

## References

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This brochure was developed by ParaQuad NSW with the assistance of funding from a National Disability Insurance Scheme ILC Jurisdictional Based Grant.

ParaQuad Acknowledgements: Amy de Paula (Occupational Therapist); Wendy Harris (Peer Support); Kylie Jones (Clinical Nurse Consultant); Robyn Ryan (Peer Support); Matthew Smith (Social Worker). © 2019



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Supporting people in our community

PQAWIJUL19

# Ageing and Wellness

Preparing for getting older with  
a Spinal Cord Injury



 ParaQuad  
Paraplegic & Quadriplegic Association of NSW  
Supporting people in our community

The middle years of life can be rich, fulfilling and satisfying.

They can also bring new challenges and glimpses into ageing. We can reduce the impact of ageing and maintain wellbeing by:

### 1. Participating in life

Studies have found that people who continue to actively participate in their life, family and community tend to remain independent and have a greater sense of wellbeing.<sup>1,2,3</sup>

### 2. Adopting new technology & choosing supports

Using new equipment, home modifications, care and technology as you get older can improve wellbeing, maintain cognitive skills and can help avoid needing a nursing home.<sup>4,5,6</sup> Getting good advice from peers and clinicians helps maintain lifestyle and wellbeing.<sup>7,1</sup>

### 3. Understanding changes to the body

Age-related changes may impact on your continence, skin care and your balance in your wheelchair. Other changes, such as wear and tear to joints, or arthritis can mean new equipment or learning new ways to do things.

### 4. Planning ahead (starting before we get 'old')

Adapting your lifestyle as you age can reduce stress and the impact of ageing<sup>8,9,10</sup>. Taking control, setting goals and making plans can all help keep up your lifestyle and wellbeing<sup>6</sup>. Understanding signs of ageing (both physical and emotional) and being prepared can reduce stress on you and your significant others.



ParaQuad NSW is hosting peer-led discussion groups and facilitating an information page on our website to support people as they age with a spinal cord injury.

Our Peer Support and Clinical Team have experience in supporting people with spinal injury throughout their lifespan.

Contact us to obtain support to explore the choices, independence and participation you want to have as you get older.

[www.paraquad.org.au](http://www.paraquad.org.au)

## Checklist

The following is a check list to help you consider if your supports would benefit from a review:

- I used to be able to do XYZ, but now I can't
- I am ok now, but I am wondering what might happen in the future as I age
- My daily routines are taking longer or getting harder
- I avoid activities I used to enjoy because of the increased effort
- My posture or balance has changed (eg wheelchair/commode/vehicle)
- Aches and pains stop me from doing things
- My bladder and bowel care is taking longer or I have more accidents
- I experience more frequent Autonomic Dysreflexia
- I get more frequent red marks or pressure injuries on my skin
- I'm worried about the future or becoming isolated
- The support my partner gives me is changing