

amplified

edition 1 | 2025



2025 is shaping up
to be our biggest
year yet!

AMPed Up wrap up

Korrin Barrett -
living without limits

I'm 65 and have just
had an amputation,
what's next?



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Welcome Nella

Well, what a way to kick off 2025!

We had the great pleasure of welcoming hundreds of amputees, their partners and carers to the Adelaide Convention Centre for AMPed Up 2025. And what an event it was!

A massive "thank you" to the Limbs 4 Life team for their work and contributions in the lead up to, and during the conference.

Aside from starting 2025 with a bang, the year ahead will provide an abundance of opportunities for the Australian amputee community. Limbs 4 Life will be rolling out national peer support volunteer training, scheduling Amputee Empowerment Workshops in each state and territory, hosting regular local area gatherings, among other events and activities.

Get on board, engage, explore new possibilities and most of all (as a famous person once said) "do the very best you can, in your circumstances."

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AMPed Up 2025 Wrap Up!

AMPed Up Adelaide proved to be our biggest conference yet. With more delegates (amputees, partners and carers) and exhibitors than we have seen before. Registration numbers peaked in the month prior to conference, resulting in the early closure of ticket sales.





Ayla Walker, Senior Social Worker, State Rehabilitation service WA, presents her findings from research on the effectiveness of peer support for amputees.



Healthcare provider session

Healthcare providers attended in strong numbers for the inaugural 'Healthcare Provider Session.' This session was open to presentations from people in the healthcare sector who had conducted research and/or were working on amputee-related projects. With a diverse range of topics, the session attracted a full house!

The Expo Hall

This year saw an increase in the number of exhibitors; the Expo Hall was twice as big as Melbourne, with super-site displays from major conference partners, OPC Health, Ossur and Ottobock, showcasing a range of prosthetic devices and an assortment of options and opportunities for amputee consumers.



The conference was also supported by NovitaTech and Massons Healthcare, along with modified vehicle manufacturers, legal representatives, virtual reality solutions for prosthetic use and phantom pain, occupational therapy solutions, sport and recreation options.



The plenary

For the third year running, the two day conference attracted people with limb loss from around Australia with representatives from nearly all states and territories.

Our two-day program in the plenary was hosted by our wonderful emcees: the effervescent and energetic Kath Tanner, and Limbs 4 Life board member, diversity advocate and model, Sara Shams. Kath and Sara made sure that the crowd was engaged while keeping the speakers on track and the program on time.



The Lifetime Support Authority Welcome Event

The Official Welcome event sponsored by Lifetime Support Authority (LSA) was widely attended at the conclusion of day one. Our wonderful duo 'Missing Bits' reunited for the second time to entertain the crowd with their incredible musical talents.



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When life changes in an instant, you have two choices: let it define you, or let it empower you.

Growing up in New Zealand, my childhood was full of challenges that would unknowingly prepare me for the toughest battle of my life. From a young age, I learned the importance of resilience, independence, and adapting to circumstances beyond my control. Those early experiences taught me that while life might not always be fair, how you respond to it makes all the difference. They gave me the inner grit and strength I would later draw on when facing unimaginable change.

In 2012, my life was turned upside down when a sudden and severe illness led to the amputation of both my arms and legs. I spent seven and a half months in hospital fighting for my life and learning to live it all over again. But from the moment I woke up and realised what had happened, I made a choice: I will not be limited by my circumstances, and I will embrace life with both hands, even if they looked a little different now.

"I don't live life by what I've lost, I live by what I'm willing to embrace. Every day is an opportunity to live boldly, live fully, and live without limits."

Living without limits: Korrin Barrett's journey of resilience and adventure

Korri Barrett is a resilience speaker, resilience expert, disability advocate, and podcast host based in New Zealand. As a quad amputee, she is passionate about breaking barriers and inspiring others to live boldly, no matter their circumstances. Korri serves on multiple boards, championing the uniquely-abled community, and hosts the empowering podcast 'Korri - Life Unlimited.' Korri recently presented at Limbs 4 Life's AMPed Up National Amputee Conference and was a crowd favourite.



Returning to the professional world after such a life-altering event was never going to be easy, but it was a challenge I welcomed. As Traffic and Transport Manager on the APLNG Gas Pipeline Project in Australia, I had led a team of civil engineers, negotiated multimillion-dollar contracts, and managed complex stakeholder relationships. When I returned to complete my contract, this time in a wheelchair as a quad amputee, it wasn't just about finishing the job. It was about proving to myself and others that resilience, determination, and leadership aren't diminished by disability; they are redefined by it.

