

SKILLS TO ENABLE PEOPLE & COMMUNITIES

STEPS NEWSLETTER

From the Manager....

It is full steam ahead here at the STEPS program as we excitedly plan for our upcoming STEPS Program Leader Network Training Forum, titled "Stepping into the Future", in Brisbane on 18/19 October. See page 7 for all the details.

We have also been very proud about some of our recent achievements being recognised by others. Our Logan STEPS Program Leaders (John Enright, Jon Giessler and Milissa Valentine) were recognised for their efforts at the Logan Disability and Opportunity Expo; and Ben Turner was also a Finalist in the Queensland Health, Healthcare Improvement Awards. See below for all the details.

Areti

Logan Disability and Opportunity Expo

On 7 September 2011, the Logan STEPS Program Leaders (John Enright, Jon Giessler and Milissa Valentine) attended the Logan Disability and Opportunity Expo. Together with Ben Turner (STEPS Program Co-ordinator), they had an exhibitors stand at the expo to promote the program to residents of the Logan area. A fantastic day was had by all – many people came over to the STEPS Program stand and the Logan Leaders were very helpful in offering suggestions and helping people learn what the



STEPS Program is all about. The expo has already generated further interest from people seeking to do the STEPS Program in the Logan area.



In conjunction with the Expo, Logan City Council hosted the annual Logan Disability Awards. John, Jon and Milissa were nominated for an award. In what is a fantastic recognition for their hard work and effort in establishing the STEPS Program in the Logan area, John, Jon and Milissa were the award winners for the Community Services category. The

Mayor later visited the STEPS Program exhibitors stand to personally thank them for their contribution to helping others who have experienced a brain injury in the Logan area.

John, Jon and Milissa have led 10 STEPS Skills Programs in the Logan area and support the local STEPS Network Group, which regularly has an attendance of 25-30 people. Together, they have formed an excellent partnership that continues to make a real difference in the lives of others who have experienced a brain injury – we join with the Logan City Council in congratulating them for their efforts!



QH Healthcare Improvement Awards

On 31 August, Ben Turner, Areti Kennedy and Ray Quinn (ABIOS Manager) attended the Queensland Health Healthcare Improvement Symposium and Awards. Ben Turner was shortlisted as a finalist in the Consumer Partnerships category, which is a great recognition within Queensland Health of the growth of the STEPS Program over the past few years. Earlier that day, Ben and Milissa Valentine (Logan STEPS Leader) had given a presentation about the STEPS Program. Once again, this was a great opportunity to promote the STEPS Program to health professionals and other service providers.

STEPS

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Special Points of Interest:

- © Logan Disability & Opportunity Expo
- © QH Healthcare Improvement Awards
- © Bang on a Beanie

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STEPS Skills Program Reports

STEPS Southport

The Southport/ Spiritus STEPS Skills Program commenced on 25th July at the St Peter's Anglican Church at Southport. The program was led by Sue Simpson and Alex Young from Spiritus Gold Coast. Both Sue and Alex are experienced chronic disease self-management facilitators and they definitely brought their wealth of experience to the group. The group enjoyed the open and relaxed structure of the STEPS Program with plenty of discussion, a few tears and plenty of laughter along the way. For the group break-up activity, the group decided to meet at the art gallery of one of the participants in the group, Pierre, for morning tea. Pierre's artwork is amazing and the setting for the morning tea was just perfect – sitting outside overlooking a canal in beautiful spring weather. Pierre's wife had also baked plenty of French pastries etc for the group to enjoy. A fabulous morning was had by all – it was a great way to finish the program! The Southport STEPS Skills Program participants have been invited to join with the Gold Coast STEPS Network Group.



STEPS Rockhampton

The Rockhampton Base Hospital STEPS Skills Program started on 3 June and was held at the Geriatric and Rehabilitation Service (GARS) at the hospital. The program was led by Judy Fisher (Social Worker) with the help of a few other GARS staff members. The group differed slightly from other STEPS groups in that some of the participants were still inpatients at GARS, while the

majority had returned to their homes and were continuing with their rehabilitation as outpatients. The group was large in numbers and there was always lots of discussion. The group found it very beneficial to hear the perspectives of participants at different stages of the recovery process. For the group break-up activity, the group decided on lunch at the Rockhampton Botanical

Gardens. Everyone was quite keen to try a burger at the café. A previous patient of GARS who has returned to his job as a reptile keeper at the Botanical Gardens was also kind enough to show the group around the Botanical Gardens and point out a few of the scaly friends who call the gardens their home.

