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1. Dansac data on file, LN-06901, 11/24. ref-04051, 2024, Laboratory In Vitro Study using water *In comparison to Coloplast Sensura Mio™ barrier, Salts Confidence Be™ barrier, Convatec Esteem™ barrier and Dansac Nova™ barrier. 2. Dansac data on file, LN-06224, 07/22.

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HOURS OF BUSINESS

Monday-Thursday

8.30am - 3.30pm

Friday 8.30am – 1.30pm

For current information go to:

nswstoma.org.au

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SECRETARY Lynda frost

TREASURER Graham Lawson

OTHER

DIRECTORS Carol Quast
Ian Murray
Eugene Tomczyk
Renee Constantin
Ian Niccol
Joneen Troup

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NOTICE BOARD

Upcoming Education Days

20th June 2025 - Port Macquarie @ Port City Bowling Club

15th August – Wagga Wagga @ Wagga Wagga RSL

21st November – Liverpool @ Club Liverpool

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 22nd November 10am over Zoom. More information will be announced via our website: <https://www.nswstoma.org.au/about-us/agm/>

Stomal Therapy Clinic

The clinic is open and free to all our members and operates for the first 3 Thursdays of each month at our Stanmore premises. Members can also contact Anne Marie via phone or email. Appointments are essential.

Anne Marie Lyons STN

phone or text: 0468 582 951

email: stomanurse@nswstoma.org.au

Stoma Appliance Ordering Portal for members

For information, FAQs and instructions go to:

<https://www.nswstoma.org.au/nsw-stoma-members-portal/>

From 1st July 2025 the following charges apply:

POSTAGE	STANDARD POST	EXPRESS POST
1 Month Issue within NSW	\$17	\$27
2 Month Issue within NSW	\$34	\$54
1 Month Issue Interstate	\$27	\$38
2 Month Issue Interstate	\$54	\$76

 **Please be aware that Australia Post do not guarantee delivery times for Standard or Express Postage**



NOTICE BOARD

Products for Sale

Product	Code	pack size	Member Price	Non-Member Price
Redi wipes Silk Wipe	ARS3033	100	\$10.00	\$12.00
Micropore 1"	1530-1	1 roll	\$2.00	\$3.50
Micropore 2"	1530-2	1 roll	\$3.50	\$5.00
Metal Nightstand	Nightstand	each	\$45.00	\$50.00
Simple Nightstand Plastic	380431	each	\$16.00	\$18.00
Ostomy Scissors (curved)	9505	each	\$9.00	\$10.00
Hollister Leg Bag	9632	each	\$10.00	\$12.00
Hollister Leg Bag	9624	each	\$10.00	\$12.00
Urostomy Drain Tube Adaptor	7331	10	\$31.00	\$35.00
Odour Be Gone Hos-Togel	3300	each	\$36.00	\$40.00
Odour Be Gone Hos-Toma No Smells 500ml	10500	each	\$18.00	\$20.00
Odour Be Gone Hos-Toma No Smells 120ml	10120	each	\$8.00	\$9.00

Did you know you can purchase products from any of our suppliers through us?
We offer special pricing for our members and can provide quotes on request.
Please note all cash sales must be paid for at the time of ordering.

CHAIRPERSON REPORT

from Dr Allen Nash April 2025



We had another successful member information day in Shoalhaven heads recently and it was great to catch up with members and hear their feedback. The ability to see the products and talk to suppliers has always been appreciated. Our Stomal Therapy Nurses again made significant contributions demonstrating their commitment to supporting ostomates.

We have had no news about the Federal Health Departments reviewing of the distribution arrangements of the Stoma Appliance Scheme. We seem to be in a perpetual state of wondering what is happening with several reviews in recent years.

The current operations to distribute your products is a very efficient operation. NSW Stoma is a not-for-profit organisation run by ostomates for ostomates. Through committed volunteers and member donations we can not only provide a cost-effective distribution service but provide extra support for members such as our providing Therapy Nurse,

members information days, and monthly zoom discussion sessions.

We hope that the Health Department does not disrupt our current system that is working well in the interests of ostomates.

