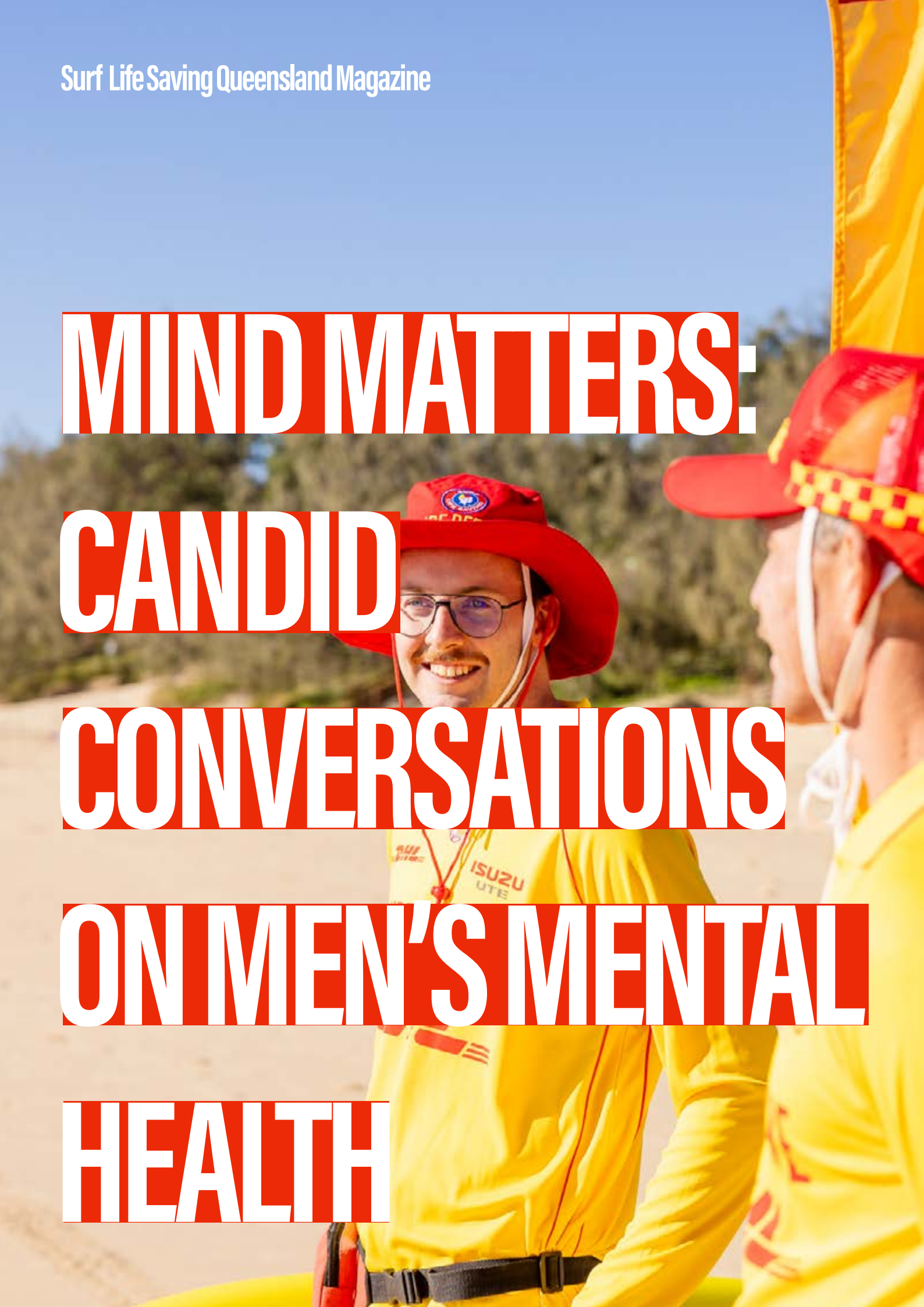
**MIND MATTERS:**

**CANDID**

**CONVERSATIONS**

**ON MEN'S MENTAL**

**HEALTH**







### **DAVE WHIMPEY, CEO SLSQ**

#### **What actions do you take to maintain your mental well-being?**

Personally I practice the art of reflection every night without fail about my day and what I'd be happening in my life and those around me. This helps me pace myself.

### **JESSE MANTELL, LIFEGUARD SUPERVISOR SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND**



#### **What actions do you take to maintain your mental and physical well-being?**

This is extremely important for me; I prioritise my fitness, every morning I am up at 4 am to go to the gym, then I may pair up a run or a swim with mates all before going to work, no matter how much work load I have on I will always ensure to make the time in the morning to do some exercise. I prioritise a minimum of seven hours of sleep, this helps with recovery and regulating stress.

Recovery and rest is also important. I am fortunate to have a sauna and ice bath in my back yard and I use them at least two to three times in a week. Good nutrition, need I say more? This ensures that I can do all the above and a full day's work whether I am on the beach, in the office or just out and about. I make Sunday the day I go grocery shopping and prep majority of my meals. Lastly socialising outside of work, being able to turn off from work completely is key, whether that's going camping or going surfing just helps switch off from work.



## **RON RANKIN, CHAIR & PROJECT DIRECTOR - LWC24**

**What advice would you give to someone who may be struggling?**

You are not alone, and just like physical health conditions there are ways to receive treatment and get back to normal health. It is good to avoid those thoughts and situations which trigger the stress if possible. I find music, art, exercise and keeping busy keep my mind away from negative thoughts when things seem to be impacting on me.

## **JESSE WITT, RETENTION PORTFOLIO FOR MEMBERSHIP SERVICES COMMITTEE AND YEP COORDINATOR**



**Do you have any advice for someone who may be struggling?**

Speak up! Don't suffer in silence.

Don't let the social norms of the past hold you back from sharing your struggle. With men the hardest part about going through mental health is the old school way of thinking that if you talk about your feelings or open up, you aren't a real man or you are weak.

This is completely untrue and makes it harder on yourself. The ability to be able to open up and share your feelings is a really big part of being an adult and growing up to help yourself in the future. Whether it's for Work, Club, Committee, or family, being able to share more makes the connections you have better and stronger, opening up more opportunities and multiple options when it comes to people helping you if you need it for your mental health in the future if you begin to struggle.



### **ELLIOTT RHODES-BATES, DEVELOPMENT PORTFOLIO FOR MEMBERSHIP SERVICES COMMITTEE AND AVIATION ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER**

#### **When do you know your mental health is struggling?**

It's a really good question and I think it highlights the importance of thinking about mental health and having some insight as to how you are tracking. For me there are a few warning signs, I'm usually a pretty direct communicator and so if I find myself getting even more short with people I have to stop and ask myself why. Most people will be familiar with

being hangry and I think that is how I get, except it's not resolved with a little snacky snack. But I think for me, prevention is better than cure. I have worked in frontline operations for ambulance for close to eighteen years now and I think there has been a fair bit of trial and error along with asking colleagues and friends what they do to stay well. Unfortunately, I don't think there is an easy recipe to follow as life changes and so do we, so I like to think of having a handy little tool box (or lunch box if we are sticking with me being hangry) with a number of strategies that I can use to help me stay well and maintain my mental and physical well-being.

### **IAN TANNAHILL, LONG TIME PATROLLING MEMBER, PAST PRESIDENT OF BROADBEACH AND DEPUTY PRESIDENT OF THE SOUTH COAST BRANCH**



#### **What actions do you take to maintain your mental and physical well-being?**

I believe connectivity plays an important part in maintaining a person's mental health. I love patrolling with members of my surf clubs on weekends. Being able to talk to people about my problems and not feel like I am being judged is important. Similarly, being able to help others, such as by listening to them describe what is bothering them, makes me feel valued and that I matter.

I believe that physical exercise is important in maintaining good mental and physical health. Going for a run along the beach leaves me feeling good about myself and the exercise helps keep weight off, which in turn makes me feel better when I look at myself in the mirror.

## NATHAN BLACKBERRY, PILOT FOR WESTPAC LIFESAVER RESCUE HELICOPTER SERVICE



### When do you know your mental health is struggling?

Firstly, I want to acknowledge the importance of proactively managing our mental health. I am very conscious of maintaining a positive mental health balance and I am passionate about mental health awareness. For a long time, I think the idea of mental health issues were perceived as a sign of weakness or it was taboo to be discussed, so it was not always addressed adequately. I like to think this attitude has changed as statistics show that up to 45% of adult Australians will suffer from a mental health condition at some point in their life. That is almost half of the population, so let's open the conversation, check in on our mates and remove any perceived stigma.