STEPS Buranda

The Buranda STEPS Skills program started on 22 June and was held at the ABIOS offices. The program was led by two of our experienced STEPS Leaders in Maria Hoogstrate and Marilyn Ginn.

The group filled up very quickly and had a great attendance of 8-10 regular participants. While the group was quite diverse, they enjoyed sharing their experiences and found that there were many similarities in the journey they each had taken in their recovery after brain injury. Another feature of the group was the morning teas, prepared by Maria. Maria

enjoys baking and kindly shared her talents with the group throughout the course of the program. For the group break-up activity, the group enjoyed lunch together at a café in the Roma Street Parklands. The group has continued to meet since the completion of the program and has recently planned a public transport train trip to Cleveland for lunch. This was a goal set by the group during the course of the 6-week STEPS Skills Program – it will provide a great opportunity for participants in the group to regain their confidence in accessing public transport in the Brisbane area.



STEPS Nundah

It's always great to have an enthusiastic group. The Nundah STEPS group were just that. A team, 100% devoted to finding a better way through the minefield that is having an ABI. Light-hearted information sharing made for a fun, effective and helpful weekly meetings as we made our way through the course workbook in a very comfortable room at the Nundah Community Health Centre. As a leader with an injury I loved the opportunity to be in this positive environment and am thrilled to be part of moving our group into next phase. Yes, our Network Group is up and running and we are having our first meeting in October, which we are all looking forward to.

Sandy.



STEPS Townsville

We have had 2 STEPS Skills Program in Townsville this year- at Townsville Hospital and in the community in Kirwan- the first time we have had a community- based program in Townsville! We plan to have a full report about this group- ably led by Tina Ferriday, Melissa Walls and Noel Ball- in our next newsletter but, for now, here is a poem written by one of the leaders, Noel. The poem was shared with group members at the break-up activity.

STEPS to a BETTER FUTURE

ABIOS set up a programme called STEPS
So ABI people can have better preps
They can't answer the big question
"WHY"
But help you try to reach the sky.

You set goals to achieve
Much more than you could believe
Not too high and not too strong
They'll help you back to where you belong.

The programme is only for guidance
You will have to take the stance
You need to grasp it with both hands
And let it take you to uncharted lands.

You can stay in contact with the group
Maintain an effective loop
Help each other with the drive
Never give up, always strive.

Time will let your body heal
Your future, time will reveal
Try hard, take losses, love gains
Be positive whatever the strains.

STEPS can help you along the way
It's your choice if you want to stay
ABIOS will be there for assistance
It all depends on your persistence.

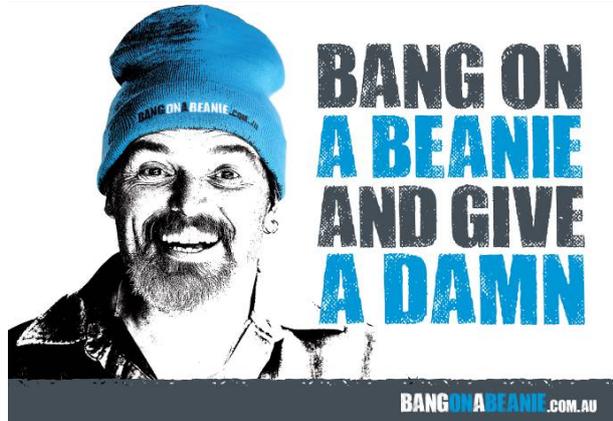
Noel Ball

Bang on a Beanie

What a beautiful bunch of benevolent bunnies you are! Thank you for your support of the BANGONABEANIE Campaign, the first national brain injury awareness campaign, which strived to encourage people to buy a blue branded beanie to support Brain Injury Awareness Week (15-21 August 2011). STEPS Program leaders and members certainly embraced this campaign, with over 200 beanies sold through the STEPS program. We also know many others ordered beanies directly from the website, something we encouraged when we ran out of stock, and demand exceeded supply. As well as fundraising towards improving essential services for people living with ABI, this campaign was a great opportunity for people to talk with others about brain injury. The STEPS Program had several examples of this from communities around Queensland, which means the word was spread far and wide, in places where people need to hear it- EVERYWHERE!