This year we will have three directors retiring and we will be looking for new directors. If you would like to contribute to NSW Stoma in being a Director, please feel free to contact me via my email: chairperson@nswstoma.org.au and I will arrange to give more information on what the position requires.

We are looking for people who are computer literate and understand good governance.

Keep well.

Allen Nash

Chair - NSW Stoma Ltd



A message from Mary Egan, your General Manager

NSW Stoma is here to provide you with the supplies you need to manage your stoma, but that's not all we do.

As a registered charity our primary focus is to raise the standard of care and wellbeing for all ostomates. Providing you with information, encouragement, and emotional support is an important part of our role and we do this through our website, journal, member information days, Zoom meetings, our Stomal Therapy Clinic, and our Stomal Therapy Scholarship. Additionally, from time to time, a member may find themselves in dire financial circumstances, even homelessness, and need extra support from us in the form of subsidised membership or other needs. Any money raised via fees and donations ensures we can continue to help those who need it most.

By now, all members should have received the 2025-2026 membership renewal form in the post. (Friendly reminder that fees are due before the 1st July!) There is no increase in fees for the next year but with rising postage charges we will need to increase our postage charges to you. See the

notice board on page 5 for prices from 1st July. We also take this opportunity to ask those who can afford it to assist us by adding a donation to your annual renewal. This additional financial support allows us to continue to provide those services and ensure all our members have access to the support they need to manage their stoma. Special thanks to all of you who donate, whether we publish your name or not.

Our monthly Zoom meetings continue to be well attended and Anne Marie, Carol and I love bringing them to you. Feedback from attendees is always positive so these continue to be a win-win all round. For members who prefer in-person meet-ups, we're running four face-to-face meetings this year. We started in Nowra at the Shoalhaven Bowling Club in April and next stop is Port Macquarie on 20th June. If you're in the area, we would love to see you there! We'll follow that with Wagga Wagga in August and finish the year in Sydney at Club Liverpool in November.

It's been over 18 months since we introduced our online ordering portal. Thank you for all your feedback. We have a long list of enhancements and I hope that over the next year we can introduce at least some of them. The portal is managed by our national body which oversees all stoma associations and any changes are agreed by a committee representing



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A message from Mary Egan, your General Manager (continued)

those associations. While change can be slow, the shared management allows us to have an affordable system that benefits all ostomates around Australia. If you haven't yet tried it, I urge you to give it a go and let us know what you think. Check out our website for more information on how to register and use the portal.

In this issue, we have more great ostomate stories. Andrew Lam has generously shared his story and shows that having a stoma doesn't stop you doing anything. Kelly Moss's story is a triumph in the face of adversity. Don't forget to check out her ostomy support bears too.

I need to make special mention of our wonderful volunteers who give up their time to help get your products out the door. They help us in so many ways. Thanks to Randall for his kind words on page 38 about his volunteering experience. We are always looking for more volunteers so if you can come to our premises in Stanmore, we would love to see you!

Our board of directors also work hard to make sure our association runs smoothly. This year we are farewelling three of our directors. Ian Niccol was our treasurer until the last AGM. Work and family commitments are forcing him to take a step back from the board. Ian Murray and Carol Quast will both complete their 9 year maximum

term at the November AGM. All have made a significant contribution to the board and NSW Stoma and will be sorely missed. Fortunately, Carol will continue her stoma education work so we will still see her at our Zoom meetings and education days. I would like to add a big thank you to them and all our board. If you are interested in serving on our board and have some governance experience, we would love to hear from you. Contact Allen Nash: chairperson@nswstoma.org.au

Lastly, but not least, I want to thank our staff who work really hard to get your products to you as efficiently as possible. I'd like to give a special mention to two of our staff who have been with us more than 16 years. You might recognize their names from phone calls or emails: Talei Vakalutugone started work here in 2008 and works in customer service. Fiona Lau joined us 6 months later in 2009 and is now our deputy manager. It makes such a difference having experienced staff dedicated to serving our members and I'm incredibly thankful for their continuing hard work – here's to another 16 years!