Today, advocacy is at the heart of everything I do. I proudly serve on several boards, including the Amputees Federation of New Zealand, Sport Hawke's Bay - Tu Manawa Funding Panel, Presbyterian Support East Coast, and the Adaptive Whakauru Tahi Trust. I am also actively involved in broader disability and advocacy initiatives, such as Amputee Society of Hawke's Bay/East Coast, NZ Sepsis Trust, Napier City Council, Heretaunga District Council, as a Peer Support Volunteer for Peke Waihangā, a brand ambassador for Taska and I continue to provide mentoring to amputees worldwide. I believe representation matters and it's crucial that lived experience drives real-world decisions.

"Life isn't about what you've lost – it's about what you're brave enough to embrace."

My passion for empowering others has also taken me into new and exciting spaces. Through my podcast, *Korrin - Life Unlimited*, I share conversations with empowering women about



resilience, leadership, and living without limits. I want people to hear authentic stories of courage and ambition and know that no matter the obstacles, they too can live boldly.

Outside of my keynote speaking, volunteer work and advocacy, life is full of adventures. I now live in a beautiful part of New Zealand with my husband Craig and beautiful fur baby Raymond. When I'm not nursing an injury (which seems to happen often) I like to keep fit with chair yoga workouts, riding a bike at the gym or just going for a walk with a friend. I've even entered the upcoming Hawke's Bay Marathon 10km Walk, which should be interesting with next to zero training! I also love to travel, whether it's exploring new countries, trying new experiences, or sipping cocktails at sunset. I'm constantly reminded that the world has no shortage of wonders, and that adventure doesn't stop when life changes; it just looks a little different. I firmly believe that life is meant to be lived fully, and without fear.

Living with limb difference has taught me that life isn't about what happens to you, it's how you respond to it. Every experience, every challenge, and every triumph adds to the rich tapestry of who we are. I've also learned that bad days and setbacks are always going to happen, the key is to embrace it, do whatever it is that you need to do to overcome it but don't allow it to creep into the next day.

As I often say,

"Your limits aren't defined by what you've lost, but by what you're willing to embrace. Live boldly, live fully, and live without limits."



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Dale, centre, at Peer Support Volunteer training in August 2023

Dale's journey back to strength

In 2022, my life changed in an instant. A motorcycle accident led to the amputation of my right lower leg, and I was thrown into a world I never imagined I'd be a part of. Since then, the road has been anything but easy, but it's been a journey of rediscovery, strength, and growth.

Now, three years on, I'm proud to say that I'm well and truly back into my active lifestyle. I've been exploring para sports, getting stuck into fitness, and challenging myself physically and mentally in new ways. Every small milestone feels like a major victory, and it's a constant reminder that life doesn't end after amputation, it just takes a different path.

One of the most rewarding parts of this journey has been becoming a Limbs 4 Life Peer Support Volunteer. I've realised how powerful it is to connect with others who are just starting their own journey. Being able to offer a listening ear, share tips, and simply say, "I get it," makes a real difference.

I recently attended AMPed Up in Adelaide, and it was an incredible experience. Meeting fellow amputees, hearing their stories, and learning about the latest in prosthetic technology was not just inspiring, it was empowering. Events like that remind me how vibrant and resilient our community is.

Life threw me a curveball, but I'm proud of where I've landed. I'm still moving, still growing, and still finding new ways to thrive.



