

MASS Action

December 2023

The Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) provides access to subsidy funding for the provision of a range of aids and equipment to eligible Queensland residents with permanent and stabilised condition or a disability.

MASS acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land across Queensland, and pay respects to First Nations Elders past, present and future.

Upcoming Holiday Period

MASS offices will be providing limited services during the Holiday period **from 4:30 PM on Thursday 21 December 2023 until Friday 5 January 2024** (inclusive) and will **reopen on Monday 8 January 2024**.

The MASS Home Oxygen and MASS Palliative Care Equipment Program (PCEP) will be contactable via email for Daily Living and Mobility Aids and Home Oxygen services between Wednesday 27 December 2023 and Friday 5 January 2024 (inclusive).

For more information on services being provided by MASS during the Holiday period and emergency repairs, health.qld.gov.au/mass/holiday-message/



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Contact MASS

Phone: 07 3136 3636 or 1300 443 570
 Email: MASS@health.qld.gov.au
 Website: health.qld.gov.au/MASS





From the Director's Desk

Welcome to the December 2023 edition of MASS Action.

On behalf of all of MASS I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

I would like to thank all our prescribers, clients, suppliers and MASS staff for the great effort over the year as good results/outcomes are only possible when you have a fantastic team supporting you.... Thank you.

As we know the majority of MASS clients are people aged over 65 years and living at home. It is good to be aware that this year saw some changes occurring in the aged care space with more to come.

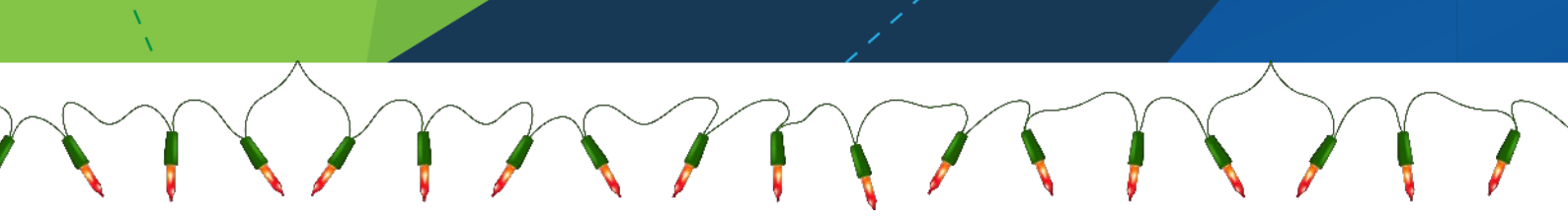
Some time has passed since the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety completed its report and made a number of recommendations on how existing Federal aged care services should change. Some of the recommendations have been implemented with others outstanding and still being progressed, particularly the Support at Home Program and the new Aged Care Act.

An Aged Care Taskforce was established and held its first meeting in June 2023. The taskforce was established to review financing of Australia's aged care system and to oversee the final design of the new in-home care program. The Taskforce drafted principles which were refined following consultation with the community. The six principles are:

- The aged care system should enable and encourage participants to remain in their home for as long as they wish and can do so.



John Vasil
Director
Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme
Community and Oral Health
Metro South Health

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- Aged care funding arrangements and their outcomes should be fair, simple, transparent and sustainable, Government is and will continue to be the major funder of aged care; government funding should be focused on care costs; personal contributions should be focused on accommodation and everyday living costs with a sufficient safety net.
 - Government and participant contributions should be sufficient to provide quality and appropriate care delivered by a skilled workforce, allowing and encouraging innovation by the health, hospital and aged care systems.
 - There should be accountability for funding received from government and participants, how it is spent, and the quality of the services provided.
 - The residential sector should have access to sufficient, and new, capital to encourage the development of new accommodation and upgrades to existing accommodation.
 - The Taskforce will continue its consultation process and will provide its final report to government in December 2023.

It will be interesting to see how the Support at Home Program develops in the new calendar year and how it might change services available for people aged 65 years and over, in line with the aged care royal commission's recommendations.

While these changes are unfolding MASS will continue to provide its services to facilitate hospital discharge and provide subsidised supports for Queenslanders to live at home and avoid early or inappropriate residential care or hospitalisation.

Wishing you a very Happy Christmas and a safe and healthy 2024.