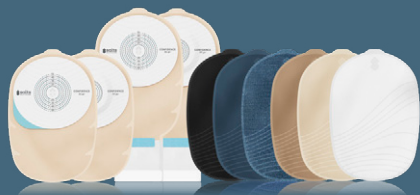
Warm Regards,

Mary Egan

General Manager, NSW Stoma Ltd

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Through listening to people living with a stoma, Confidence BE go™ addresses your unmet needs. For the first time Confidence BE go™ gives you the option of a 'naked bag' and a collection of reusable, washable covers in a choice of six colours.

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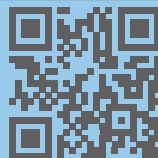
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© Registered trade marks of Salts Healthcare Ltd. © Salts Healthcare Ltd 2025. Products and trade marks of Salts Healthcare Ltd are protected by UK and foreign patents, registered designs and trade marks. For further details, please visit www.salts.co.uk **Reference: 1.** Confidence BE go™ Focus Group 2024, Australia, Nurses and Patient. v.0

Failte Mo Chairde

(Hello my friends)



Hope this note finds you well.

The last time I wrote was for the Christmas journal!

My clinic has been extremely busy which I am well pleased with, it just proves there is a great need for my services.

If you need to see me, please try and book in advance.

If on the other hand you have a problem that cannot wait, I will see you although you will probably have a bit of a wait.

Our zoom meetings are being very well attended and for this I would like to share some of the very encouraging and grateful comments people have shared with us about them.

"At 91 years of age I finally managed, with the help of my niece, to also send my first medical supply order and I found the meeting most informative, will print out the information sheets"

"I would like to say how pleased I am logging in to these meetings... The meetings make me feel good in a funny sense that I am not alone in this new body and the things that I liked to do, swimming and bike riding is still all possible and travel. I would like to say THANK YOU for my mental state has improved and listening to your advice and seeing the video links on exercise has been very helpful.

I look forward to the next month".

"Just a big thankyou to Anne Marie Carol and Mary, for all your info and support at the zoom meetings, for me it gives me comfort to know I am not alone in the daily struggles us ostomates have. Also, first time I use the portal for my orders a big thumbs up, it's so very much easier to use"

"We had a great meeting last night and it was full of useful and helpful information as usual. NSW Stoma is a great support to us all".

"Your zoom meeting and all the info provided are very useful and much appreciated".

"The zoom meetings have changed my life, I was quite depressed and felt very alone, now I feel so connected and confident I'm with people like me"

These are just a few quotes from you lovely people so..... If you have not joined us, please consider it, it may be just what you need.

We discuss different topics each month, Mary (our Manager) will give a rundown on the Association and latest developments, Carol one of our directors and an ostomate gives a talk on different aspects of life from



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Failte Mo Chairde (*Hello my friends*)

an ostomate perspective and I give a clinical perspective on various conditions.

Our United Ostomy Associations (UOA) had an education day in March in Nowra, and it was a wonderful day. Our audience were very engaging and asked many questions, both the ostomate and us clinicians learned a lot from each other, I never come away without learning something from you.

Brenda Christiansen our Stomal Therapist in Nowra attended and gave us a wonderful education session on the use of accessory products,

it was both educational and very entertaining, thank you Brenda.

While the numbers were lower than expected it was still a very good turnout.

Our next UOA will be in Port Macquarie 20th June. My husband and I will take a week or so off and enjoy a few small towns on our travels.

Until we meet again either in my clinic, on the zoom or at Port Macquarie.

Stay safe and warm this winter.

Slan agus beannacht

(bye and blessings)

Anne Marie

Anne Marie Lyons STN



NSW STOMA MEMBERS ZOOM MEETING

The meeting is designed to give you an introduction to NSW Stoma Ltd and the services we offer, as well as provide some explanation of the Stoma Appliance Scheme and how to place your orders.

We recognise how important it is to feel supported on your stoma journey.

The meeting offers lots of tips and tricks for new ostomates and our more experienced ostomates usually learn something too.

Whether you are a new member or have been with us for some time you are welcome to join us. There is lots of opportunity to ask questions too.

The meeting is hosted by Anne Marie Lyons, our Stomal Therapy Nurse, Carol Quast, NSW Stoma Director & Ostomate, and NSW Stoma Manager, Mary Egan. To attend please email: **customer.service@nswstoma.org.au** and we will send you a zoom invitation on the day of the meeting. You need to register your interest for each meeting you wish to attend.