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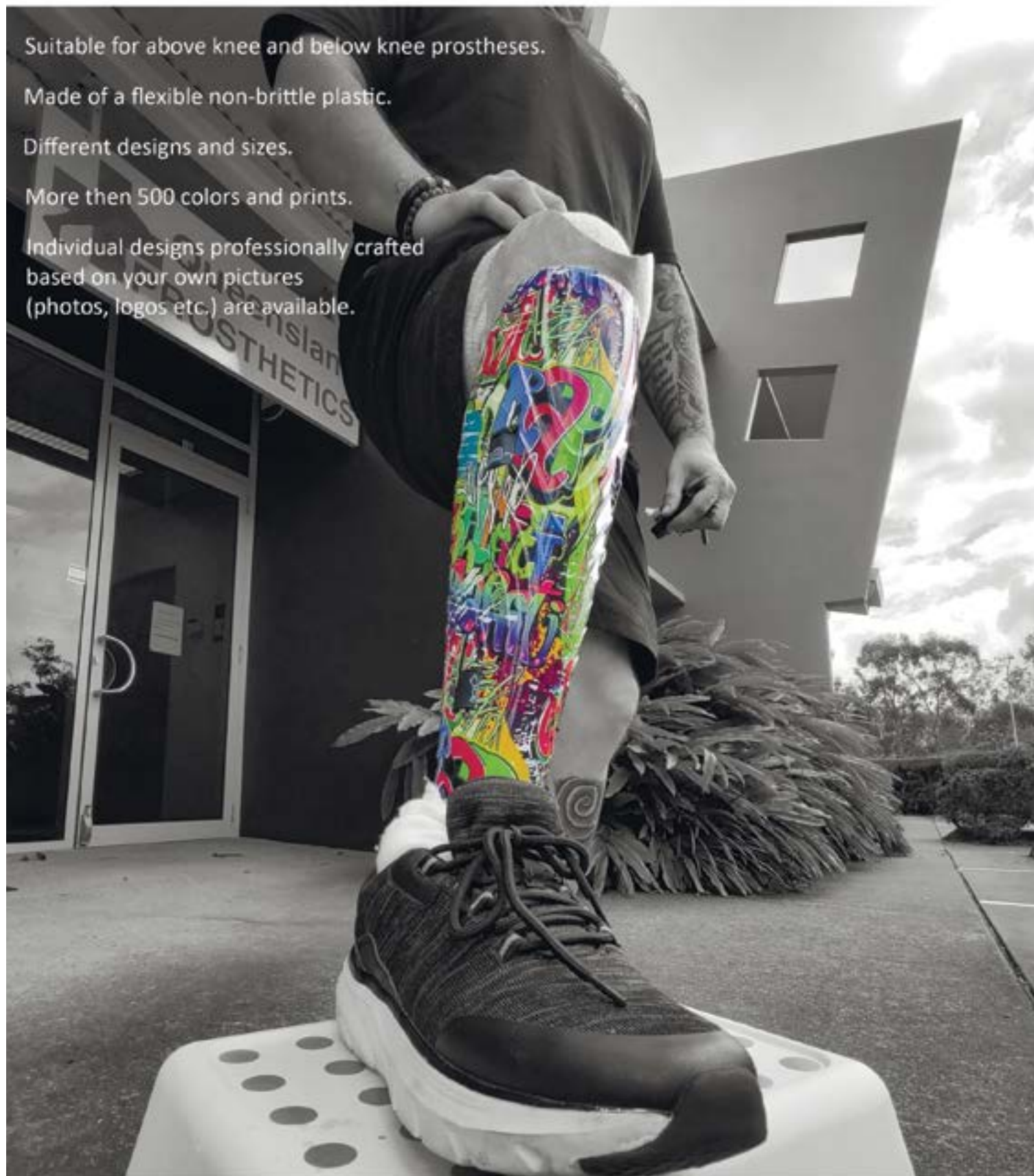
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So, you're over 65 and have had an amputation – what now?

Learning that you are going to have an amputation can present a range of questions. Those questions may relate to where you live, how services and supports are funded, who will help you get what you need and what you are eligible for.

So, how will you be supported and who pays for what?

Prosthetics

Funding for prosthetics is provided by the state government under the artificial limb program in your state or territory. Funding under these programs is capped and you will need to make a contribution to all services.

Register for My Aged Care

It is important to register for My Aged Care if you haven't already done so. You will

need to have an assessment prior to entering the program and the assessor will determine which level of funding you receive.

Funding levels range from Level 1, the lowest amount of funding, to Level 4, the highest amount of funding. Funding is paid monthly, and you will need to find a provider to manage those funds on your behalf.

Do you need help to register?

A family member or friend can help you to register for My Aged Care. If you don't have someone to help you contact the Australian Older Persons Advocacy Network on 1800 700 600

Apply for an assessment

To arrange an assessment, you can contact My Aged Care on 1800 200 422 or apply online.



- Access to day or overnight respite
- Aids and equipment or assistive technology, like wheelchairs, basic home modifications, walking sticks etc.

There are significant wait times to access My Aged Care, so it's important that you apply as soon as possible.

Things to consider prior to having an assessment.

Prior to meeting with the person doing your assessment, you need to think about the things that you can do, what you might be able to do and what you may need help with.

