



MASS Action

The newsletter of the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme

FROM THE MASS EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S DESK...

Welcome to our first edition of *MASS Action* for 2009.

I would like to thank all prescribers who attended the MASS forums conducted in 2008. Clinicians expressed appreciation for the update forums and from a MASS perspective, it was a valuable opportunity to discuss issues affecting service delivery in different areas and to explore strategies to improve our service to clients across Queensland.

The end of 2008 provided us with a full year of data relevant to the Spectacle Supply Scheme (SSS). During 2008, SSS received over 68,000 applications. While there were some initial teething problems in coping with the high level of service demand, strategies were implemented to improve timeframes and service

delivery for clients.

In 2009, MASS will be implementing new Standing Offer Arrangements for mobility aids, oxygen and continence services. Additionally, towards the latter part of the year, MASS is planning to introduce an SOA for Hoists. Evaluation of offers is resource intensive but it is important to ensure that equipment/aids available through our SOAs continue to provide value for money. There will be education sessions provided on each of the new SOAs to ensure that prescribers are aware of changes to equipment/aids.

With the transfer of the management and administration of the Spectacle Supply Scheme to MASS, the Brisbane Office has outgrown the available

accommodation at St Paul's Terrace and planning is underway to move to premises at Cannon Hill. The move is likely to occur mid-year and the new accommodation will enable MASS to better manage and rotate stock equipment. Further information about the new location will be provided closer to the proposed move.

In conclusion, I am pleased to advise that the temporary subsidy increases that commenced on 1 September and were due to finish on 31 December 2008 have been extended. The continuation of the increases is reviewed on a monthly basis and depends of the overall MASS financial position.

Gayle Leggat
Executive Officer

Medical Grade Footwear &

Orthoses

From 1 July 2008, improvements to the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) Medical Grade Footwear and Orthoses service were implemented.

Prescribers are requested to adopt the new application forms as soon as possible and are urged to refer to the changes in MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedure Manual, Medical Grade Footwear or Orthoses Sections.

Full details are available on the MASS internet website at www.health.qld.gov.au/mass

Additional Equipment

The following trials which were initially approved for a six month period have been continued subject to review on a monthly basis:

- Communication Software with a subsidy of \$750.00 plus (1) accessing device/switch (not computer mouse) to a maximum of \$140.00 with mandatory ownership; and
- Voice Amplification Devices with a subsidy of \$450.00, also with mandatory ownership.

All forms and procedures can be obtained from the application forms section of the MASS website at www.health.qld.gov.au/mass.

MASS Stock Pool

MASS would like to remind prescribers that MASS has a number of equipment items that are returned when no longer in use. MASS screens all equipment returned and selects items to be recycled into its stock pool. Prior to returning equipment into the stock pool, items are cleaned, repaired and refurbished. Allocation of stock equipment to MASS clients is a routine MASS procedure and clients can be assured of receiving a stock item in good condition. This may be an alternative option for prescribers to consider, particularly when equipment is required urgently or if there are concerns with client co-payments.

Brisbane Stock Inventory Lists are uploaded onto the MASS website at regular intervals. Detailed equipment lists can be found following the Bulletin Board link, under Resources: <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/mass/bulletin.asp>. There are links to the following stock categories: Electric Hoists, Mobile Overtoilet & Shower Commodes and Manual Wheelchairs.

Therapists are welcome to phone, email or make an appointment to view stock and identify suitable options. It is suggested that therapists contact the MASS Clinical Advisors or Rehabilitation Engineer, prior to submitting applications for equipment listed on the website, so items can be held pending receipt of the application. This is advisable, as stock items have regular turnover, and it is important to determine suitability as there may be specific features and/or modifications present on some of the stock items.

Product Alert: Liko AB

Liko Universal Sling Bars

Liko AB has issued a Field Safety Notice regarding the *component securing* a Liko Sling-Bar mounted on a Liko Light Patient Lifter.

The notice indicates that the *component securing* the sling-bar to a Linko Patient Lifter/Hoist, in certain circumstances, may experience unanticipated fatigue. In extreme cases, this can result in the sling-bar becoming detached from the Patient Lifter/Hoist. If this was to happen when a person is being lifted, the person would risk falling. Liko has stated that it has had no reports of personal injuries to date.

Liko has also stated that a Linko *Patient Lifter/Hoist* is *currently safe to use, as long as the sling-bar passes an inspection, by the user's carer, before every lift*. The instructions and details of the inspection required can be obtained from Medtec Products Australia or from the MASS Engineer.