Thank you again for all the great work you do.

As this is our Christmas issue, I'll leave you with two quotes as they seem appropriate this year.... until next time.

"Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass but learning to dance in the rain."

Vivian Greene

and

"The thing about Christmas is that it almost doesn't matter what mood you're in, or what kind of year you've had – it's a fresh start."

Kelly Clarkson



Clinical Education

MASS Clinical Education provides regular education for prescribers, allied health assistants, clients and carers. Students studying to become a health professional in any MASS designated prescriber category are also welcome to participate.

Most education sessions are provided as a webinar on Microsoft Teams at no cost.

MASS Clinical Educations last webinar of the year will be the [MASS-eApply in a Nutshell held 13 December 2023 at 1:00-1:30pm](#).

Our next Clinical Education Calendar will be released in early 2024. Check out the [MASS Clinical Education webpage](#) for the most current details.

Care Expo 1-2 September

For the first time, the MASS Clinical Education team manned a booth at CARE Expo at the Brisbane Exhibition and Convention Centre. The event targeted seniors and people with disabilities.



The MASS booth drew lots of interest from event attendees and we were able to pass on information verbally and in brochures about the range of assistive technology for which we provide subsidy funding e.g. continence aids, spectacles, mobility aids, medical grade footwear, artificial limbs, heat moisture exchange devices and laryngectomy consumables, communication aids, palliative care equipment program, daily living aids and spinal/lower limb orthoses. It was amazing to meet older people with functional impairment living in the community who had never heard of MASS! We also enjoyed engaging with other organisations who had a presence at the event. We are planning on continuing our engagement with the community at CARE Expo in 2024.

For more information on MASS Clinical Education, visit our website: health.qld.gov.au/mass/education visit and/or join our [mailing list](#).

MASS Daily Living and Mobility Aids

Removal of requirement to trial basic Daily Living and Mobility Aids

In an effort to provide faster equipment delivery to consumers and prescribers, MASS Equipment Services is temporarily removing the mandatory requirement to trial basic equipment items.

The equipment types include:

- Wheeled Walking Aid
- Basic Manual Wheelchair – no accessories except anti tips
- Bath Transfer Bench
- Non-Standard Bathboard
- Static chairs/Stools
- Static Over Toilet Aids

Please refer to the MASS Daily Living Aids and Mobility Aids webpages for more information.

New product types funded by MASS

Static Shower Chair/Stools and Over Toilet Frames

MASS Equipment Services has completed their trial of static shower chair/stools and over toilet frames. During the trial, MASS provided over 1,000 items to clients, highlighting the need for access to these static and less complex bathing and toileting aids for consumers.

MASS Equipment Services is pleased to announce that the two new product types, static shower chair/stools and over toilet frames, have now been included permanently under the Daily Living Aids – Bathing and Toileting Aids approved equipment category.

For more information on this and product eligibility criteria, please visit the MASS Daily Living Aids webpage - health.qld.gov.au/mass/prescribe/living



Basic, Lightweight and Foldable Mobility Aids

MASS Equipment Services has completed their trial of basic mobility aids – manual wheelchairs, TIS manual wheelchairs and power wheelchairs. These basic mobility aids are lightweight, less complex and some are foldable or dismantlable, making it easier for lifting into cars or transporting.

During the trial, applications for the trial basic mobility aids made up 57% of mobility aids requested. This demonstrated that there was an unmet need for MASS consumers, who are more likely to require a complex or highly customisable mobility aid and find the basic options more suited to assist them with increased mobility and safety.

These items are now available permanently under the Mobility Aids equipment categories. MASS-eApply and the MASS website will be updated with this information in the near future.

MASS-eApply Online Applications

MASS-eApply is an online system designed to provide greater versatility to MASS clients and prescribers who want the flexibility to make an application request from any location.

To register to use MASS-eApply go to: health.qld.gov.au/mass/eapply/register

Need help?

health.qld.gov.au/mass/eApply/help

Email: MASS-eApply@health.qld.gov.au



For more information on MASS-eApply visit health.qld.gov.au/mass/eApply/



Medical Grade Footwear and Orthoses

The Medical Grade Footwear and Orthoses application is now available through MASS-eApply.