My Aged Care will fund supports like:

- Personal care, dressing and showering
- Home supports, like gardening and home maintenance, gutter cleaning, house cleaning, laundry
- Healthcare services, such as podiatry, physiotherapy, hearing or vision services
- Transport assistance to community or medical appointments



Partners and carers

Limbs 4 Life recognises that amputation affects the families and loved ones of people who experience amputation too.

Using community feedback, Limbs 4 Life have created 5 information sheets tailored for the needs of people who are the partner or carer of an amputee. Often partners want to know how they can best provide support, what information they need and where to access that information. These sheets can be downloaded from our website or posted out to you.

To further support the community and connect partners and carers a closed Facebook group has been set up where you can connect with others in a similar situation - Amputee Partners | Caregivers - Limbs 4 Life Australia.

Partners, family members and carers are welcome at Limbs 4 Life's Support Group events, so if there's an event near you, RSVP today.



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Trevor Jones's
journey so far –
Becoming a
bilateral, below
knee amputee

I was diagnosed with diabetes in 2003, and this disease has led to vascular problems in both of my legs.

On 25 September 2019, this resulted in the amputation of my left leg, below the knee. I'd also had all of the toes on my right foot amputated between December 2017 and March 2019, in three separate surgeries. The below knee amputation came after multiple procedures including the debridement of an infection, angiograms of my leg and the insertion of stents. The amputation changed my life forever.

After the amputation surgery I was bed bound in Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital for days. During this time, I received a visit from John, a gentleman who was an amputee himself. John was a Peer Support Volunteer with Limbs 4 Life and he brought a bag full of resources and information for new amputees. I subscribed to Limbs 4 Life immediately.

I realised that my mental state was declining, so I wanted to see a psychologist. DVA helped me even though I was still in the hospital, by giving me the contact details of a psychologist that practised in my local area. Upon phoning the psychologist's office, the first question I asked was, "Is your office wheelchair accessible?" The answer to that was "no, there are 17 steps to get inside!" The DVA found me a psychologist whose office is accessible, and I've been seeing him every fortnight since.

I've taken it upon myself to keep laughing and making jokes about being an amputee.

Once, a nurse was inserting a catheter and she asked me to wriggle my toes. I said, "don't be silly, I don't have toes" and we both laughed! I'd also sail past the nurses' station in my wheelchair and tell them, "I'm escaping!" They'd ask me where I was going and I'd say, "I don't know, but I'll be back at meal time!"

On 1 October 2019, I was transferred to Osbourne Park Hospital for rehabilitation. I'd already met the rehab doctor, physiotherapist, occupational therapist and a prosthetist at the amputee clinic where I'd been doing strengthening exercises since the amputation.



I was fitted for my interim prosthesis and for the next 37 days, I exercised daily in the amputee gym and got used to my prosthesis under the guidance of the physiotherapist and occupational therapist. I walked between the parallel bars, and they taught me how to get up off the floor if I ever fell over.

On 6 November 2019 I was discharged home. The Occupational Therapists had arranged some modifications to my home including a ramp at the front door, some changes to my bathroom and ensuite including the removal of shower screens and the installation of a seat, grab rails alongside the toilet and a toilet seat raiser.

I was still visiting the Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital Amputee Clinic regularly. Every time I donned my prosthesis, the skin on the end of my stump would break causing infection, which took time to heal. I was admitted back into hospital for stump revision surgery on 20 May 2020, which was performed by Professor Shirley Jansen. Over the next few months, my stump finally healed, and I was fitted with a new prosthesis.

On 12 October 2020, 383 days after my below knee amputation, I was told to get up out of my wheelchair and to start walking. This was the greatest experience since walking on my own two feet and I had the freedom to do daily tasks such as driving, shopping and anything else I wanted to do. In February 2021, I attended Peer Support Volunteer training with Limbs 4 Life, and I've been an active volunteer since then. I also travelled to Melbourne to attend AMPed Up National Amputee Conference in February 2023 as I'd been told it would be the best thing that I would ever do as an amputee, and they were correct!



I experienced several setbacks after this including the amputation of my left index finger due to an abscess and a right heel pressure injury from pushing myself up in bed. I also experienced diabetic foot ulceration and osteomyelitis in my remaining right foot. This required debridement, an angioplasty, stent and ongoing wound management.