If the sling-bar does not pass the inspection before each lift, or for further information on how to perform the inspection, please contact the Medtec Product's representative Phil Jones (03) 8761 6956. If you are unable to contact Mr Jones, please contact the MASS Engineer, Elene Athousis on (07) 3250 8555.

Liko Mobile Patient Lifts

Liko AB has issued an Urgent Medical Device Recall for the Liko Uno, Viking S, Viking XS and LikoLight mobile patient lifts (identified by specific serial numbers) due to a potential safety hazard.

According to the Field Safety Notice, the actuator of the lift has the potential to separate when the upper arm is fully extended. If this happens when a patient is lifted the actuator will fail resulting in a patient fall.

To date, Liko has received 18 reports of actuator failures, including one report of a death from complications associated with a hip fracture, and one report of a fractured femur.

Medtec Products Australia have advised that the lifting equipment is safe as long as the hoist passes the inspection process conducted before every lift and at least once per day as described in the Field Safety Notice. The instructions and details of the inspection required can be obtained from Medtec Products representative Phil Jones or from the MASS Engineer.

Hoists affected by the above two Field Safety Notices that have been provided through MASS will be replaced by Medtec Products Australia. MASS has spoken to its clients or their carer as to the required inspections when using their hoist, prior to the replacement or modifications which will be carried out by Medtec Products Australia.

Further information can be obtained from the Liko website: www.liko.com/int/alerts.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON SUBSIDY INCREASES

The following temporary increases to subsidy levels have been continued subject to review on a monthly basis.

Communication Aids

The subsidy on Speech Generation Devices has been temporarily increased from \$3,000.00 to \$5,000.00

Also subsidies on Artificial Larynges have been temporarily increased from \$1,000.00 to \$1,200.00.

Continance Aids

The temporary increase applies to applications received by, and due from, MASS from 1 September 2008 to 31 March 2009 (unless further extended). The temporary increases apply to the following:

All-in-one and Pull-on Pads

Applicants approved for all-in-one or pull-on pads receive the same level of subsidy levels as those approved to receive shaped pads.

This temporary increase will not affect the quantity of supply received by clients receiving all-in-one or pullon pads prior to 1/11/04 as these clients are already receiving subsidy quantities comparable to applicants requesting a shaped pad.

Intermittent (disposable) catheters:

The level of subsidy assistance for intermittent/disposable catheters has been temporarily increased from the current subsidy level of 75 intermittent catheters per six months to 300 intermittent catheters per six months.

Equipment

Further details of the scope of eligibility for the various components are available on the MASS website bulletin board at www.health.qld.gov.au/mass

The MASS Statewide Prescriber Procedures Manual will not be amended at this point due to the temporary nature of the increases. The amount listed is the new temporary subsidy level.

Mobility Aids



- Powerdrive wheelchair frame \$5,200
- Specialised powerdrive wheelchair control systems \$3,000
- Swing away/drop down Joy Stick (powerdrive wheelchair) \$200
- Tilt in space (powerdrive wheelchair) \$1,500
- Tilt in space manual wheelchair and infant stroller \$4,000
- Seat (postural control, pressure reduction) \$1,000
- Backrest \$1,000
- Headrest \$400
- Armrests (alternative/adjustable/modifications) ..\$200 per pair
- Securement rigid (all solid guides – add/abd, pelvic, shoulder, knee, limb)\$150 each
- Trays \$300

Daily Living Aids

Bath Transfer Benches — The existing subsidy has been temporarily expanded to include alternative equipment to achieve same function, but does not include static showerchair or stools;

Pressure Mattress — The existing subsidy has been temporarily expanded to include mattress for purpose of appropriate positioning;

Mobile Overtilet Showerchair

- Frame modification \$300
- Securement - limbs \$120
- Tilt \$800

Hoists

- Non basic \$2,400
- Standing \$2,400

Pivot frames – existing subsidy extended to include any alternative attachments

AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS FOR PATIENT LIFTING DEVICES

From 31 March 2009, MASS will require that all patient lifting devices subsidised through the scheme comply with Australian Standard (AS) ISO 10535-2002 *Hoists for the Transfer of Disabled Persons – Requirements and Test Methods*.

Conformance to this standard provides MASS with acceptable evidence that patient lifting devices supplied to MASS' clients have been tested in conditions which replicate 'normal' use and meet minimum levels of safety, performance and reliability. In addition, conformance ensures patient lifters within the MASS Equipment Fleet comply with a minimum benchmark in terms of product design, functionality and manufacture quality.

MASS has requested documentary evidence of conformance with this Standard from suppliers of patient lifting devices, to be provided prior to this date. A list of compliant products will be posted on the bulletin board of the MASS website and updated regularly. There will be an overlap period where hoists in the current MASS fleet, both with clients and available through recycled stock, will continue to be utilised and issued. As these products reach the end of their economic life, they will be replaced with Standards compliant items. Please check the MASS bulletin board at www.health.qld.gov.au/mass. Details should be available at the end of March 2009.

