



QAWC NEWSLETTER

1ST QUARTER 2021



VoQoL Competition

Coral Tech, the developer of the VoQoL system, very generously donated the installation of a VoQoL system to QAWC to be used to benefit one of our members. The VoQoL installations have proved to be life changing for those who have already benefited from them as they enable the user to control some electronic devices using their voice. Users can control their



TVs, switch their lights on and off, control a device that is plugged into an electric socket, switch between radio stations, send an SMS to a predetermined number and much more just by using their voice! The QAWC Board decided to select a recipient for the installation by means of a lucky draw, with any member who had a suitable Internet connection eligible to go into the draw. The opportunity was advertised on Facebook and also via e-mail to all members on our database. The draw, which was done by QAWC member Welile Mbonja, took place at the QAWC office with Taurik Booley the lucky winner. The installation has already been done and Taurik is enjoying the independence that the VoQoL system brings. On behalf of Taurik and QAWC, we thank Coral Tech for their fantastic support of QAWC and for improving the lives of persons with disabilities. Thank you Coral Tech!

Medical Supplies

In February QAWC started a new initiative aimed at assisting members who do not receive sufficient medical supplies from their day hospitals. QAWC has observed that a number of our members do not receive the medical supplies that they desperately require from the day hospital while other members receive more than they require and have excess stock in their cupboards. QAWC has put out a call to members who have excess medical supplies to donate them to QAWC so that we can redistribute them to those members who are in need. Correspondence went out on social media as well as via e-mail and we received a good response from a number of members who have kindly donated excess supplies. Edward, the QAWC driver, collected the supplies from members, delivering them to the QAWC office where they were sorted and stored. Members in need of supplies were encouraged to make contact with our office, with those who expressed a need receiving some of the supplies that were in our store. This project has got off to an excellent start and we are pleased to have been able to offer assistance to members in real need of the supplies. This is an ongoing project and we look forward to receiving your excess medical supplies should you have any. If you are in need of supplies such as bed bags, leg bags, KY Jelly, suppositories, catheters (indwelling, intermittent & condoms) or any other supplies please make contact with Esme on info@qawc.org



Computers To Members



From time to time QAWC is in the position to offer second-hand computers to our members. QAWC maintains a list of members who have requested a computer and/or laptop and in the event of devices becoming available we distribute the computers to members according to the waiting list. We were very grateful to be able to provide 6 computers and a laptop to members during this last quarter. With the Work Readiness Program being held online, QAWC no longer had a need for the computers in the training room so the Board decided to distribute the computers to our members on the waiting list. These devices were sent to members in diverse areas around our province, including Hawston



and Montagu and we are very pleased to have been able to assist our members in this way. While we don't currently have any computers or laptops available, should you require a computer/laptop please be sure to put your name on our waiting list so that in the event of computers/laptops becoming available you will be in line to receive one.

Get To Know Esmé

In our newsletters we will be introducing you to the QAWC staff and Executive Board members who keep QAWC running. In this quarter's newsletter we start with the longest serving member of the team, our Administration Manager, Esmé Kleinschmidt. Esmé, who is the mother of 2 children, was employed as secretary of QAWC in 2004 and was the sole employee of QAWC in those days. Having never previously had much interaction with people with quadriplegia and paraplegia, Esmé was exposed to a whole new world and quickly set about learning about and becoming comfortable in her new working environment. Esmé has now been a part of the QAWC team for 17 years and has built up a huge amount of knowledge and expertise and is able to refer and advise wheelchair users appropriately. As QAWC has grown, so has the role that Esmé plays in the organisation and 2 years ago Esmé assumed the position of QAWC Administration Manager. An excellent



administrator, Esmé is extremely organised, efficient and ensures that all administration matters at QAWC are taken care of in a professional and prompt manner. Away from QAWC, Esmé is passionate about the well-being of animals, volunteering at various animal shelters. Esmé is also a massive sports fan, with cricket a particular favourite of hers. Esmé says that one of the highlights of her time at QAWC has been getting to meet many interesting people and being able to assist to improve the lives of quadriplegics and paraplegics in the Western Cape. QAWC is fortunate to have such a competent and experienced administrator managing the office and ensuring that our administration remains in order.

Dial a Ride Update

Transport remains one of the biggest challenges facing persons with disabilities and wheelchair users in particular. The City of Cape Town Dial a Ride project provides a very limited accessible service which a number of our members make use of. QAWC has recently engaged with the City extensively around the service and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future. With the current service providers contract expiring on the 31 March 2021 and the tender to run the service not yet awarded to a new service



provider for various reasons, there was a very real concern that the service would cease on 1 April 2021. Fortunately the City were proactive and engaged with various role players, including QAWC, in order to find a solution. It has been resolved that the current service provider will operate the Dial a Ride service for an additional 6 months meaning that the service will not be interrupted at all. The City are in the process of drawing up a new business plan for the Dial a Ride service and have consulted extensively with QAWC, organisations of and for persons with disabilities and other transport service providers. While we are not exactly sure what the new service will look like QAWC will continue to engage with the City in an attempt to ensure that a service that is suitable and appropriate is offered to our members. At the same time, QAWC continues to emphasise to the City that a fully integrated accessible public transport system is the desired solution to the transport needs of persons with disabilities.

Coloplast Social Group



Coloplast, a supplier of incontinence and wound care products, are a friend and supporter of the QuadPara Association who recognise the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. The Covid 19 pandemic has seen many wheelchair users confined to their homes and interacting with people even less than normal. This has had a significant psychological and emotional impact on the lives of many of our members. Coloplast and QAWC want to get wheelchair users out into public open spaces where they can enjoy fresh air and the beauty

that our country has to offer. As such, we will be arranging quarterly outings to various places of interest in and around the Cape Peninsula. Unfortunately our 1st outing which was scheduled to take place on 4 February 2021 was postponed due to the country being lockdown alert level III. The great news is that our 1st outing for this year will take place on 15 April. We will be visiting the Green Point Biodiversity Park and will be there from 11am – 1pm. For more details please make contact with Anthony on gm@gawc.org Please watch your inbox for more info on this outing as well as the outings which will take place on a quarterly basis. We look forward to you joining us!

QAWC Social Media

Regular users of social media and Facebook in particular will have noticed that there are daily posts on the QAWC Facebook page. Nazeem, our Communications Officer, does an excellent job of posting appropriate and interesting content on our Facebook page. This has seen our number of followers grow significantly. QAWC also has a profile on LinkedIn, the aim of which is to showcase the skills that our members who are looking for employment and to potential employers. If you are looking for a job be sure to visit our LinkedIn profile and to follow us. Our daily themed posts on Facebook have proved to be very popular and we are appealing to our members who have their own businesses to send details about their business and themselves to Nazeem at admin@qawc.org On Tuesdays we profile and advertise members businesses using the hash tag #tradingTuesday. This has proved very popular and successful and a great way for our members businesses to get some exposure. We look forward to promoting your business on our Facebook page soon.



The QAWC office and Covid 19



Please note that QAWC continues to follow and adhere to all Covid 19 protocols and as such our staff continue to mainly work from home. The QAWC team would like to make our members aware of the fact that the office is not staffed every day so please be sure to find out if a staff member will be at the office before coming to visit us. When visiting the office, all visitors are expected to wear their masks and adhere to all other protocols that are in place. Our office team continue to be available on e-mail as per normal and can be contacted telephonically as well.