For me, I find that an early indication of deteriorating mental health is from poor sleep patterns. As pilots, we study human factors and know that chronic poor sleep and fatigue are known to contribute to poor mental health, in addition to other poor physical health issues.

### **Remember, you are not alone.**

If you're concerned about your own or someone else's mental health and wellbeing, you can get confidential help through Surf Life Saving Queensland - see how [here](#).

### **You can also reach out to any of the following support organisations:**

**Lifeline Australia: 131114**

**MensLine Australia 1300 78 99 78**

**Suicide Call Back Service: 1300 659 467**

**Multicultural Mental Health: 02 6285 3100**

**Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800**

**Survivors of torture and trauma who have come to Australia from overseas: 07 3391 6677**

**Beyondblue: 1300 22 4636**

**Benestar: 1300 360 364**

LET NOTHING

HOLD YOU BACK:

THE JOURNEY OF

DEREK BALDWIN



## Surf Life Saving Queensland Magazine

Derek Baldwin of Tallebudgera SLSC is the epitome of what it means to be a true-blue Aussie bloke – resilient, down-to-earth, and deeply committed to making a difference. His journey in Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ) spans decades, filled with highs, lows, and a remarkable display of determination in the face of adversity.

From Club Director, Chief Training Officer, and club captain to Surfcom volunteer, he's been a quintessential lifesaver.

It all began back in 1990 when Derek first moved into the world of lifesaving. "Our kids got involved in Nippers and like any parent, we managed to get roped in," he recalls with a chuckle. Like any supportive parent, he tagged along and was approached while waiting on the sidelines. "One of the Members there, who is now a life Member, suggested I do my Bronze," Derek reminisces. And just like that, his journey began.

"I started my Bronze in September of 1990 along with three others and we were assessed two days before Christmas. Our group was so small, we had more instructors than there were those of us in the group!"

"My claim to fame was that I was on the last course for the Club that included the reel line and belt."

Fast forward time and Derek found his real passion in training others, so much so that he now works as Education and Training Supervisor for Point Danger Branch after years of volunteer training and assessing at Club level.

"I've been in my role for six months now and I get paid to do what I love! In the 18/19 season I was lucky to be awarded State Assessor of the Year, which was really fabulous, then about two years later, I was awarded life membership at the Club which meant the world to me."



## WHEN LIFE THROWS A CURVE BALL

But life, as it often does, threw Derek a curveball.

It all started with what seemed like a minor inconvenience – bleeding from his foot. However, what followed was a series of medical procedures and operations spanning several years. From attempts to cauterize the wound to inserting stents and shunts, Derek endured a prolonged and painful process to address the growth on the ball of his foot. Despite the efforts, the problem persisted, leading to more surgeries and periods of recovery. The toll on his physical and mental well-being was immense, with Derek spending years in pain and undergoing multiple operations.

“Between 2014 and 2018, I had 14 operations. Some days I was on painkillers four times a day and even the slightest bit of movement sent me into complete agony. I hated the cycle of operations and painful recoveries and had almost three years off work.”

Derek reached a turning point. After exhausting various treatment options, he faced a difficult decision – to continue enduring the pain or to opt for amputation. The choice wasn't easy, but Derek ultimately decided to amputate his leg, seeking relief from the constant suffering. The surgery on New Years Eve 2018, marked the end of one chapter and the beginning of another, ushering in a period of recovery and adaptation to life with a prosthetic limb. A conversation then started to change things around.

“I was lying in the hospital after saying goodbye to my leg and I found out that the Branch had

a whole heap of carnivals coming up and had no assessor to complete some courses. Kerrie Barnes got in touch with me and explained the Branch was really stuck and that was a turning point for me.”

“I was that keen to help out because I was bored in hospital and was sick of life holding me back. I explained that I was on crutches and needed support getting there, and before you knew it, I was on my way back to my old life. I was on a fair amount of prescription drugs at the time, and I remember thinking I didn't want any brain fog so I spent a day off the pills and was in pain by the end of the day – but boy, was it worth it.”

From that point Derek never looked back, that first step led him to now working in the community he loves the most.

## HOW LIFESAVING SAVED A LIFE

While the physical challenges were significant, Derek's journey also took a toll on his mental health. Facing uncertainty about the future and grappling with the loss of his leg, he experienced moments of depression and dark times.

However, Derek found inspiration in the stories of others who had overcome similar struggles, including a guest speaker at an SLSQ conference, the Australian Navy diver who had lost limbs in a shark attack.

“I went to some pretty dark places over those years and was on antidepressants for a while to help me get through. A turning point for me was hearing from Paul de Gelder (the Navy Diver) and his story. Despite losing a leg and an arm, nothing held him back.”



### “I went to some pretty dark places over those years

“His response to a question about running distance on his prosthetic was striking—he could only manage up to 20 kilometres...only 20, that’s huge! Despite facing dark days and suicidal thoughts, he persevered, returning to Navy clearance diving as an instructor. He really inspired me as someone who also found a passion in teaching.”

Aside from finding a role model, being a Clubbie also helped Derek’s recovery.

“I’d just get really bored and thank God for my wife who would take me down to the Club house so I could tinker around and then be there to pick me back up. Without her throughout the whole process – I dread to think what would have happened. She’s my true lifesaver.”

“I also had to learn to drive again in my manual car without modifications - my job at the time required me to be able to drive any car so I took 11 driving lessons so I could relearn how to drive again. It was either that or no more job!”

### TAKING EACH DAY STEP BY STEP (PUN INTENDED)

“I’ve got two legs! One is my day leg (red and yellow coloured) and one is my fancy one that can go in sand and water,” Derek shows us proudly. “I’ve had to re-learn how I balance myself in an IRB, but that’s not stopped me from being part of the IRB group.”

“I’ve heard more jokes about pirates than I thought existed, but I wouldn’t have it any other way. Surf Life Saving is a way of life that saved mine.”

From learning to drive again to mastering the art of prosthetic limbs, Derek’s story is a testament to the human spirit’s capacity for resilience and adaptation. Through his experiences, he’s learned valuable lessons about perseverance, acceptance, and finding humour in even the toughest of circumstances.

“They’ve unofficially named the disabled toilet at the Club – “Derek’s ensuite” – not many other people have that honour! I’ve also been told I could never be a lawyer, as I wouldn’t have a leg to stand on!”

As Derek reflects on his journey, he offers sage advice to those facing their own trials: take each day as it comes, look forward to the day when the pain subsides, and embrace the process of healing with patience and determination. His story serves as a reminder that while life’s challenges may be daunting, they also present opportunities for growth and resilience.





**His story serves as a reminder that while life's challenges may be daunting, they also present opportunities for growth and resilience.**



A male athlete is captured in a dynamic pose, running through the ocean waves. He is wearing a yellow and green swim cap, goggles, and a bright yellow-green singlet. His body is splashing with water, and his expression is one of intense focus. The background is a vast expanse of blue ocean with white foam from the waves.

**RACING AGAINST**

**ATHLETES &**

**MOTHER**

**NATURE**

Matt Poole, a seasoned figure in the world of surf life saving, traces his journey back to his roots of Dee Why SLSC, where his passion for the ocean took place.

Growing up in a family deeply connected to surfing and swimming, Poole's introduction to surf lifesaving was a natural progression. With the support of his family, particularly his dad, who instilled in him a love for water, led Poole to become one of the most prominent figures in surf sports.

"I moved from Dee Why SLSC to Queenscliff SLSC where I able to find a dedicated coach



and supportive community. Through Queenscliff SLSC I won a Junior Australian Ironman title and a couple state Ironman and board titles."

At the age of 18, Poole made the bold decision to leave his hometown in Sydney and move to the Gold Coast to pursue his passion professionally with Northcliffe SLSC.

This marked the beginning of a remarkable career that spanned over 16 years, during which Poole competed at the highest level in the professional Ironman series.

## HOW DID YOU PREPARE YOURSELF MENTALLY FOR THE RACES AND THE CHALLENGES YOU'D FACE OUT IN THE WATER?

"I believe Ironman racing is one of the most difficult there is. It's unique in the sense that you're not only racing athletes alongside you, but you're ultimately competing with mother nature as well.