Product Alert: ARJO Maxi Move Hoist

ArjoHuntleigh have issued a Field Safety Notice regarding a particular type of attachment to Arjo Maxi Move Hoists called the Lock and Load system or Combi Hanger.

The Field Safety Notice indicates that unintended dislocation of the hanger on Arjo Maxi Moves Hoists, equipped with the Lock and Load system, could occur. Should the hanger dislodge, the notice indicates that a complete detachment of the hanger may subsequently occur during use, placing the user at risk of injury.

No Arjo Maxi Move Hoists, with the Lock and Load attachment device, have been provided through MASS. For further information, please contact Arjo Huntleigh on 1800 072 040 or the MASS Engineer, Elene Athousis on (07) 3250 8555.

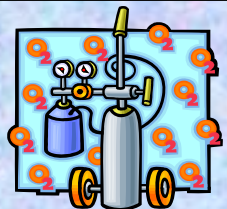
Home Oxygen

Standing Offer Arrangement (SOA)

Work on the new SOA has commenced and MASS are currently awaiting tender submissions which will be evaluated prior to entering a new agreement for the provision of Home Oxygen. The new SOA is scheduled to commence on 1st July 2009. MASS will keep clients and Community Health Centre staff informed of developments in particular any changes which may affect current and future oxygen provision.

Disaster/Cyclone, Flood Procedures

As you would be aware, Queensland has suffered its fair share of natural disasters over recent months. MASS has previously developed emergency procedures and, in conjunction with oxygen suppliers, will continue to provide oxygen equipment to clients affected by these natural disasters as soon as possible. If further information is required please contact MASS Ph:3250 8555.



Education Events 2009

Following the success of MASS and Home and Community Care (HACC)/MASS education in previous years we look forward to seeing our many and diverse prescribers at new and updated education sessions planned for 2009. The Calendar of Events is available via the Bulletin Board section of the MASS website <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/mass/bulletin.asp> with the following events on offer:

Continance Aids Services

Three videoconferences are available for the continence area in 2009. The series begins with:

- The 'First steps in the management of urinary and faecal incontinence' in March;
- The 'Management of incontinence from a dietician's perspective' in August; and
- The 'Impact of Urinary and Faecal Incontinence on Personal and Family Wellbeing', being conducted in November 2009.

Equipment Services

The year begins and ends with a videoconference on 'Measuring the user for a manual or power wheelchair, scheduled for early March and December. This topic is also useful when considering shower chairs and other seated equipment.

Two videoconferences will specifically address seating, beginning with 'Seating assessment and prescription in practice' in May, followed by 'Off the shelf or custom seating? Examples of seating in manual and power wheelchairs' in September.

Two videoconferences will address some of the more challenging aspects of daily living aids prescriptions, with 'Providing postural support in mobile shower chairs' in May, then 'Choosing and using slings, with a little more on using hoists' in September, the latter repeated in November.

With a new Mobility Aids Standing Offer Arrangement due to commence in July 2009, MASS will be providing several options for prescribers statewide to update their awareness of all walking aids and wheelchairs on the new SOA:

- Brisbane and Townsville Expos will occur in July and August respectively and provide presentations on the application, options and accessories available for all wheelchairs on the SOA.
- Small group sessions will be conducted to give prescribers an opportunity to practice and update skills in pre-selection of equipment for trial to suit the user and the local area.
- A videoconference version of the Mobility Aids SOA Expo will be conducted on 30 June, 22 July and 6 August.

With so much time devoted to the Mobility Aids SOA in 2009, it was decided not to proceed with MASS' annual Wheelchair Prescriber Workshop in 2009. Instead a new event will be trialled, the 'Hands on Equipment Expo' in Brisbane to be confirmed for late October. The goal of this expo is to bring together equipment suppliers, repairers and service personnel with engineering and MASS staff to provide a very practical event for both prescribers and consumers. Sessions will focus on adjustment, safe use and maintenance of equipment subsidised by MASS.

Oxygen and Specialised Services

With a new Oxygen Standing Offer Arrangement due to commence in July 2009 MASS will provide 2 videoconferences for prescribers and support staff (e.g. Respiratory Nurses and Physiotherapists) catering for the 2 main specialty areas:

- Prescribing Adult Oxygen Packages, 26 June (date to be confirmed)
- Prescribing Paediatric Oxygen Packages, 17 July (date to be confirmed).