Approved suppliers can register using the "QALS, Orthoses and Medical Grade Footwear Registration" available here:

health.qld.gov.au/mass/eapply/register



Medical Grade Footwear and Orthoses



▶ Start

Queensland Artificial Limb Service

EXCITING NEWS!!!

Queensland Artificial Limb Service (QALS) has been granted a temporary funding increase to the annual budget from \$2.6 million to \$4.9 million per year, for four (4) years.

The funding boost will increase subsidies, during the 4 years funded, for upper and lower artificial limb components, including waterproof components (where appropriate). This increase allows QALS consumers to access a greater range of componentry and consumables for their definitive limb funded through QALS, including liners and socks.

The temporary increased funding limits are available in the [Guidelines for Queensland Artificial Limb Service Supplement](#).

Everyday tasks such as showering, or situations that many of us see as a minor inconvenience, like being caught in the rain or being splashed with water, are a safety concern for people with an artificial limb if its components are not waterproof.

QALS clients are eligible to apply for funding for a definitive prosthesis (also known as an artificial limb) every three years, with more information available on the [QALS website](#) and in the [Guidelines for the Queensland Artificial Limb Service](#).

QALS would like to acknowledge [Amputees QLD](#) (formerly Amputee and Family Support Group) for their advocacy for persons with a limb difference in Queensland and their valuable contributions in petitioning for increased funding.

For more information visit health.qld.gov.au/mass/prescribe/artificial-limbs

New Spectacles Frames

The Spectacles Supply Scheme (SSS) added **15 new frame options**. These new frames are more modern, have larger frame sizes and offers a broader range for MASS applicants.

Pictured below are four (4) of the new frame options, to view all new frames and their specifications visit the MASS website's [Approved spectacles, lenses and frames](#) list.



Recent MASS Staff Events

R U OK Day

MASS came together for R U OK sausage sizzle on Thursday 14 September 2023, it was an opportunity for all the different service areas of MASS to show each other appreciation and support.

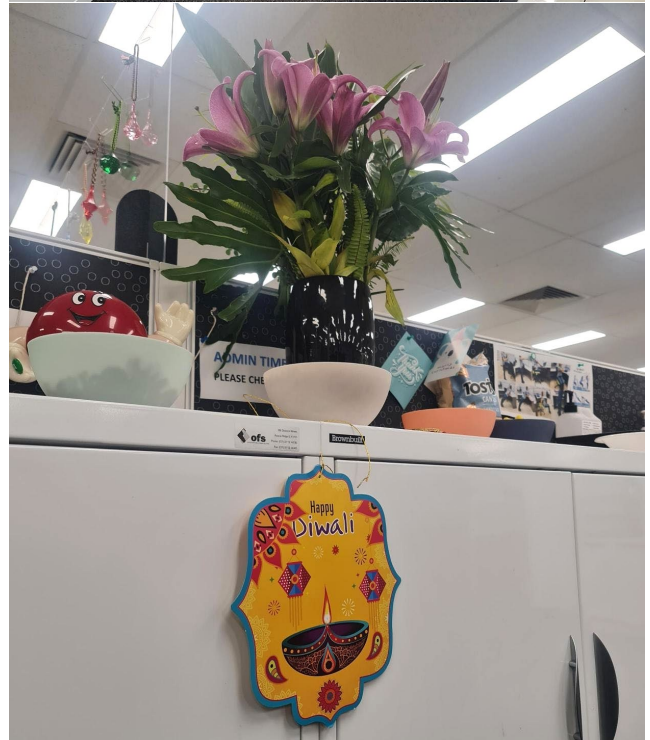
Mental Health Week Challenge

The Continence and Oxygen team enthusiastically joined the Steps to Wellbeing, stepping into the 21-day challenge as part of the Addiction and Mental Health Services – Mental Health Week Challenge (8 – 28 October 2023).

Diwali

MASS staff celebrating Diwali made sure to include other team members in their celebrations. This included explaining the significance of the Festival of Lights, recommending clothing and food that represent the holiday and even sharing ornaments and trinkets to add some lovely sparkle.

The celebration was held at MASS on 10 November 2023. Pictured to the right are some attendees from the MASS Central Business Services, Equipment Services, PCEP and QALS.



Wishing you a very Happy Christmas and a safe and healthy 2024.



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