**From a young age surf sports teaches you to be able to adapt, be resilient, positive and overcome setbacks quickly and move on."**

So, you're always in two mindsets between watching what the other athletes are doing, and also trying to navigate and analyse the conditions and pick what you believe to be the best way through and out of the ocean.

Despite how fit, strong, or fast you might be, sometimes the ocean can take that all away from you. So mentally, it's very unique going into a race. From a young age surf sports teaches you to be able to adapt, be resilient, positive and overcome setbacks quickly and move on."

## WHAT DID TRAINING LOOK LIKE FOR YOU ON A WEEKLY BASIS?

Poole's success in surf lifesaving is a testament to his unwavering dedication and relentless pursuit of excellence. He attributes much of his success to the rigorous training regimen he adhered to, which was shaped by his experiences at Mooloolaba SLSC under the mentorship of coach Michael King.

Poole's training routine was gruelling, often consisting of multiple sessions per day, "often we'd train two to three times a day, four to five days a week. We were in the pool every afternoon, and on either the boards or skis, plus two Ironman sessions each week."

This hard regime built up a sense of mental confidence and resilience which proved invaluable in competition.

"His [Michael King's] training and my work ethic without a doubt took me from an apprentice to a fully well-rounded professional athlete."

## RUNNING FROM THE RACE TO A RESCUE

Poole's might have been a world class athlete, but always a lifesaver at his core, his

journey is marked by moments of bravery and selflessness.

"We were at Currumbin Beach, and it was big surf. I was about to race the Ocean6 Nutrigrain Ironman series, and right before we were about to get called to the start line, and while I was warming up, I heard a mum and dad scream. Their young daughter had been stuck behind the rocks in Currumbin and a rip was pulling her out further towards the rocks.

**"you grow up as a surf lifesaver doing patrol and rescues, and as you develop and become an athlete, you will always have the background and skill there."**

I ended up jumping onto my board, paddled out, rescued her, and literally ran to the start line of my race. I hadn't really stopped to think about it, as my mental mindset was wired to my race. It wasn't until I finished the race and spoke to observers, I really realised how wild the whole experience was. That is a key moment that has stuck with me."

This rescue story by Poole underscores the essence of surf lifesaving and highlights the exact reason of our movement.

Discussing this with Poole he was able to highlight, "you grow up as a surf lifesaver doing patrol and rescues, and as you develop and become an athlete, you will always have the background and skill there."

## PROFESSIONAL ATHLETE TO COACH

As Poole transitioned from athlete to coach, he found a new calling in passing on his knowledge and passion to the next generation of surf lifesavers. His involvement in coaching the juniors and youth at Tallebudgera SLSC next season, alongside fellow surf lifesaving icon Courtney Hancock, signifies a continuation of his commitment to the sport and its values.

“We’re excited to what’s to come for the next couple of years for Tallebudgera SLSC!”

Looking ahead, Poole remains deeply involved in surf lifesaving, not only through coaching but also through his business endeavours for learn-to-swim schools.

“For me, that’s where I’ve really found a great love and passion is teaching kids to swim, being down on the beach and teaching the young kids surf safety.”

For Matt Poole, surf lifesaving is more than just a sport—it’s a way of life, shaped by a lifelong dedication to the ocean and its endless possibilities.

As he continues to inspire the next generation of surf life savers, his legacy will endure as a testament to the enduring spirit of camaraderie, courage, and passion that defines the sport.



In this issue of Shoreline, we dive into men's mental and physical health, recognising the vital role of having a support system, both on and off the beach. Matt Poole, an elite athlete in surf lifesaving, attested to the profound impact of having a support person, particularly in his father.

Reflecting on his journey, Poole expressed the nostalgia of transferring back to Queenscliff SLSC for the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, "That's where I grew up. That's where the sport began for me, my first taste of success came from that surf club, especially to race with your dad. He's 62 now and I'm 35, you don't get too many opportunities or experiences like that. Anyone would attest in the sport, that my dad is a father figure in the sport."

Throughout his career spanning 15 years, Poole's father was his supporter and handler in every single race. Poole reflected on this, "Right from my very first race when I was 18, right through to my very last race, he handled for me in every single race...15 years, which is very unique."

The depth of their connection extended beyond the competition arena, as Poole remarked, "I've always done it with my dad, so it's been cool that we've shared so many different experiences through the sport."

This sentiment displays the huge impact of support in an athlete's journey, underscoring the importance of having a reliable support person in achieving success and overcoming challenges in sports and in life.



A female surf lifesaver is captured in motion, running on a sandy beach. She is wearing a blue and yellow swim cap, a bright yellow sleeveless top with 'FINZ' and 'RUSSIES' logos, and black shorts. Her expression is focused. In the background, other participants and spectators are visible, along with a yellow flag on the left. The overall scene is bright and active.

**BREAKING  
BARRIERS: A  
SURF LIFE SAVING  
JOURNEY WITH  
MINNIE SMITH**

In a historic milestone for the 2024 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships, the inaugural Adaptive Competition welcomed athletes of all abilities. We caught up with Rhiannon Smith from Tannum Sands SLSC, known to many as Minnie, to hear about her journey as an athlete and her experience competing in this groundbreaking event.

Sport was something that always interested Minnie, leading her to some pretty big successes:

"I have always loved everything to do with health and fitness, but the water was where I felt most comfortable and growing up with a type of Dwarfism, swimming was always encouraged by my doctors. This love of water ultimately led me to compete for Australia at a number of international competitions and culminated at the 2008 Beijing Paralympic games, with my best result there being 5th for 100m breaststroke. "

Surf lifesaving though was a relatively recent venture, thanks to her son Sonny Boi.

"Fast forward to when I became a mum to my awesome son Sonny Boi, who has been my training partner from the start. I first became exposed to lifesaving when Sonny Boi was old enough to start swimming squad and commenced his lifesaving journey in green caps.

As my son was progressing through the age groups, I became involved in helping with water safety and went through the training program to gain my Bronze Medallion to become a patrolling Member with our Tannum Sands.

I knew I could make all the proficiency swims for my Bronze but I wasn't confident in the rescue component. For the first time in my life, I actually doubted myself, but my Club were amazing and reassured me that it was 100% possible. It did lead to some entertaining moments on course for my unconscious board rescue with me having to literally stand on top of the board to flip my patient on. But we did it!"

The Aussies Adaptive Competition was her first surf lifesaving competition, her discovery of this event described by her as 'the most amazing thing.'

"I couldn't believe it - they had an event I could do! I quickly nominated for the Adaptive Competition before I changed my mind. The Aussies was always something that I had wanted to have a crack at, but honestly, wasn't sure how it would work if I had to compete with the able-bodied athletes. Having this event especially for the adaptive athletes meant that we could compete in arenas that we made for us."

The competition was a success, with Minnie fondly recalling the inspiring sight of "all the different adaptive athletes giving every event their best shot and the spectators giving full support and accolades for every one of them."

Her son had a unique highlight of his own.

"If I ask Sonny about his highlight from the day, it would have to be when mum was attempting to catch a wave on her board and nosediving (he will never let me live this down)."

When asked if she has any advice for those in the adaptive community who may be thinking of competing, she responded:



"The more representation we have from a variety of athletes with a disability, the more lifesaving can learn how and what is needed to implement the adaptations. So, I would say if you love the sun, surf and sand, reach out to a Club. Find the event or events that suit you best and give it a go!"

When looking into the future, continuing competing and encouraging others are at the forefront of her mind.

"I would like to continue to train, and master catching a wave on my board and also compete in the adaptive surf events at hopefully regional and State levels, as well as Aussies. I am thinking of how to encourage interest and participation at my Club, Tannum Sands, for other potential adaptive athletes to get into this sport."

**"The more representation we have from a variety of athletes with a disability, the more lifesaving can learn how and what is needed to implement the adaptations."**

Adaptive events within surf lifesaving are set to continue to grow year on year, a prospect that Minnie enthusiastically embraces.

"I hope to see growth in participation numbers in surf sports with more Clubs opening up these options for participation and perhaps more events tailored for different disability types. And maybe in the future we will see events integrated with our amazing able-bodied athletes at regional and State competitions."

I will be forever grateful that Surf Lifesaving Australia could see a need for providing an event like at Aussies for us adaptive athletes. The event exceeded all my expectations and am so proud to have taken part.