Thanks also to everyone who made a donation to the campaign. Of special note, the father of our Mt Gravatt STEPS Program leader, Tyrone, held a BBQ at his workplace and raised over \$700, which was amazing.

A few of our members and staff also had their photo image used for the campaign- they look pretty great, we think! If you want to learn more about this campaign, and get a head start for next year, check out the website, <http://www.bangonabeanie.com.au>



STEPS Network Groups

STEPS Bayside

The Bayside STEPS Network Group has continued to meet on a monthly basis throughout 2011 (2nd Thursday of each month). The group usually meets over lunch and the Redlands RSL at Cleveland tends to be a bit of a group favourite. However, the group tries to rotate the venue for group lunches between Cleveland, Capalaba and Wynnum. Earlier in the year, the group welcomed participants from the Capalaba STEPS Skills Program

– it has been great to have a few new faces in the group. The Bayside STEPS Network Group has been running for almost 2 years now – one of the great strengths of the group is the opportunity to celebrate the progress and achievements of participants over time. While everyone has had their difficulties (and we continue to do so), it is great to share in each others progress towards achieving their goals. The positive nature of the group is motivating for all!



STEPS Mt Gravatt

Mt Gravatt has certainly been out-and-about these past few months. With most of our members able to travel easily, we can go to different places and enjoy new experiences. We have taken advantage of this fact, alternating



our meetings at our local favourite coffee shop in Mt Gravatt, with adventures to other places. We have had a trip on the Brisbane River on the Citycat, a day trip for lunch at the famous Morgan's Seafood on



Scarborough Harbour, a trek up to Glasshouse Mountains to sample Mr Beefy's Pies, and another lunch at the Blue Fin Fishing Club. After all our feasting and rambling around the countryside, we had a more active and local session of ten-pin bowling most recently.

STEPS Brisbane Central

The Brisbane Central STEPS Network Group continues to meet on a monthly basis, with meeting venues rotating between the ABIOS offices and the Roma Street Parklands. This year, the group has been fortunate to star in the production of a DVD about brain injury – some of the footage has been used to develop a promotional DVD about the STEPS Program. The group also featured in a photo shoot as part of Ben Turner's finalist nomination for the Healthcare Improvement Awards (a couple of the professional photos are featured right). Each time, the group has been willing to give things a go

and has had a great time along the way. The group is one of the longest running STEPS Network Groups and continues to provide a valuable source of support to people with an acquired brain injury in the central Brisbane area.



STEPS Forest Lake

The Forest Lake STEPS Network Group was formed in July 2011 after the Forest Lake STEPS Skills Program finished in June. Since then, the group has met monthly

(last Tuesday of each month) at the Coffee Club in Forest Lake. The group is only small, but is never short of conversation. The group provides a great opportunity for people to continue

the friendships they formed during the initial 6-week program. The group is open to others in the local area, and has recently welcomed a couple of new participants.

STEPS Kingaroy

The Kingaroy Network group has been meeting on the 2nd Friday of the month this year, mostly at Gloria Jean's coffee shop, interspersed with some ten-pin bowling. Lately, we have been

using Bridge magazine (published by Synapse) as a starting point to discuss issues related to brain injury, including cognitive and emotional issues. It has been good to have some structured discussions for our meetings, as this

gives us the opportunity to keep on learning together, as well as catching up socially.

We plan to do more of this in the future. Bobbie

STEPS Ipswich

The Ipswich STEPS Network Group has continued to live up to its reputation as an active group over the past 3 months. In June, the group enjoyed a BBQ lunch at Queens Park in Ipswich – a big thank-you to Doug and Sue Stubbs who kindly prepared lunch. The group also enjoyed the warmth of their beanies from the Bang on a Beanie campaign. In July, it was back to the lawn bowling greens for a few friendly games– always a big hit for the group. The East Ipswich Bowls Club were very accommo-

dating and provided a quick lesson on how it's done at the beginning. In August, the group decided to give putt-putt golf another go. The sloped surface of the course was challenging. While a formal winner for the day was not decided on, Lorry managed the most holes in one – a grand total of 4 for the day! The Ipswich STEPS Network Group continues to



provide a great avenue of support for people who have experienced a brain injury and their families in the Ipswich area.