Meetings are held at 6pm on the first Wednesday of the month via Zoom.

Not a new member?_

If you would like us to cover other topics, please let us know by emailing:
customer.service@nswstoma.org.au

Education & Information Days

Our Regional Education Days provide an opportunity for ostomates to meet and support each other.

Speakers include Stomal Therapy Nurses and Stoma Association representatives and fellow ostomates to provide a patient perspective.

With plenty of time to ask questions, it's an excellent way to learn more about your Association and gain useful information and tips to help you manage your stoma.

Anyone with a colostomy, ileostomy, urostomy or external pouch procedure is invited to attend, as are family, friends, carers, and healthcare professionals.

Our Regional Education Days are also attended by supplier company representatives and provide an opportunity for members to find out more about the latest products available under the Scheme and additional products available for purchase.

With 4 days planned for 2025, we have already visited Nowra. Thanks so much to the amazing stoma nurses who joined us there: Brenda Christiansen, Anne Marie Lyons and Heather Hill. They give up their time for free and we really appreciate them and the depth of knowledge and experience they bring with them.

Next scheduled day:

Port Macquarie

20th June 2025–10am until approx. 3.30pm

Port City Bowling Club, 4 Owen St,
Port Macquarie NSW 2444

RSVP: customer.service@nswstoma.org.au
by 13th June for catering purposes as a light lunch will be provided.

Itinerary:

10.00 am – Meet & Chat with supplier company representatives

11.00 am – Official Welcome, Associations & Stoma Scheme Updates

11.30 am – A member's perspective

12.00 pm – Talks by Health Professionals: hernias

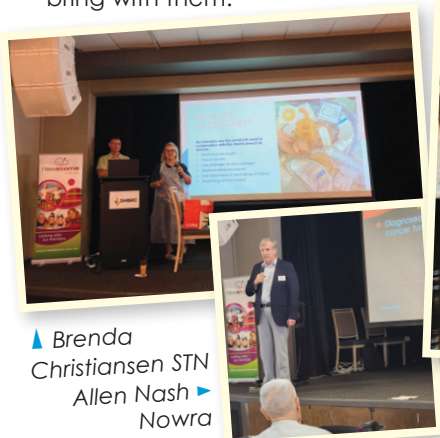
12.30 pm – A light lunch of finger food will be provided

1.30 pm – Talks by health professionals: types of stomas, choosing accessories

2.30 pm – Q&A Session including guest & local Stomal Therapists

3.30pm – Close

I hope to see as many of you as possible in Port Macquarie. We will then be in Wagga Wagga on 15th August and for all of you in the Sydney region, we will be in Liverpool on 21st November. Watch our website for more details.



▲ Brenda Christiansen STN
Allen Nash ▶
Nowra



▲ Anne Marie Lyons



▲ Heather Hill, retired STN,
on the right with a satisfied customer

A Patients Perspective... by Andrew Lam

2019 for my family and I was a big year. At the beginning of the year, my wife Stefanie and I received the wonderful news that we were to be parents for the first time. For anyone remembering we all know the excitement of preparing for the first child, work-wise, things were looking good.

For years I had gut and intestinal issues. I always thought it had something to do with my service in the Army having been an infantryman living on ration packs on field exercises which stop you from being regular. I had bleeding from my bowels not long after I had turned 40 which I assumed was haemorrhoids (I had some removed when I was in my twenties). So I had a colonoscopy which uncovered I was not suffering from haemorrhoids but actually had ulcerative colitis.

Then a week after Anzac Day and whilst getting ready to go away with Army as the Australian Defence Force finance lead on the major Australian-US military exercise, my ulcerative colitis flared significantly. So significant I was hospitalised with medications that normally controlled it, not working. I went into Concord Repatriation Hospital. In my mind I would be home after an overnight stay. But I didn't go home. My colitis got worse by the day and within weeks I lost 20 kg, was being "PICC line fed" (I was being fed fluids and food directly into a patient's bloodstream through a Peripherally Inserted Central Catheter (PICC line) because I couldn't eat orally and and was told that the aggressive nature of

the colitis meant that the medication I was taking would mean I was almost certain to have bowel cancer in ten years. One way or another I was losing my bowel.