Surf Life Saving Queensland Magazine



# PARIS 2024: SURF LIFE SAVING'S OLYMPIC CONTENDERS



**As the 2024 Olympic Games approach in July, we interviewed a few of our Members set to compete, who shared insights into their journey with surf and its impact on their sporting careers.**

**We wish them, and all Members competing, the very best of luck - all of Queensland will be cheering on in July!**

# JACKSON COLLINS

CANOE - SPRINT



## **What have you been involved with in terms of Surf Life Saving?**

I'm currently competing for Kurrawa Surf Life Saving Club. I started racing surf skis when I was 17 for North Burleigh at the time, and it's been a pretty fun journey.

## **How have the skills you've learned with Surf Lifesaving helped you with your career?**

You learn the fundamentals of being out in the ocean and paddling. Kayaking is a more refined version of surf ski paddling, so my first attempt at kayaking was to improve my surf ski paddling, and it kind of just took over from there. I think there's a lot of good things you can learn from being surf aware and safe when you're out there.

## **What are your goals for the future?**

Looking ahead, I think we have a really good opportunity to go to Paris later this year and have a really good performance. I'm not sure what that will look like. I think it'd be awesome if we could go there and medal. I do think it's possible, but I just want to feel like we've gone out there and given it our best possible shot.

# THOMAS GREEN

CANOE - SPRINT  
GOLD MEDAL HOLDER



**When did you start with Surf Life Saving and what club are you a part of?**

I started Surf Life Saving as a Nipper. My whole family was involved, and I am a part of Northcliffe Surf Club.

**How have your Surf Lifesaving skills translated into your career?**

Surf lifesaving teaches you a lot, especially to never give up. Anything can happen in a surf race, so you have to keep going as hard as you can. Persistence is key.

**Any goals for the future?**

My goals are to try and go to Paris and claim the title of the K25. Also, to do as well as I can in the cable thousand. After that, I want to come back and focus on surf racing, aiming to take the single ski title. It's a competitive field with many great athletes, but I'm determined to give it my best shot.

# ALYCE WOOD

## CANOE - SPRINT

### What club are you a part of?

Maroochydore Surf Life Saving Club.

### What has your journey with Surf Life Saving looked like?

My parents signed me up to Nippers in U8s with no previous link or experience to surf lifesaving, but after a few years our whole family was super involved. Outside of my athletic success in the sport, I've also held many awards and positions within my club including Youth Development Officer and Patrol Captain. My mum recently became a Life Member of the Club and both my brother and sister are National First Aid Champions.



### Have you found any skills that you've gained from Surf Lifesaving have benefited you in your career?

While on patrol, it's crucial to collaborate effectively with a diverse team, including individuals of various ages, backgrounds, and genders. This experience has taught me the importance of clear and open communication, as well as being accepting of different perspectives. These skills have seamlessly transitioned into my life as an elite athlete, enabling me to quickly connect with and build trust among my entire support team.

### Goals for the future?

Standing on the Olympic podium is the obvious goal, but my primary motivation is to strive for continuous improvement as both an athlete and an individual every day. If I'm able to get to the Olympic final and produce my best possible race, I will be happy, regardless of the result.

### Advice for aspiring Olympians.

Everyone's journey to success is unique. Own your story and don't be ashamed of who you are or where you came from.

# BREE MASTERS

4 X 100 M

## What club are you a part of?

I am currently a part of Kurrawa Surf Life Saving Club but grew up in Sydney at Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club. I moved to the Gold Coast after I graduated school in 2012 to train with Ryan Hoffman (who is still my coach today) alongside the likes of Melissa Cracraft-Wilson (Howard), Simon Harris, and Paul Cracraft-Wilson, who were the sports greats at the time.

## What has your journey with Surf Life Saving looked like?

I started Surf Life Saving at the age of six years old at Cronulla Surf Life Saving Club.

My parents put me into lifesaving to get me comfortable with the ocean and to stay active, and I participated in Nippers every Sunday morning with my friends until I was 13 years old. I was always a land crab and much preferred competing in the beach sprints, flags, and relays than the ocean events.

When I was 12 years old, I won my first individual state medal in the beach flags, and when I was 13, I became the State Beach Sprint Champion, as well as competing up an age group in seniors to win the State and Australian Beach Sprint Title, becoming the youngest to win a Under 15 Australian Beach Sprint Title.

In the years that came after, I won numerous State, Australian and World Beach Sprint, flags and relay medals in my age group and in opens. I also represented my State on many occasions and was selected to represent Australia at the Youth World Championships, Sanyo Bussan International Lifesaving Cup, and International Surf Rescue Challenge.

In 2012, I moved my life from Sydney to the Gold Coast after graduating school to train with Ryan Hoffman and never looked back. The first few years on the Gold Coast were tough after battling sickness and injury, but in 2016 I became the World Beach Sprint Champion and in 2019, after winning many 2nd and 3rd places, I achieved my goal of winning an Open Australian Beach Sprint title. The 2019 International Surf Rescue Challenge marked the end of my time in Surf Life Saving, transitioning into track and field shortly after.



## **Have you found any skills that you've gained from Surf Lifesaving have benefited you in your career?**

Surf lifesaving has been an incredible foundation in my career. Running on soft sand is completely different, and I am still learning how to transition my technique to be more efficient and faster on the track, however running on sand has made me a very strong and powerful athlete - I get a lot of comments on my high knee lift which is something that has transitioned from the beach.

The opportunities the sport gave me to represent my country in international competitions and the discipline it instilled in me have been invaluable. It also taught me important lessons about teamwork, perseverance, and mental toughness, which are all essential attributes for career success. Surf lifesaving has certainly played a significant role in shaping me into the athlete I am today, and I continue to draw upon those lessons in my track sprinting career today.

## **Goals for the future**

It's crazy to look back on what my goals for the future would have been four years ago before I transitioned from beach to track, and it's still crazy to say this, but my final BIG goal that I hope to achieve in my career is to represent my county at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in the 100m and 4x100m. Beyond that, I'd love to continue to race for my country at the highest level and continue to improve my personal bests and break records.

## **Advice for aspiring Olympians.**

Set clear goals, work hard, and embrace both success and failure as learning opportunities. Surround yourself with supportive people and prioritise your mental strength and physical well-being. Enjoy the journey and be patient, and most importantly, believe in yourself and your abilities, trusting that your dedication and hard work will lead you to your dreams of becoming an Olympian.



**We wish the best of luck to every one of our athletes that are competing in the Olympics. We are sure their hard work, determination, and unwavering spirit will bring about memorable achievements and inspiring moments on the global competition stage.**



**MAKING WAVES:**

**LIFE SAVING**

**SPORT EYES**

**OLYMPIC DEBUT AT**

**BRISBANE 2032**



# Surf Life Saving Queensland Magazine

The International Life Saving Federation (ILS), together with Surf Life Saving Australia, has dropped big news: they're gunning for life saving sport to have a spot in the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games! It would be the first time ever that life saving makes a splash at the Olympics.

Life Saving sport has fostered many world-class athletes, especially from Queensland, like Ky Hurst (open water swimming), Clint Robinson (kayak), Grant Kenny (kayak), Michelle Steele (winter Olympics – skeleton), Tom Green (kayak), and Grant Hackett (swimming).

Renowned figures in the sport, including Trevor Hendy and Karla Gilbert, have elevated life saving to a global status, while athletes like Kristy Munroe, Courtney Hancock, Ali Day, Shannon Eckstein, and Zane Holmes have become legends in the sport.

ILS President Graham Ford AO is feeling positive about the growth of life saving sport worldwide and thinks it's the perfect time to push for Olympic recognition. He highlighted the support of prominent figures in the sport, both past and present.

Ford shared why they're excited about hopefully adding Ocean Man & Ocean Woman events, along with a mixed Ocean Relay, to the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games, pointing out how it fits perfectly with the International Olympic Committee's vision of 'building a better world through sport.'

"Our sport is unique, with all our members trained lifesavers who are rescue ready and have the abilities to perform rescues and save lives."

The big news dropped at the 2024 Australian Surf Life Saving Championships on the Sunshine Coast, where more than 8,100 people gathered over nine days. Surf Life Saving Australia's President John Baker ESM AM cheered the team effort, calling it a major step forward for the sport. Now, athletes can chase their Olympic dreams without having to ditch surf life saving.

Former World and Australian Ironman Trevor Hendy AM expressed excitement about the announcement. He underlined how deeply lifesavers are dedicated to their cause and their potential to add something special to the Olympics.