STEPS Bundaberg



It was such a lovely day on 7 May when most of the men in our group (plus a couple of mates Gary had called to help who could provide the use of a large skip bin for free) all got together for a big clean up at the house of 2 of our members, Geoff and Claire. They worked like Trojans all morning pruning, cutting down trees and weeding their vegie garden up the back corner. Because of Geoff's severe epilepsy and his wife Claire needing an operation on her painful shoulder, their yard had got a little out of hand. I provided a big morning tea for all, and Geoff and Claire were touched by everyone's kindness. Later in May, we all met at the neighbourhood centre where we had LIFETEC show us available gadgets etc to help disabled people around the home, in the car and many other uses. Leanne

STEPS Leader Network

The focus for the STEPS Leader Network is building toward the STEPS Leader Training Forum in October (see page 7 for details). However, we have continued with our quarterly teleconferences throughout the year. In May, the focus was Meet the Leaders, with a special emphasis on STEPS Network Group leadership. John from Logan, Jenny from Cairns, Megan from Ipswich and Mary-Ann from Toowoomba, who have all been actively

involved with leading STEPS Network Groups, shared their experiences of this phase of the program. All acknowledged the challenges involved in keeping a group going into the longer-term. Both Jenny and Mary-Ann emphasised the need to not personalise the problems and assume that you're doing something wrong if things don't seem to be working out. John and Megan both reflected that the most challenging time can be the early phase of getting a group up and running. John shared that every group will have

its teething problems, but the rewards are there if you can continue and establish a network of regular people who attend. Megan suggested that it can be helpful to be a little creative and offer suggestions within the group and "just give it a go."

At the July teleconference, Areti shared the details of the upcoming STEPS Leader Training Forum. She also highlighted resources available on the ABIOS and STEPS websites. See www.health.qld.gov.au/abios/ for details.

Open Network Groups

Here is the list of Network Groups are open to new members, places where they meet and the contact person for each of the groups.

Acacia Ridge– David Firth: Ph 0411 501 641

Weekly meetings, Mondays 10:00am-12noon, Acacia Ridge Community Centre, Hanify St, Acacia Ridge

Beaudesert– Tina Jarvis, Denise Kelly & Annie Kydd: Ph 5541 1653

3rd Wednesday of month 10:00am-12noon at St Mary's Community Services, 6-12 Petersen St, Beaudesert

Bundaberg– Leanne Curtis: Ph 4155 2303

Monthly meetings, 4th Wednesday of month, 1:00-3:00pm at Bundaberg Neighborhood Centre, or various community locations.

Buranda– Sue Wright: Ph 3406 2311

Monthly meetings, 1st Wednesday of month, 10am-12pm- venue alternates between ABIOS and a community setting.

Cairns– Jenny Sweeney: Ph 4055 0015

Monthly meetings, 1st Thursday of month 1-3pm at either Smithfield Community Health, 16 Danbullan St or community locations

Cleveland– Denice Rundle: Ph 3823 4851 & Ben Turner: Ph 3406 2311

Monthly meetings, 2nd Thursday of each month at various local venues

Gold Coast– Ben Turner: 3406 2311

Monthly meetings, last Saturday of month (daytime), various community locations

Innisfail– Raylene McSwan: Ph 4063 3742

Monthly meetings, 3rd Monday of month at Healthier Great Green Way, 180 Edith St

Ipswich– Ben Turner: Ph 3406 2311

Monthly meetings, 2nd Tuesday of month, 10:00am-12noon at Riverview Neighbourhood House, 138 Old Ipswich Road, Riverview, or various local venues

Kingaroy– Bobbie D'Arcy: Ph 4162 9220

Monthly meetings– exact details TBA

Logan Drop-in Chat Group- John Enright: Ph 3342 5820

3rd Monday of month 10:00am-12noon Logan North Library cnr Sports Drive and Springwood Rd, Underwood

Logan North– John Enright: Ph 3342 5820

Monthly meetings, 1st Monday of month, at various community locations

Mackay– Anne Jennings: Ph 4968 3823

2-monthly meetings at various local venues

Mt Gravatt– Ty Hill: Ph 3841 2842 & Areti Kennedy: Ph 3406 2311

Fortnightly meetings, Wednesdays, 10:00am -12noon at Toscani's Café, Garden City shopping centre