My world had turned upside down. Suddenly I was staring down the barrel of being medically discharged in my two jobs, having no income just before a baby was born and having cancer by the time I was 50. I started researching whether I could still be in the Army and the police force with a stoma bag. These were dark days.



*06 June 2019 - The day after the first surgery.
The drugs are working.*



Remembrance Day 2019 - a week after my surgery to create my J-Pouch. The nurses did a great job hiding all my tubes.

They talk about angels who walk amongst us. Well my angels were in the form of the Concord Hospital Stoma therapy team of Ian Whiteley, Anne Marie Lyons and Roger Riccardi. Ian was the first one I met and he told me about this thing called a J-Pouch. I have to admit that initial meeting I was still stewing about having a stoma bag and it wasn't until he mentioned I could actually down the track lose the stoma, that I started paying attention. It wasn't for the faint hearted when he described the 3 staged surgery (a three stage proctocolectomy with ileal pouch-anal anastomosis) including rebuilding a bowel from my small intestine, but in the back of my mind, I had hope. I had hope I could have some normalcy (ie

no bag). Without hesitation, I asked Ian, "When can we do this?"

In the meantime I received calls and messages from as far as Afghanistan and the UAE from my ADF brothers and sisters. The common message apart from get well soon was "Geez Lammy, I've heard of ways to get out of a field exercise but having a bowel removed takes the cake." The police messages were similarly tongue in cheek including a bullet proof cover for my stoma. But aside from these wonderful messages, when I explained the J-Pouch, I received assurances from my respective commanders that I had a job in both the Army and the police force.

With this in mind I gave myself a goal to be well enough to drive my wife to



A Patients Perspective... *by Andrew Lam*

the hospital for the birth of my daughter in August, which was only 2 months away. Over the next few days, Ian, Anne Marie and Roger prepped me for the surgery and what I need to do when I got my stoma. The surgeon, Associate Professor Matthew Rickard explained to me that after the surgery he wanted me to sit up and watch the State of Origin that night as part of my recovery. The day arrived and when I woke up I was covered in tubes and there was the stoma with the bag that I had feared. I tried to follow Prof Rickard's instructions but the drugs kicked in and I lasted halfway through the first half of State of Origin 1

(probably a good thing as NSW got pumped that night).

I then started my rehabilitation with the help from my angels in blue scrubs from the Stoma Therapy team and the staff from Colorectal Department at Ward 1 East. It is a humbling experience for someone who ran 5 km every day having to learn to walk again with all the tubes attached but my angels helped me through the good and not so good days. Like everything I knew there would be sacrifices along the way including any ambition to be a competitive eating champion. My ADF friends asked me to pick a sport I could compete in the Invictus Games during



October 2024 - Receiving my warrant of promotion to Sergeant from Deputy Commissioner David Hudson

my rehabilitation (I picked ping pong) and it helped with my mindset that I could not fail.

A few days after going home, I was back at Ward 1 East because I developed a nasty infection which meant a second wound to drain the infection. But I remembered the mantra of "don't get bitter, get better" and like everything that was thrown at me, my now very pregnant wife, my friends and family and the Concord angels made sure I stayed the course and in August, the first goal I set was achieved when I was able to drive my wife and I for the birth of my daughter, Alexandra.

There were times where I saw Ian, Anne Marie and Roger more than other members of my family for wound management and other complications that come with getting ready for such a large surgery.

In my second surgery to rebuild my J-Pouch (which included a night in ICU from a bit of internal bleeding), it coincided with being in hospital for Remembrance Day 2019. Knowing my military background, the nurses did a really good job of hiding all the tubes and all the equipment I had attached to me so I could actually get dressed in a suit with my medals and attend the service at the hospital memorial with my wife and my three-month-old baby daughter.


And then the final surgery to remove the bag and I became what my police colleagues called me Detective Dyson as I was now bagless.