"When you have something that you really want, you get nervous on the inside. The fact that we've put our foot on the line and said we really want to be in this...I was a bit nervous because it means so much to so many people. And I think the Life Saving movement is a movement of the heart."

Ironwoman legend Karla Gilbert OAM echoed these ideas, picturing the chance to shine a spotlight on the sport worldwide, with a bunch of passionate fans cheering them on.

"When we talk about 80,000 nippers that are involved in the movement from Australia alone, and you give each of them that purpose or that dream to be able to go to the Olympics, or have that goal to go to the Olympics – it's a massive audience. To be able to take our sport to a bigger stage would be amazing."

Triple Olympian and Olympic kayak gold medalist Ken Wallace OAM said: "It's an incredible opportunity that we have in front of us. I was one of those athletes that did delve in both and I'm very comfortable in saying that I never left surf life saving to go to an Olympic Games. Surf life saving was part of my Olympic Games."

The International Life Saving Federation is getting ready to work with key players from the Brisbane 2032 Olympic Games to check out options for Olympic inclusion.



AUSTRALIA'S  
**GOLDCOAST.**

**IT'S LIVE!**  
*in Queensland*



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2024 LIFESAVING  
WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

# PROFILE: SRI LANKA LIFESAVING SERVICE





**Saving lives and avoiding preventable deaths in waters is a global task. In this issue of Shoreline we wanted to focus on one of our counterparts, Sri Lanka, on their history, challenges and goals.**

**The Sri Lankan Lifesaving Service (SLLS), provided us with insights into their past, aspirations for the future, and the distinctive challenges and differences they encounter.**

## TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT THE HISTORY SRI LANKAN LIFESAVING SERVICE - HOW DID IT BEGIN?

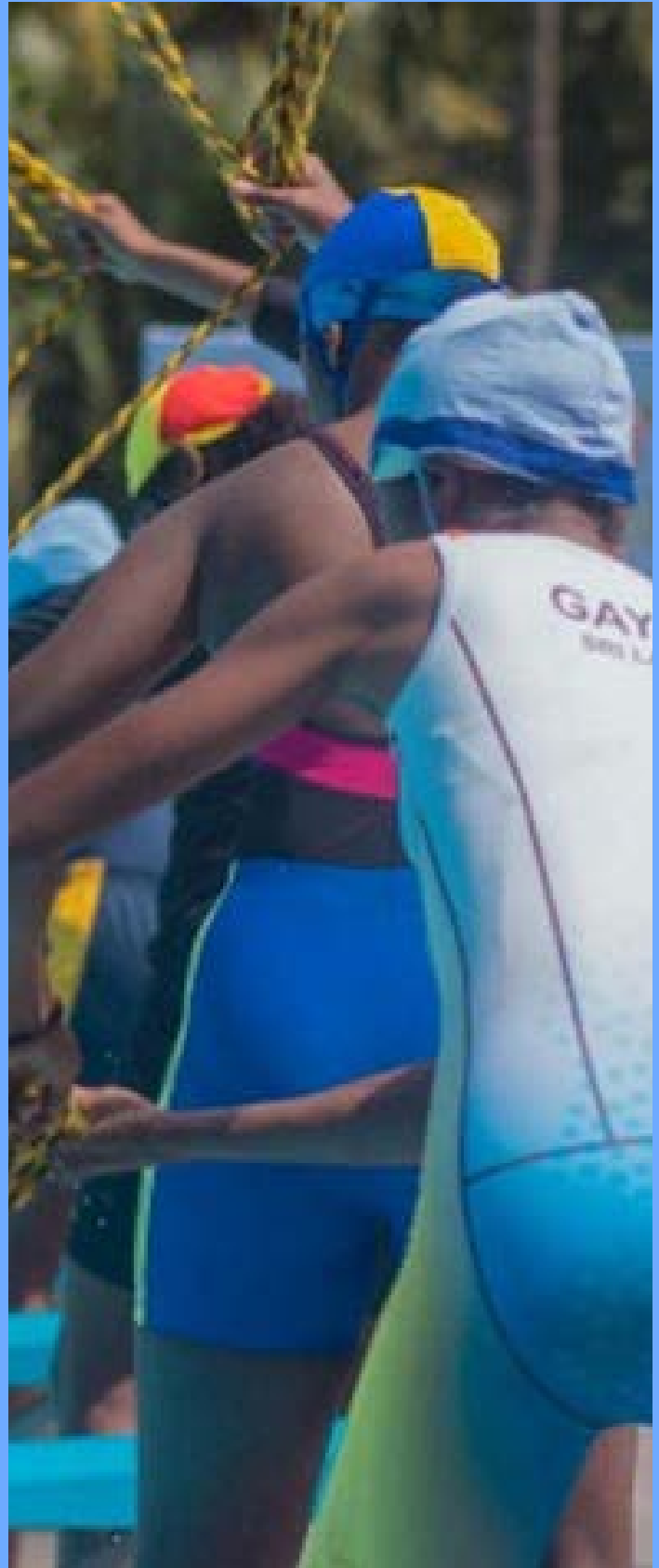
“The journey of Sri Lanka Life Saving (SLLS) began in 1947 when Mr. Harry Nightingale from Bondi Beach, Australia, founded the Surf Life Saving Association of Ceylon as a Non-Governmental voluntary organisation in Sri Lanka. Thereafter in 1976, the government of Sri Lanka recognized the national level involvement of the organization and listed the SLLS under the purview of the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs.

The SLLS is currently affiliated with the Ministry Sports and currently operates as the 22nd national sport in the country. SLLS has also been recognized by the Ministry of Health and the Disaster Management Centre of Sri Lanka and has been given special authority by the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka government to conduct all drowning prevention and water safety related activities through the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Defence.”

## WHAT UNIQUE CHALLENGES DOES YOU FACE IN THE WATER?

“Sri Lanka is an island nation, we experience two inter-monsoons throughout the year. The Northern and Eastern regions are affected through October to January and the Southern and Western regions, from May to August.

We have thousands of inland water bodies such as tanks, lakes and reservoirs all over the country and usually the water temperature inside them is from 26 to 28°C whereas, outside it is from 30 to 33°C. Due to this tropical and warm environment, people always try to surround themselves with water.”



## DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOUR NATION UNDERSTANDS WATER SAFETY?

"Since the last five years, the Sri Lankan authorities have an idea on water safety and have taken appropriate decisions at a national level with the support of the Ministry of Health and the Disaster Management Centre, Sri Lanka, to prevent drowning in the country.

As an organisation we have more than 80 affiliate clubs throughout the 25 districts and 9 provinces. Through these clubs, we share and spread awareness on water safety and drowning prevention along with our international partners such as the Life Saving Victoria (LSV) and the Australian High Commission in Sri Lanka. Due to the political and economic crisis that Sri Lanka was facing the past few years, the Sri Lankan people, even though they understand the importance of water safety, tend to prioritise their day to day lives as a community.

With the support of the Tourism Development Authority in Sri Lanka, we recently conducted special training to educate their staff on water safety. We believe them to have a huge impact as they are exposed to foreigners and locals in their day-to-day life."

## WHEN YOU THINK OF THE AUSTRALIAN COASTLINE WHAT ARE YOUR FIRST THOUGHTS?

"Stunning Natural Beauty: The Australian coastline is renowned for its breathtaking natural beauty, featuring pristine beaches, rugged cliffs and crystal-clear waters. Images of iconic landmarks such as the Great Barrier Reef, Bondi Beach and the Twelve Apostles often come to mind.

Surfing Culture: Australia is synonymous with surfing culture, and its coastline offers some of the best surfing spots in the world. Surfers flock to destinations like Byron Bay, Gold Coast and Margaret River to catch world-class waves. Diverse Marine Life: The Australian coastline is home to a diverse array of marine life, including colourful coral reefs, tropical fish, dolphins, whales, and sharks. The Great Barrier Reef, the largest coral reef system in the world, is a UNESCO World Heritage site and a biodiversity hotspot.

Outdoor Recreation: Australians and visitors alike enjoy a wide range of outdoor activities along the coastline, including swimming, snorkeling, diving, boating, fishing and beachcombing. The coastline offers endless opportunities for adventure and relaxation."





## WHAT DOES SLLS HOPE TO ACHIEVE IN THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS?

"We currently have ongoing water safety activities for school children and so, in the next three years we are planning to implement them with the Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka, throughout the country as a national level activity.