For further information please contact Stephen Hales telephone 3250 8648, or email Stephen.Hales@health.qld.gov.au

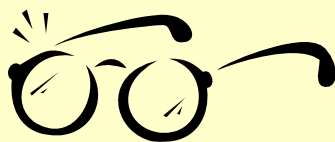
SPECTACLE SUPPLY SCHEME — ‘ONE YEAR ON’

The Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) celebrated the first anniversary of the transfer of management and administration of the Spectacle Supply Scheme (SSS) at the beginning of January, giving SSS staff an opportunity to reflect on what a big year it was. SSS provides a comprehensive range of basic prescription spectacles to eligible Queensland residents. Applicants to SSS can receive single vision spectacles for reading or distance, bifocals or trifocals in a wide range of frame styles.

SSS received over 68,000 applications in 2008, and generated over 63,000 orders for spectacles to residents of Queensland. The numbers, however, tell only part of the story. The move of SSS to MASS saw continuous improvement of the scheme throughout the year. Improvements included:

- A new Standing Offer Arrangement (SOA) for SSS, which was signed in April and provides a greater range of products for applicants. For the first time, a range of metal frames was made available as a standard option for all applicants – previously a clinical reason was required. This proved an extremely popular addition to SSS, with nearly 18,000 metal frames prescribed by optometrists in the last half of the year.
- The development of new application forms and information booklets for SSS, reducing the paperwork required of both applicants and optometrists to participate in the scheme. The application form has been received favourably since its introduction in July 2008.
- The establishment of the Spectacle Supply Scheme Clinical Advisory Committee (SSSCAC), the first meeting of which occurred in 2008. The SSSCAC provides clinical advice and expertise and ensures that the scheme continues to meet the needs of eligible Queensland residents. The next meeting will be held in April.

SSS is looking forward to consolidating during 2009, and continuing to meet the vision needs of eligible Queenslanders.



CAIRNS VISIT

In March, Gayle Leggat, Executive Officer and Penny Penrose, Service Manager, Continence Services, visited Cairns to meet with MASS staff, Community Health staff and MASS prescribers from Cairns and the surrounding areas.

Thanks to the continence advisors, nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and the speech pathologist who took the time out of their busy working days to attend the meetings. It was wonderful to see so many interested and passionate prescribers.

Issues discussed included difficulty in trialling equipment in the north, lack of repair agents, MASS subsidy levels and temporary increases, and new equipment available on the market relating to the communication aid area.

CONTINENCE EDUCATION FORUM, 14 - 15 MAY 2009

Brisbane Technology Park, Eight Mile Plains, Brisbane

The project team have already approached guest speakers for this forum, and the program is sufficiently varied and interesting to appeal to those working in the acute, community, child health and aged care settings. Just to whet your appetite, confirmed sessions include:

- Chronic respiratory disease and incontinence - Dr Henry Marshall, Thoracic Physician
- A guide to evidence based practice - Professor Chris Del Mar, Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences and Medicine, Bond University
- Life after colorectal surgery - Dr Nick Lutton, Colorectal Surgeon
- Complementary medicines and incontinence - Geraldine Moses, Senior Drug Information Pharmacist, Mater Health Services
- *Panel discussions on:*
 - Skin health and incontinence
 - Perinatal pelvic floor issues and their long-term impact on the older woman
 - Chronic disease, incontinence and Aboriginal people
- *Workshops on:*
 - Toddlers to teens
 - Continence care in the residential aged care setting
 - Selecting and prescribing aids and equipment for managing urinary and faecal incontinence
- *Lots more!*

The finalised program will be circulated with the next edition of the Continence Update newsletter. If you require further information or wish to be added to the "Continence Update" distribution list please email contpro@health.qld.gov.au or telephone Lesley Osborne on 07 3250 8606.

MEDICAL AIDS SUBSIDY SCHEME CONTACTS

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**"Supporting independence at
home"**

The Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme (MASS) provides access to subsidy funding for the provision of MASS endorsed aids and equipment to eligible Queensland residents with permanent and stabilised conditions or disabilities.

The range of MASS aids and equipment is selected to assist people to live at home and avoid premature or inappropriate residential care or hospitalisation.

Aids and equipment are subsidy funded either on a permanent loan basis, private ownership or through the purchase of consumables.

The range of aids and equipment include:

- Communication Aids
- Continence Aids
- Daily Living Aids
- Home Oxygen
- Medical Grade Footwear
- Mobility Aids
- Orthoses
- Spectacles under the Spectacle Supply Scheme .



If you have any suggestions about what you would like to see in future newsletters, or would like to be included on the *MASS Action* mailing list, email the editor Neil Anderson on neil_anderson@health.qld.gov.au.