I can happily report that I am now



July 2020 - Detective Dyson - Bagless

"rollin with no colon" and the new plumbing is still working. The J-Pouch has given me a second chance which I grabbed with both hands. During the rebuilding process I was notified I was deemed suitable for promotion in the Army and not long after my second surgery, in the presence of my long suffering wife and baby daughter, I was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and it did not take long before my Army team and I were called upon to deploy as part of ADF responses to the 2019-20 national bushfire emergency and COVID 19 pandemic, which I considered a career highlight.

In 2024, my J-Pouch was functioning well enough for me to be able to deploy overseas as part of the ADF assistance to the Solomon Islands 

A Patients Perspective... by Andrew Lam



2024 - Honiara Solomon Islands. Never thought I'd wear a uniform again let alone deploy overseas.

Elections in Honiara I was healthy enough and fit enough to deploy with the rest of the force element. My colleagues didn't even realise that I'd had the amount of surgery that I'd had, the amount of treatment that I actually did have, which is a testament to the care that I received from the Stomal Therapy and Colorectal team at Concord.

In my police job I was fit and well enough to be promoted to Detective Sergeant, taking command of one of the investigation teams at the NSW Police Cybercrime Squad.

The family has expanded with Nicholas aged 3 joining Alexandra aged 5 and I have been able to do all the Dad things (both good and bad)

with my Lam Chops thanks to my Concord friends.

My ADF duties take me back to Concord for representational duties at the nearby Kokoda Track Memorial Walkway. Last Remembrance Day, five years after I hobbled down with my tubes all hidden to attend the service, I came back in full ceremonial uniform, with the medals for the deployments I received after my surgery. I made sure I visited my angels in blue and thanked them for giving me that second chance and all the opportunities I have been blessed with since I went to the hospital with a crook gut. Not all heroes wear capes, but my heroes wear blue hospital scrubs.



Remembrance Day 2025 - Full circle complete with my heroes in blue -no tubes, no dressings, on the Manshakes...



January 2025 - Nicholas, Stefanie, Alexandra and a very grateful Daddy

Andrew Lam was born in Sydney in 1978 and grew up in the small town of Moruya on the south coast of NSW. Andrew enlisted in the Australian Army Reserve in 1996 and has served in finance and logistics roles and is a Lieutenant Colonel at Headquarters 17th Sustainment Brigade at Randwick Barracks.

Andrew has deployed on peace-keeping, combat and humanitarian operations at home and abroad, reflecting the operational tempo of the Australian Defence Force has been engaged in recent times. Lieutenant Colonel Lam has deployed overseas to the Solomon Islands twice (2010 and 2024), Timor Leste (2011-12), Iraq (2015) and domestically within Australia during ADF response to the 2019-20 national

bushfire emergency (2020) and COVID 19 pandemic (2020-21).

Andrew is a criminal investigator with the NSW Police Force since 2000 holding the rank of Detective Sergeant. He has been posted to the Eastwood Local Area Command, South East Asian Crime Squad, Gangs Squad, Homicide Squad and is currently posted as the Cyber Dependent Specialist Investigations Team Leader within the Cybercrime Squad, State Crime Command.

Andrew is married to Stefanie, who is an IT system specialist at the Sydney Opera House and they are parents to a daughter, Alexandra (5) and a son, Nicholas (3).



January 2025 - Stefanie, Nicholas, Alexandra and a very grateful Daddy



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Disclaimer: Speak with your doctor, physiotherapist, or nurse before doing these exercises, and ask them to show you how to do the movements correctly. If you've had a very complex surgery, have an unstable hernia, or other complication, please check with your doctor or ask for a referral to a clinical physiotherapist.

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A Patients Perspective... by Kelly Moss

My story starts back in 1992, I was on an overseas exchange for a year after finishing high school. My symptoms started then & worsened during that year away.

In January 1993, at 18.5yrs old, I was diagnosed with extremely aggressive Crohn's disease. It had already invaded my entire gastrointestinal tract from mouth to rectum. Severe cramps, multiple (up to 40 x day) toilet stops, fatigue, depression, weight loss etc. I started drug treatment which worked for a while, but I couldn't get rid of it.