At present we have two national activities already in discussion. As an organisation we hope to engage and contribute to them with the technical input and skills:

1. The "Multi Sectoral Strategic Action Plan on Injury Prevention and Management, Sri Lanka" initiated by the Ministry of Health, Sri Lanka.
2. The "Drowning Prevention National Action Plan" initiated with the support of the Disaster Management Centre (DMC), Sri Lanka.

The Ministry of Sports, Sri Lanka, has supported us continuously and we believe that we are able to promote Lifesaving as a sport for school children in the future.

We also hope to engage more with our international partner organisations such as the Royal Life Saving Society (Commonwealth), UK, Life Saving Victoria (LSV), Australia, through technical exchange programs so that we are able to update the knowledge and skills of our lifeguards and volunteers."



## YOU HAVE AFFILIATIONS WITH A NUMBER OF INTERNATIONAL BODIES - WHAT DOES THESE PARTNERSHIPS ASSIST YOU WITH?

"The various international bodies provide us with technical expertise, international exposure, local experiences, new technology, updated knowledge, networking opportunities, research and data sharing and it also amplifies the advocacy efforts on global issues such as global warming and climate change." alike enjoy a wide range of outdoor activities along the coastline, including swimming, snorkeling, diving, boating, fishing and beachcombing. The coastline offers endless opportunities for adventure and relaxation."





## HAS THERE BEEN A STAND OUT RESCUE STORY THAT YOU COULD SHARE WITH US?

"Mavindu Peiris, a Grade 8 student of Aluthgama College, is a graduate of the Swim for Safety survival swimming program, which was delivered to students in his community. On 2 September 2018, an incident occurred that had a lasting impact on Mavindu. He began his day as usual and made his way to the community well, which is not too far from his residence. Whilst on the edge of the well, Mavindu lost balance and fell 16 feet to the bottom.



Although petrified and struggling to survive, Mavindu had the presence of mind to employ the survival skills that he had learnt in the Swim for Safety program. By utilising the floatation technique that was taught to him, Mavindu remained afloat whilst clinging onto a rock on the surface of the water for 30 minutes after which he was rescued and rushed to the nearest hospital.

Having experienced a near-death situation on such as this, Mavindu expressed immense gratitude towards those that encouraged him to take part in the Swim for Safety program, including his parents, the Principal and Master-in-Charge at his school, community leaders and especially, Sri Lanka Life Saving (SLLS). If he had not participated in the program, he may not have survived the fall. He is now an advocate for the program in his community as he recognizes that Swim for Safety is an invaluable asset to help save lives of children just like him.



Following our strong connection with the Surf Life Saving, Australia, in 2009, we were able to build a partnership with the Life Saving Victoria (LSV) and in 2012, we were then connected to the Australian High Commission in Sri Lanka. These bonds have grown from professional connections to friendships rooted in shared values and goals."

**SHAPING**

**COMMUNITIES:**

**RAISING**

**AWARENESS,**

**MAKING A**

**DIFFERENCE**





The Community Awareness Team is a very important part of Surf Life Saving Queensland, dedicated to ensure beachgoer's education, safety, and wellbeing around our coastlines and waterways. They are committed to providing a wide range of community awareness programs designed to educate people of all ages and from all walks of life about important surf safety measures.

We got the opportunity to speak with Sally Williams, Head of Community Awareness, to tell us a bit more about what they are up to, and how to get involved.





## A SNAPSHOT OF WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW

'Community Awareness is currently working on a schedule to expand our service outreach to schools slightly beyond our current geographical coverage. The focus of this effort is to send a committed team to these schools with the goal of actively engaging and training kids on the essential topic of water safety. Central to our purpose is an uncompromising dedication to ensuring that every child, regardless of geographic location, understands the importance of following safety measures in aquatic environments, whether it's a creek, swimming pool, or the ocean. By widening our reach and providing critical knowledge to a larger demographic, we want to enhance our advocacy efforts while striving towards our vision of zero preventable deaths in public water ways.'

## RECENT STANDOUTS

'Community Awareness has been fortunate to work on quite a few exciting projects recently. The standouts, however, would be our Water Safe Seniors program and our recent partnership with the NRL Dolphins.

The Watersafe Seniors program was a huge success on the Sunshine Coast. The program ran once a month at various beaches along the Sunshine Coast, finishing in a four-week series at the end of our summer season. It attempts to address the over-50 population, which is a prominent demographic in our drowning statistics. We cover awareness in basic first aid and CPR, as well as surf awareness skills including spotting rips, reading the ocean, entering, and exiting the water safely, and navigating the surf. We also go ocean swimming, and the participants even do rescues! Just this summer, we had 250 participants in our programs.

We were also thrilled to collaborate with the NRL Dolphins this season, where we provided Beach programs that combined surf awareness campaigns with rugby league activities on the beach. We visited some fantastic spots with the Dolphins, including Bribie Island, Point Lookout, Rainbow Beach, and, of course, Redcliffe. We believe that this relationship will help to increase membership in both of our clubs and the Dolphins while also promoting the surf safety message! We begin July with three programs taking place around Wide Bay Capricorn, including Yeppoon, Tannum Sands, and Moore Park!

## LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

'Looking ahead, our goal for Community Awareness is to expand our programs to reach new and diverse audiences while maintaining the high standards that we have established in our current programs. We are delighted to be collaborating with new organisations and groups in the multicultural space to educate their children about the importance of surf safety and awareness. Modelling what has been accomplished within our Little Lifesavers program, which was first founded with the mission of giving inner-city kids access to key aquatic survival skills, regardless of their proximity to a local beaches and waterways, we are excited to work with other international and multicultural groups in the hopes of implementing more practical beach programs with the aim for them to be opened for wider public engagement.

Adding to this, the Brisbane Region is pleased to introduce its own version of Surf Crew overflowing with increased community participation and fun-filled activations. The Surf Crew idea is motivated by the desire to teach people about water safety before they ever set foot on the beach in a fun and interactive way. Our team intends to be present on the beaches and waterways of the Brisbane region, as far north as Bribie Island in Moreton Bay and as far south as Raby Bay and Wellington Point in Redlands Bay. Overall, the Brisbane Team is thrilled to promote SLSQ's values and mission statement of achieving zero preventable deaths in Queensland waters.'



## GET INVOLVED

Community Awareness is continuously seeking for more people to join our team. We are extremely busy over the entire Gold Coast, Brisbane, and Sunshine Coast districts.

Wide Bay Capricorn is still seeking for personnel in Hervey Bay and Bundaberg, with the possibility of expanding to other places depending on staff availability.

North Barrier is searching for personnel in Mackay and Townsville, with the possibility of expanding to other sites subject to staff availability.

In North Queensland, we are searching for people in Cairns, Port Douglas, and Mission Beach with the possibility of expanding existing workforce!

Join our Community Awareness Team at Surf Life Saving Queensland and be part of a dedicated group committed to educating beachgoers, ensuring safety, and making a real difference in coastal communities across Queensland!

Those interested in applying can use the Jotform link provided below. For additional information contact Sally Williams e. [swilliams@lifesaving.com.au](mailto:swilliams@lifesaving.com.au) or ph. 0420 639 389.

[Community Awareness Application Form \(jotform.com\)](https://jotform.com)





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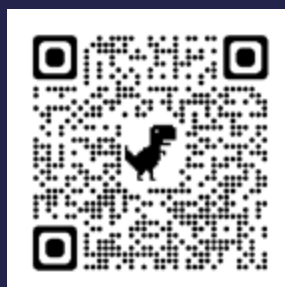
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**SURF LIFE SAVING**

**QUEENSLAND**

**INTRODUCES NEW**

**PUBLIC SAFETY**

**LIFESAVING**

**EQUIPMENT**







Surf Life Saving Queensland (SLSQ) recently saw the introduction of new public safety rescue equipment.

In this chat with Peta Lawlor, General Manager of Lifesaving Services at SLSQ, we delve deeper into the background, significance, and components of this initiative.

## THE BACKGROUND

The start of this initiative can be traced back to successful implementations in other coastal communities, such as the City of Coffs Harbour, where rescue tubes housed in special boxes have been made accessible to anyone in need. Reflecting on the success of such programs, Peta explained, "We witnessed the positive impact these initiatives had on enhancing water safety and empowering bystanders to take action during emergencies. It was a natural progression for SLSQ to explore similar strategies to complement our existing lifesaving efforts."