On 2 January 2024, I was admitted to hospital again due to a wound on the inside of my right ankle. The wound was debrided, and I was due for a review in five days' time. When the nurse removed the dressing I asked him to take a photo. When I saw the wound, I was horrified, and I knew that I wanted to have the leg amputated. I needed reassurance that I was doing the right thing, so I spoke with my family and some of my peers in the amputee community, including bilateral below knee amputees.

I informed my surgeon that I consented to a right, below knee amputation which was performed on 8 January again, at Sir Charles Gardiner Hospital. I went to Osborne Park Hospital for rehabilitation on 14 January and remained there until I was discharged home again on 2 February 2024.

It was then that I really had to learn to adapt

and be able to do everything differently from showering, getting dressed and daily chores, none of which are easy when you have no legs.

My friend told me that I had joined an exclusive club by becoming a bilateral amputee and they aren't wrong!

I received my right prosthetic leg on 26 March this year and I also attended AMPed Up again, this time in Adelaide and it was fantastic! I'm also the secretary of an ex-military organisation, The Royal Australian Engineers Association of Western Australia, which looks after the welfare and comradeship of members with meetings, fellowship luncheons and a newsletter, 'The Purple Circle,' published four times annually. I'm proud to be a consumer representative for both the Australian Diabetes Clinical Quality Registry, part of the School of Preventative Medicine at Monash University, and Project Atherid, an awareness campaign for peripheral artery disease being conducted at The Harry Perkins Institute.

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Amputee support groups

If you would like to connect with your local amputee community, why not come along to a get-together in your area? Hosted by Peer Support Group Leaders, support groups are a great way to meet others, connect with people in a similar situation, ask questions, share stories and learn a tip or two. Partners, carers and family members are welcome and encouraged to participate in support groups.

If you would like some more information visit the website or call us today.

Local area support groups can be found in:

- Adelaide
- Bendigo
- Blackburn
- Brighton
- Brisbane
- Geelong
- Gold Coast
- Launceston
- Petersham
- Mildura
- Mornington Peninsula
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Peer support capacity building project

For the first time in the history of this organisation, we are proud to announce that Limbs 4 Life has received funding to deliver and expand its flagship Peer Support Program nationally.

At Limbs 4 Life we know the benefits that peer support can provide to people facing amputation and those who have recently undergone amputation.



Peer support provides people (and their families):

- With the opportunity to speak to someone who has lived experience of limb loss;
- Helps to navigate the pathways forward in relation to healthcare systems and funding support;
- With direction and knowing what to expect; and
- To reduce fears and concerns relating to living with amputation.

Importantly peer support provides new amputees and their family members with access to a person who has the very real experience of understanding how you may be feeling. We know this because, not only do we have the privilege of listening to the feedback of peer support recipients, but because we invested significantly in independent research to determine the impact that the Limbs 4 Life Peer Support Program has on the Australian amputee community.

The Peer Support Capacity Building (PSCB) grant will provide two years of financial support. That support will give Limbs 4 Life the ability to:

- Deliver peer support training nationally, in all states and territories.
- Increase the volunteer of peer support volunteers meaning that Limbs 4 Life can be more responsive to the needs



of our ever-growing community. (It is conservatively estimated that amputation rates increase by 2.7% per year).

- Establish more local area support groups which serve as wonderful pathways for community engagement and peer support, especially for those who missed the opportunity in hospital or rehabilitation, or were not ready to receive support at the time
- Create new resources in response to information gaps
- Deliver national empowerment workshops with a focus on self-advocacy, understanding human rights and enacting on those rights, along with the provision of insights into consumer law. It's important that everyone of us feels equipped to confidently voice your concerns if they arise.
- Finally, like always the outcomes of the program will be evaluated to ensure that community needs are being met.

The PSCB project has also enabled Limbs 4 Life to employ more people to assist us with the program roll-out. Andrew Fairbairn has rejoined us following a short break to continue his role as Peer Coordinator for WA, Kylie Franson has taken on the role of Peer Coordinator for SA/NT, Kath Tanner has come on board as Peer Coordinator for Tasmania and Jacquetta Rogers has been promoted to National Peer Coordinator | Partners and Carers.

"Peer support was one of the most important aspects of my rehabilitation. It helped me to understand what was possible and made me realise that there was life after amputation."

Below knee amputee 62 Adelaide

If you have adapted to limb loss and would like to find out more about the national Peer Support Program, contact us today.