Pine Rivers- Sue Wright: Ph 3406 2311

Monthly meetings, 3rd Wednesday of month, 10:00am-12noon at Pine Rivers Neighbourhood Centre

Redcliffe– Cherie Carter: Ph 3284 6839

Monthly meetings, 2nd Wednesday of month, 10:00am-12noon at Redcliffe Leagues Club, cnr Klingner and Ashmore Rds, Redcliffe, or various community locations

Sandgate– Ben Turner: Ph 3406 2311

Monthly meetings, 1st Thursday of month (daytime, various community locations.

Toowoomba– Mary-Ann Garrahy: Ph 4630 1709

Fortnightly meetings, 2nd Monday of month at Sunset Superbowl, Green Wattle St, 10am-12pm; 4th Monday of month at various community locations

Yarraman– Peter McLean: Ph 4163 8780

Monthly meetings– Contact Peter for details

STEPS Leader Network Training Forum

It's almost here! Our STEPS Program Leader Network Training Forum is being held at Diana Plaza Hotel in Brisbane on Tuesday 18/ Wednesday 19 October. We have received a Queensland Health HP research Grant titled "Supporting the growth of peer-professional workforces in health care settings: an investigation of the training and support needs of volunteer leaders of the STEPS Program" to host the forum. This will be a fantastic opportunity for us to research and further understand the support you all need to deliver the STEPS Program. Leaders from around Queensland will enjoy some face-face networking with each other, including workshoping for the future of the STEPS Program Leader Network. A mix of keynote speeches, workshops and interactive group activities will be presented, on topics including trends in the health and community services workforce, group facilitation,

fostering participation in others, community rehabilitation, brain injury education and a showcase of current brain injury research. We are eager to make the most of this event, as another method through which our Leader Network strives to "support those that provide support to others".

We have 40 delegates already registered. Let's take a trip down memory lane via the nostalgic photo below of the 13 delegates at our '2008 STEPS Program

Leader Conference', which held during the temporary project pilot phase of the STEPS Program. That was a wonderful experience, so we look forward to an equally stimulating training forum in 2011!



Spotlight on.. *Biloela*

Biloela is a rural town in Central QLD, situated 120 kilometers inland from Gladstone, five years ago Biloela had a population of 5,371.

Biloela is a growing rural town with a very diverse agricultural industry including cotton, sorghum, wheat, herbs and spices. The cattle industry is thriving with the largest number of cattle of any Shire in Queensland. The Town is the centre of the Banana Shire. The name of the Shire came from a tan coloured bullock, named Banana, which worked on a property in the region in the mid 19th century.

Biloela's biggest attraction is The SILO. More than 28 metres high, it is filled, not with grain, but with an array of displays about primary industry. The SILO situated in Exhibition street gives an insight into cotton production, stud and dairy

cattle, redclaw and ostrich farming, grain production and land-care.

Biloela came into being only in 1924 as an agricultural centre. Coal was first mined in the 1940s but was transported to Gladstone. For an overview of the mine, drive to Callide Mine Lookout, which has a spectacular view of Biloela and the mine areas. The vantage point gives people a fantastic view of the workings of the dragline, which is one of the world's largest walking



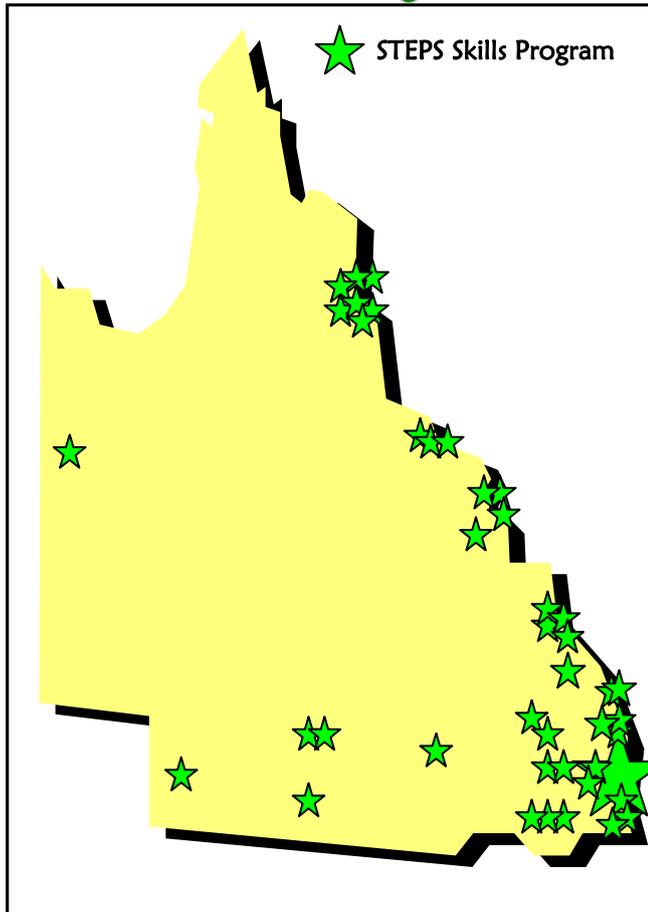
draglines.