A visit to the World Drowning Prevention Conference 2024 in Perth served as encouragement, with visiting SLSQ delegates realising the urgent need for additional water safety services readily available to the general public.

"The conference confirmed the global trend towards expanding public access to lifesaving equipment. It became evident that such initiatives are instrumental in reducing drowning incidents and saving lives."

## IMPLEMENTATION AND EXPANSION PLANS:

Working in close collaboration with local authorities, SLSQ has spearheaded efforts to introduce these rescue equipment boxes across strategic locations in Queensland. The organisation's partnership with the Gold Coast City Council paved the way for the installation of the inaugural equipment at Tallebudgera Creek.

"Our goal is to extend these installations to key coastal areas, including the Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast, and North Stradbroke Island. By strategically placing these boxes, we aim to maximise accessibility and coverage along Queensland's coastline."

## COMPONENTS AND FEATURES:

The public safety rescue equipment boxes are designed to be highly visible, with clear instructions on usage and emergency protocols prominently displayed. Each box will contain a range of essential lifesaving equipment, including a rescue tube distinguished by a bright pink lanyard for easy identification. Additionally, flippers, pocket masks for resuscitation, and tourniquets for injuries will be provided to for emergency situations.

In envisioning the future of these initiatives, Peta envisions incorporating alarm systems into the equipment boxes to automatically alert emergency services upon activation.

"Our ultimate goal is to ensure rapid response and seamless coordination in times of crisis. By integrating technological advancements, we can further enhance the effectiveness of these public safety measures."

## COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AND COLLABORATION:

Central to the success of these initiatives is the active involvement of the community. "We want to empower individuals to play a proactive role in water safety. These equipment boxes serve as a lifeline for beachgoers, offering them the tools and resources to assist in emergencies."

Importantly, Lawlor stresses that the public is not obligated to perform rescues. "While we encourage individuals who are confident in the water to lend assistance, it's crucial to prioritise personal safety," Peta emphasises. "These equipment boxes are there to support bystanders in making informed decisions and taking action when professional lifeguard or lifesaver assistance may not be immediately available."

"Our mission extends beyond reactive measures; we are committed to implementing proactive strategies that address the root causes of drowning incidents. Through continuous innovation and collaboration, we strive to create safer coastal environments where everyone can enjoy the water responsibly."

"We are in the business of saving lives, and these initiatives represent another step forward in fulfilling that mission."

Peta extends a call to action to all SLSQ Clubs and Members to actively participate in identifying and recommending new locations for the installation of these rescue equipment boxes.

"We encourage our Members to leverage their local knowledge and insights to identify high-risk areas that could benefit from these initiatives. Together, we can make a tangible difference in safeguarding our coastal communities and preventing needless tragedies."



**LIFESAVERS WITH  
PRIDE MAKING WAVES  
IN INCLUSION**

With June being Pride Month, we chatted to Jake Little, the chairman of Lifesavers with Pride (LWP). He explains to us what Lifesavers with Pride is all about, what they have achieved, what they have yet to achieve, how we can help and the importance of allies within all of this. Jake has been a part of LWP for eight years, and lifesaving for 27 years. He tells us how he got involved with LWP.

## COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR STORY AND HOW GETTING INVOLVED WITH LIFESAVERS WITH PRIDE CAME ABOUT?

I've been involved in lifesaving for a long time starting with Nippers when I was 6. I came out to my parents in my early 20s and I was looking for a group of like-minded LGBTQIA+ individuals and community. I live in Sydney, and I stumbled upon Lifesavers with Pride while watching the Mardi Gras wind down in Sydney. That's when I decided to join, and it's been a great experience. It's not just a great group of people from the LGBTQIA+ community, but also our straight allies as well.



## COULD YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHAT THE GOAL OF LWP IS?

'Looking ahead, our goal for Community The overarching goal is to promote surf lifesaving as welcoming, inclusive, and progressive. Our main objectives are really to highlight that surf life saving is for everyone, and everyone is welcome at the beach. We really want to emphasise that for people who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community, they're super safe and welcome at any beach across Australia.

## LWP ISN'T JUST FOR THOSE IN THE LGBTQIA+ COMMUNITY, ALLIES ARE INVOLVED AS WELL. WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING AN ALLY AND WHAT KIND OF ROLE DO THEY PLAY?

Our allies are a key central part of the structure of our organisation. So, typically in some sports and environments, LGBTQIA+ people feel disconnected, excluded or rejected from their straight friends. What we've really worked towards is making sure that on our committee and at all of our events, we have our straight allies join, which really removes that perceived divide between the two communities. It creates a nice sense of intertwined community and shows that we all have a common goal, which is to keep our beaches safe.



## **FOR PEOPLE WANTING TO GET INVOLVED - HOW WOULD THEY GO ABOUT THIS?**

We have made it nice and simple! We've got a website if you just pop into Google [www.lifesaverswithpride.com.au](http://www.lifesaverswithpride.com.au), this is where people can join up. We've kept our membership fee super cheap for our lifesavers at \$5. And if you aren't a lifesaver and you'd like to keep up to date you can do so for free! You can become an associate member for free, and can keep up to date by following our Instagram - [@lifesaverswithpride](https://www.instagram.com/lifesaverswithpride)

## **WHAT ARE SOME MEMORABLE MOMENTS FROM OVER THE YEARS?**

Three come to mind. The first is something that happened quite recently, which was when the Board of Surf Life Saving Australia joined LWP at the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras

this year. To us, this was quite momentous to have not only the CEO, Adam Weir, but also the SLSA President, John Baker and all of their board members. It was quite moving to have them there and was quite a momentous occasion.

The second one is the SLSA Pride Surf Rescue Board. It was a Bellambi Surf Club down the South Coast that came to LWP and said what do you think of this idea during Sydney World Pride? And we took it to SLSA and now we have the SLSA Pride Surf Rescue Boards across many beaches across Australia.

The third one is the inroads collectively we've made in encouraging women and diverse people to join, not only LWP, but also lifesaving in general. And that's come from lots of listening and community consultation, which has been a long effort, with still more work to go.

## IT IS SUCH AN IMPORTANT MOVEMENT, AS YOU MENTIONED WE ARE STILL WORKING TOWARDS. HOW CAN PEOPLE HELP OUT?

Where people can help out is probably three areas. The first one is really education. I'd say in supporting Club Members, including the committees and board members, just to understand the LGBTQIA+ community.

Second, visibility. There's some simple things that Clubs can do such as including email signatures with preferred pronouns and celebrating days of significance. Some people think they're really minor, but they actually do make quite a large impact.

The third one is to listen. Whether you are a part of the LGBTQIA+ community or not, there is great value in even just listening. There is always lots to learn.

## WHAT DO YOU SEE FOR THE FUTURE OF LWP?

I think the first goal for us, and what I'd love to see, is broadening our LGBTQIA+ audience. LWP originated in 2007 with a group of gay guys, and now we're really trying to make sure

that we're inclusive of the broad LGBTQIA+ community, particularly our gender diverse and our trans Members. So that's really a priority for us.

The second one is similar to SLSQ, really trying to get more women and gender diverse people involved. So, making sure our initiatives and programmes really target them as well.

The third - we're really working hard to work directly with Clubs, whether that be being

on the beach with them or just ensuring we are investing time with them. This can be tough with our broad set of strategies, so we are really trying to narrow them down to certain Club specific contexts.

**Whether you are a part of the LGBTQIA+ community or not, there is great value in even just listening.**

## WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR ALLIES?

We really encourage people, if they're unsure about how to deal with anything to do with the LGBTQIA+ community,

to not be nervous. I think it's really important to politely ask questions. We really appreciate it when people do ask questions because it shows that they're interested and they're trying to do things right, so it's always better to do something than to do nothing.



# CREATING GREAT AUSTRALIANS



SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS  
MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

# The What, Why And How Of Exercise For Men





People exercise for many reasons, and at varying levels of intensity. Some love going full-tilt with triathlons, marathons or weightlifting. Others love playing team sports, while some prefer swimming, yoga, Pilates or simply walking.

Current Australian health guidelines recommend adults do at least 30 minutes of moderate to intensive physical activity on most or all days of the week. However, less than half of the Australian population do enough exercise to maintain good health.

The health benefits of exercising are broad and well-known – let's explore them.

## BENEFITS OF EXERCISE

After cigarette smoking, physical inactivity is the most important factor you can change to lower your risk of chronic disease, including some cancers.

