

Media Release

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Powerful new program creates positive perspective for Far North Queenslanders with spinal cord injuries

An innovative program that helps people with spinal cord injury overcome the associated emotional challenges is now available in Cairns thanks to a partnership between the Spinal Injuries Association and nib foundation.

Discovering the Power in Me (DPM), was developed by The Pacific Institute in Canada and features practical tools and techniques focused on helping people with a spinal cord injury deal with the emotional and mental ramifications of the trauma.

Spinal Injuries Association Chief Executive Officer, Bruce Milligan, said people who sustained a spinal cord injury had their lives changed in a split second, without warning or a chance to prepare.

"Aside from the obvious physical challenges, the mental struggle of re-evaluating their entire lives and sense of self is incredibly difficult," Bruce said.

"Very little assistance is available to support people with this side of recovery, which is why our organisation was so keen to learn and deliver the DPM program.

"DPM's prime aim is on creating a mindset that encourages creative solutions and focuses on what can be achieved, rather than what has been lost," he added.

John Morgan was one of the first Australians to take part in DPM, after hitting rock bottom following an accident that left him with paraplegia.

The Gold Coast father-of-two said the program completely changed his life, providing salvation from a self-destructive decline he was desperate to get out of.

"When you're first injured and told you'll never walk again, its soul destroying," John said.

"Ironically, when you need it the most there's little support for your emotional state of mind.

"DPM pulled me through that dark time and now every day I check-in with my thoughts, which helps me to stay positive and calm," he added.

nib foundation Chairman, Terry Lawler, said the foundation funded the program following resounding success of pilot workshops last year.

“By better understanding how the human mind works and how current beliefs and attitudes shape expectations for the future, DPM program participants learn they are in control of the way they think, and can use that power to change the way they live their lives,” Mr Lawler said.

“We are proud to assist the Spinal Injuries Association bring this unique program to Queensland residents and help them make significant improvements to their overall health and wellbeing.”

The Discovering the Power in Me workshop will be held on 4 and 5 June 2012 at Cairns City Library.

For more information visit www.spinal.com.au

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