Peer support volunteer training dates for 2025

Melbourne
Perth
Hobart
Gold Coast
Darwin
Canberra
Sydney

May 17
May 31
June 21
July 12
August 2
August 30
September TBC

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Perth CBD
Hobart
Coolangatta
Darwin CBD
Canberra
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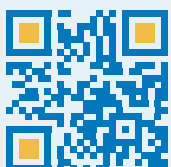
If you would like to consider volunteering as an amputee peer with Limbs 4 Life, please contact us today to find out more.

Please note, RSVP's are essential!



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PERSONALITY: 9/10
LOOKS: 8/10
LEGS: 1/2

Alfie's community connected

In September 2018, I had knee replacement surgery which went as well as possible. I was walking freely until one evening, 5 weeks later, I slipped on my wet kitchen floor. My partner, Jenny, was at work and not due to come home until about 10 o'clock. I rang neighbours who came over and dragged me onto a bed in unbelievable pain. They called an ambulance, which arrived 2 hours later. X-rays at the hospital revealed that I had cracked my patella in 8 places.

Over the next year and a bit, attempts to salvage my broken knee were made including the removal of bone fragments and scar tissue, the extension of my Achilles tendon and eventually a knee fusion. During Christmas in 2019, my family and I were holidaying in Port Vincent and the wound on my knee still required regular, professional attention and care. I took myself into Yorketown Hospital on Boxing Day where a resident orthopaedic surgeon took one look at me and said, "you're not far from being on the wrong side of the

grass!" From there I was ambulated to Royal Adelaide Hospital.

My knee was infected for the second time since the initial injury.

I had several operations over the following week, and then I made up my mind and knew that I wouldn't be having second thoughts. I wanted the leg off.

The surgeon concurred and on 9 January 2020 my leg was amputated above the knee. After the amputation, when I woke up in recovery, I felt great relief and for the first time in what felt like eternity, I wasn't in pain.

After two weeks I left the Royal Adelaide and went to Amputee Rehabilitation at the Flinders Centre. Siobhan, an amputee nurse, explained to me exactly what the next few months would entail, and for that I was most grateful. I spent my days learning and practicing the exercises to strengthen muscles I'd be using





when I was ready to try a prosthesis. During my time in rehab, I was able to interact with other amputees who were in different stages of their rehabilitation. I'd watch how they walked and ask them questions about how they were coping at home. This all proved very advantageous when I finally got my first leg. In March 2020 Covid hit and only 4 people at a time were allowed in the amputee section. My quest for sourcing lived experience was severely hindered.

Every year in March, trainee physio and occupational therapists from Flinders University attend Flinders Centre for a week of training on amputees. Due to Covid this was unable

to happen while I was there. Monique, the head of physiotherapy, asked if I would like to make a video that we could send to the trainees. We made the video, and it has been a useful tool, especially when trying to explain to family and friends what amputee rehabilitation is all about. I got my first prosthesis, and the physios made a video of my first walk using the parallel bars. I gradually got confident with the new leg and after a couple of weeks was allowed to go home.

I've been active all my life, so I was keen to try a new activity. I tried lawn bowls at Goolwa Bowling Club and it's best thing I've ever been involved in. I started playing socially, then coaching, and in the last 3 years I've played Pennant. I would suggest that if you're looking for a social atmosphere and lots of fun, lawn bowls is the sport for you. I also have a 3-wheel bike with an electric motor, and it's been wonderful to be on the road with the wind in my face.

In December 2022 I attended a Limbs 4 Life Peer Support Volunteer training session and when I walked in, there were 20 people with prosthetics, including the facilitator! It was a great feeling to be able to mix with other amputees and hear their stories. I've found great satisfaction in being able to assist future and recent amputees by sharing my story and experiences. My main message is that a positive attitude will go a long way in getting on with your life. My life is great and very busy. I attend the Limbs 4 Life lunches in Adelaide when I can, they're great and everyone's welcome to join in the fun!

Meet Nella



Limbs 4 Life is thrilled to welcome Nella to our team in the capacity of Administration Assistant.

Nella is a resilient, three-time cancer survivor who became an above-knee amputee at the age of 10 due to osteosarcoma (cancer). Nella is a proud wife, and the mother of two teenagers.

Nella joins Limbs 4 Life with over twenty years' experience in administration, finance, service coordination and customer service.

Nella is passionate about supporting individuals with disabilities and making sure they have access to the resources and assistance that they need. Her lived experience brings a unique perspective and a deep commitment to making a positive impact in the limb loss community. You'll get to say "hello" to Nella when you call the Limbs 4 Life hotline.



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