Research shows more physical activity throughout life:

- Reduces the likelihood of early death caused by cardiovascular disease
- Reduces the number of new cases of cardiovascular disease and Type 2 Diabetes
- Lowers body weight, blood pressure and cholesterol levels
- Reduces the risk of, and helps to recover from, some cancers



People who are not active are almost twice as likely to die from a heart attack compared to those who are active.

Exercise can also help boost your mood, reduce your stress and symptoms of mental health conditions like depression and anxiety, and even improve your sleep.

So, it sounds like physical activity should be on everyone's to-do list, but many still struggle to start, or commit to, an exercise program.

## BARRIERS TO EXERCISE, AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

According to research, the most common reasons given by men for not being physically active are: insufficient time because of work or study commitments, lack of interest, age ('I'm too old') and ongoing injuries or illness.

All those reasons have merit, so how do you overcome them?

**Motivation:** You may struggle with motivation for exercise. Start slowly, set small goals, and use a mood monitor to keep track of any change in your mood.

**Cost:** Local community centres often have affordable exercise groups. And if you have private health insurance, you might get financial assistance for gym membership.

**Anxiety or feeling intimidated:** You might feel uncomfortable joining a group exercise class. This is perfectly normal. Take a friend with you for the first time, or download an app to exercise in your own home.

**Time:** If you are short on time, break exercise into small chunks. Instead of doing 30 minutes in one go, do three lots of 10 minutes in a day.

**Physical:** If physical obstacles such as injuries are making it difficult to exercise, you may benefit from seeing a health and exercise professional.

## HOW CAN PEOPLE IN REGIONAL OR REMOTE AREAS OVERCOME BARRIERS TO EXERCISE?

People who live in regional or remote areas often face an additional barrier — access to things like fitness centres, sporting teams to join or training partners to work up a sweat with.

However, there are still many ways to be physically active outside of a city, says Rob Newton, a Professor of Exercise Medicine at Edith Cowan University.

“Really safe and effective exercise does not require fancy equipment and expensive gym memberships,” Newton says. “A great exercise program can be set up using no equipment, or items which are readily available at home. For example, I recommend using an old backpack and filling it with plastic bags full of sand or gravel so you can adjust the weight and then use it as resistance. Backpacks are generally strong and have numerous handles, so it is easy to hold them in different ways for a very large range of strength training exercises.

“Very effective strength training can be performed with just your body weight, such as squats, lunges, push-ups etc., and this will produce improvements in muscle size and strength. You can then add further resistance as you become stronger using equipment such as the weighted backpack or other resistance such as dumbbells or barbells.

“Aerobic training can include walking, jogging, running, cycling, swimming, rowing etc., which can be performed anywhere there is open space.

“And for those with access to the internet, there is a huge resource of exercise programs and apps for your smartphone or tablet (which

includes strength training, aerobic training, yoga and even meditation and relaxation.

“Access and bandwidth to the internet can be an issue for those in rural and remote areas, however, exercise programs can be developed by fitness professionals or even an accredited exercise physiologist and sent to you via email or even post. Accredited exercise physiologists can be found through Exercise & Sport Science Australia, and many will provide telehealth consultations which may be rebatable through Medicare.”

## WHAT TYPES OF EXERCISE SHOULD YOU DO?

The good news is, you can choose whatever you like!

You don't need to be a 'gym junkie' to improve your health — while gyms suit some people, they're not for everyone. The most effective way to stick to an exercise routine is by choosing movement you enjoy and that works the major muscle groups — it could be playing cricket, surfing, running with music, or going on a long hike.

Whatever activities you do participate in, try to make it a consistent part of your life. In Exercise & Sports Science Australia's Exercise and Men's Health eBook, it's stated that adults (aged 18–64) should be active most days, preferably every day. Each week, men should try to do:

- 2.5 to 5 hours of moderate-intensity physical activity (i.e. a brisk walk, round of golf, or swimming),
  - 1.25 to 2.5 hours of vigorous physical activity (i.e. jogging, cycling, playing soccer or football), or
  - An equivalent combination of both
- You should also include muscle-strengthening activities at least two days each week.



## HOW TO GET GOING IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START

If you're motivated to start exercising — that's great! But a chat with your GP for pre-exercise screening before you hit the gym or lace up your jogging shoes is recommended, especially for certain men.

If you have a medical condition, are overweight, are over 40 years of age or haven't exercised regularly for a long time, see your doctor for a check-up, advice and support before increasing

your physical activity levels.

Once you're good to go, take some 'baby steps' and try to make physical activity part of your regular routine. Often, getting started is the hardest part — there's an old saying that states 'the hardest part of going for a run is putting your sneakers on!'

So (as long as your GP or an exercise professional has given you the green light), lace up, get moving and reap the rewards!

# Give Your Immunity A Boost: How We Can Use Food To Fight The Flu

By Bonnie Hancock, Accredited Practising Dietitian

In light of the approaching flu season, I thought it would be very topical to shed light on how you can get your immune system in top gear. And in case you were wondering, yes ... there is plenty you can do to ensure you stay healthy and virus free.

Immune function is very closely linked to nutrition and certain nutrients can help protect your body against viruses. Just like fuelling a car with fuel for a road trip, the same applies when it comes to loading your body up with the right foods to get you through flu season.

The first line of defence when it comes to immunity is the mucosa that line the lungs, nose and mouth. To use an analogy, we can see this as the front row of your immune system team. Vitamin A plays an essential role in keeping the cells that line the mucosa intact and if you have a Vitamin A deficiency, viruses have a better chance of getting through this first line of defence.

Great sources of vitamin A include cheese, eggs, fish, milk and yoghurt, as well as yellow, orange and dark green vegetables like carrots, sweet potato, and spinach.

Next, we have iron. Blood is the primary transport system of nutrients around the body and iron makes up haemoglobin which acts as the carrier for these nutrients to vital cells. If a virus penetrates the first line of defence and you are low in iron, you have no back line to come in and help the forwards. Iron deficiency is particularly common in female athletes, and any sort of viral infection will hit those who suffer from low iron stores harder.

We can get plenty of iron from both meat sources (red meat, chicken and fish), as well as plant sources such as beans, lentils, nuts, and dark green veg. It is also important to note that Vitamin C helps to absorb plant-based iron.

If you haven't had a blood test in the past six months, now would be a good time to get your iron stores checked so you can act quickly if iron is borderline low. Supplements can be used to help top up iron levels, but the body more readily absorbs long term we should take a good first approach and source the iron from food.

## WHAT TO DO ONCE THE INFECTION IS IN OUR BODY?

If a cold or virus penetrates our first immune defence mechanisms, not to worry—we can do much to prevent the severity and length of the illness.

Zinc is a mineral which is often overlooked and whilst we know that zinc is essential in the creation of new cells, we also have evidence to suggest that adequate zinc intake will decrease the severity of a cold after onset. Good sources of zinc include seafood, particularly oysters, tofu, legumes, whole grains and nuts.

We also need to load up on antioxidants to fight the free radicals, which have fought their way through the walls of our cells. We call these phytonutrients, which includes beta-carotene, vitamin C, selenium and copper. Vitamin C sources include mangoes, kiwi fruits, limes, strawberries, capsicum, broccoli, spinach and tomatoes.

Once again, it should be stressed that rushing out to buy supplements is not always the best move. Overloading your body with one vitamin might cause a deficiency in another, as the body struggles to absorb both. Getting your vitamins and minerals from food allows you to get what you need in proportional amounts. If supplementation is required, it is always a good idea to consult your GP or dietician for advice. Eat well, stay safe and see you on the beach.



Queensland

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# Our Values



## INNOVATION

Continually explore cutting edge technologies and systems as we work towards our beach and Clubs of the future.



## SAFETY

Prioritise and take responsibility for safety at all levels across the organisation, both on and off the beach.



## RESPECT

Treat each other with respect, value each other's contributions, and celebrate our people who strive for excellence.



## COMMUNITY

We will not only protect the community we serve but we will reflect the community we operate within and foster a welcoming culture.



## TRUST

Ensure that trust and accountability are the cornerstones of our organisation; through open and honest communication, and by always delivering on our commitments.



## INTEGRITY

We will display the quality of honesty and having strong moral principles.

# Our Partners

## PRINCIPAL PARTNERS



## GOVERNMENT



## COMMUNITY



## MEDIA



## BUSINESS