Another place to visit while in Biloela is the Kroombit National Park, it displays beautiful views of sandstone cliffs and waterfalls framed by palm trees. The National Park is also the final resting place of Beautiful Betsy, an aircraft which went missing in World War Two.

<http://www.sunzine.com.au/gladstone/images/biloela>

**The name of the Shire
[Biloela is in] came from a
tan coloured bullock,
named Banana**

STEPS Skills Programs in QLD Map



- 2006** - Maroochydore, Caloundra, Buranda, Cleveland, Gold Coast, Mackay, Bundaberg, Capalaba, Annerley
- 2007** - Gold Coast, Bracken Ridge (2), Rockhampton (2), Bundaberg, Charleville (2), Innisfail, Kingston, Woolloowin, Roma, Cairns (2), Mitchelton, Carina
- 2008** - Logan central, Chermside, Bracken Ridge, Rockhampton, Far South West Qld (telegroup), Cunnamulla, New Farm, Warwick, Maroochydore
- 2009** - Logan north(x3), Pine Rivers, Red Hill, Townsville, Mt Gravatt, Warwick, Stratford (Cairns), Rockhampton, Gordonvale, Riverview, Buranda, Nundah, Redcliffe, Cleveland, Mackay, Hillcrest, Acacia Ridge
- 2010** - Warwick, Buranda, Rockhampton, Brinsmead (Cairns), Mt Gravatt (2), Ipswich, New Farm, Logan north(2), Beaudesert, Pine Rivers, Mackay, Bulimba, Arundel (Gold Coast), Smithfield (Cairns), Toowoomba (2), Townsville, Kingaroy, Yarraman, Elanora (Gold Coast), Wynnum, Ipswich, Zillmere, Mt Isa, Stafford
- 2011** - Biloela, Browns Plains, Bundaberg, Buranda, Capalaba, Edmonton (Cairns South), Elanora (Gold Coast), Forest Lake, Ipswich, Kirwan (Townsville), Logan North (2), Maroochydore, Maryborough, Nundah- CBRT, Rockhampton (3), Spiritus- Southport, Townsville., Browns Plains, Yeppoon, Biloela, Manunda (Cairns), Buranda, Newstead, Noosaville

Upcoming STEPS Skills Programs and Leader Training for 2011

There are quite a few STEPS Programs starting up in September and October!

- Rockhampton (community)- started Thursday, 1 September at Centacare Rockhampton
- Yeppoon- started Monday, 5 September at Capricorn Coast Hospital and Health Services
- Browns Plains- started Tuesday, 13 September at Browns Plains Library
- Biloela- started Monday, 19 September at Biloela Community Resource Centre
- Manunda (Cairns)- starting Wednesday, 5 October at Manunda Library, Raintrees Shopping Centre
- Buranda- starting Friday, 7 October at ABIOS Offices
- Newstead- starting Monday, 10 October at Footprints in Brisbane
- Noosaville- starting Tuesday, 25 October at Noosa Leisure Centre
- Caboolture- starting Friday, 28 October at Spiritus Caboolture offices.

STEPS Program Leader training will also be offered in Brisbane on Tuesday 29 and Wednesday 30 November at ABIOS offices in Buranda. Contact Ben or Areti on 3406 2311 for more info.

STEPS CONTACT DETAILS

STEPS Program

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