

# NeuroMoves Walk On

Finding the right exercise therapy can be life-changing for someone with a spinal cord injury or other neurological condition.

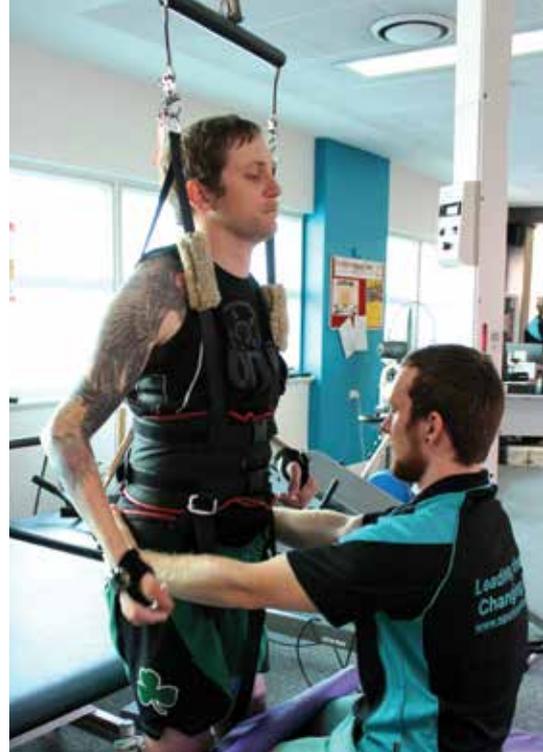
It can mean improved mobility through improved muscle strength, better general health, greater positivity and increased confidence to participate in the community.

NeuroMoves Walk On is an individually designed intensive activity-based exercise program to assist people with a spinal cord injury or neurological condition to maximise their functional ability and lead a more independent life.

The program involves intense, dynamic, weight-bearing exercises performed out of the wheelchair one-on-one with a qualified exercise physiologist or physiotherapist.

NeuroMoves Walk On is delivered by Sporting Wheelies and Disabled Association on behalf of Spinal Cord Injury Australia at the Association's inclusive fitness and rehabilitation centre, The Gym, at its Bowen Hills headquarters in Brisbane.

The program caters for both Brisbane-based and regional clients and has supported more than 80 clients since it started in 2008.



*Reece Wallen and NeuroMoves Walk On trainer Nathan McCarthy (Photo: Naomi Watts)*

## Patrick's story

Like many 21-year-olds, Patrick Castle is mad about cars. He blames his dad Pat for his passion, and up until three years ago he always had a spanner in his hand and his head under the bonnet. But the day before his 18th birthday, Patrick suffered a devastating workplace injury when he was helping to guide the lowering of a large conveyor belt by a crane. The chains snapped and dropped the load onto his chest. He left Princess Alexandra Hospital

five months later in a wheelchair with a T4 spinal cord injury.

With the support of family and friends, Patrick's Hyundai Excel circuit racing car was modified with hand controls. He was inspired by fellow Queensland paraplegic Matt Speakman, the only driver in Australia competing in circuit racing with a major disability and one of less than a handful in the world. The challenge for Patrick was regaining



*Patrick (far right) with Team Sporting Wheelies at the Bridge to Brisbane start line*

his strength, balance and fitness so that he could achieve his dream of getting back on the circuit.

Patrick joined The Gym and started personal training sessions before signing up to NeuroMoves Walk On in February 2015. He currently does two 2-hour personal training sessions and a 2-hour Walk On session each week.

“With personal training, I’m in my chair doing weights and using some of the adaptive equipment such as the handcrank, but with Walk On I’m out of my chair doing exercises like back extension exercises and sit-ups to improve my core strength,” says Patrick.

“I’ve noticed improvements in a lot of the activities that I need to do in everyday life such as transferring in and out of the car, leaning over to pick things up off the floor and doing tasks that involve putting both hands out in front of me. That will help me get back to doing mechanical work on my cars.

“I’ve got nothing but good things to say about the staff, who are really helpful. They roped me into doing the Bridge to Brisbane 5km course with



them last year which was a lot of fun, and I’ve got my gloves ready to tackle it again this year.”

Patrick has already ventured back onto the track for practice laps at the Queensland Raceway at Ipswich, and is working hard towards his goal of getting a CAMS circuit licence. He has discovered a kindred spirit in fellow gym member Alan Hammer, who became the first paraplegic to compete in the Targa Tasmania rally series in 2014-15 using a wireless satellite accelerator.

“Hammer is awesome. It’s great to have someone like him to inspire me to achieve my goals.”



*Valerie Ooi*  
Nutrition and  
dietetics

## New services at The Gym

The Gym has expanded its on-site services to provide easier access to a range of health professionals. Members can now access physiotherapy, remedial massage therapy and dietetics services all under the one roof. The new physiotherapy service is in partnership with Spinal Life Australia under a new agreement announced in February (see page 9). For more information and booking details, visit The Gym page on the Association website or call (07) 3253 3333.



*Desley Munck*  
Remedial massage  
therapist