Clinical Depression runs in my family & I had already been depressed for many years prior. After my diagnosis it became even more difficult and emotionally exhausting on top of the chronic pain and the drugs. Living with severe depression was relatively normal for me. I had been in therapy for years and used the tools I was given to cope as best as I could. I've never been one to give up or give into any health issue. Even though I didn't always win, I always tried.

I tried all available medications (there weren't as many back then) and nothing worked. I was just getting worse. In 1998, at 24yrs old, I was told I had to get a permanent ileostomy, or I would die. I was booked in for surgery, much to my disgust & preferring to die, I went ahead with getting the bag. I certainly wasn't ok with it. It was something old people had. How was I going to be attractive, confident (which I pretty much always had been) and productive with poop hanging off my belly?

But wasn't doesn't kill you makes you stronger and I conquered it. I accepted my bag whole-heartedly and then started educating others, flashing it at anyone who wanted to see it. It was my way of having other people not think of



my bag as gross, smelly or something to be afraid of. If I hid it, I was hiding who I was and how I became the person I am. I was loud and proud about my bag. I thought having a positive attitude about my bag makes others less likely to think it's gross. Instead, they think it's awesome. People were fascinated, instead of grossed out. I was reducing the stigma of stoma and educating people.

I worked hard, studied hard, travelled, had boyfriends, had a social life, owned my own unit and considered myself normal (which I am)! My bag never really stopped me from doing anything I wanted to do.

I had always been a very open person, so it was important to me to be open about having Crohn's & a bag. I knew I had to educate people if I expected people to understand what my body was doing to itself & why I was making the decisions I was making.

I worked as a sales representative for 16yrs & was very successful at it because I loved it.

UNTIL.....In 2013, at 39yrs old, I was diagnosed with immune rheumatoid arthritis. It progressed extremely quickly and within 6 months I was selling my unit, quitting work and moving in with my family because I couldn't function.

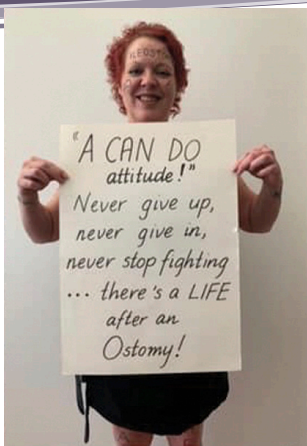
It affected every joint, every movement, every breath. Everything hurt and I just couldn't function on my own anymore. From the end of 2013 to March 2018 I was completely bedridden, addicted to narcotics and morphine and was not living, just existing. The pain was unbearable and nothing was helping.

In 2016 I was also diagnosed with minor fibromyalgia. With everything else, this didn't seem to bother me. Pain is pain is pain.

Eventually, in 2017, I found a new drug (my 6th) and started showing some improvements. I was happy with any little win I could get, small or large. I was starting to think maybe, just maybe, I won't be bedridden for the rest of my life.

In March 2018 I needed my 3rd major surgery to repair a parastomal hernia, a result of weight gain while being bedridden. I had the hernia repaired, medical tummy tuck (very different to a cosmetic one, let me tell you), and a slight resighting of my ileostomy, so 4 major surgeries in one. With the new drug starting to help, I was able to detox off all the other meds. Finally, I was not off my face on hard core drugs and wasn't asleep for 20 hours of every day.

About 6 months later I was doing pretty well. Recovery was coming to an end, and I was thinking, what the hell am I going to do now? I can't sit all day, every day doing



nothing. My arthritis was far from good but I had learned to cope with pain, although I was still very limited in movement.

That's when "Ostomy Support Bears" was born. 28th January 2018 with the first bear going out in March 2018. It gave me a purpose again.

Now look where I am, 6yrs in and over 7500 bears sent all over the world, putting smiles on faces,

raising awareness and reducing the stigma attached to having a bag for children and adults. I was helping myself and others. Yes, I still have all my health problems and they aren't going away, but neither am I.

I was also diagnosed with osteoarthritis (2019) in many parts of my body which wasn't exactly what

you want to hear at only 45yrs old. I now have degeneration starting in joints but there is nothing I can do to stop it.

What I was not going to do, was give up....no no no I don't think so. So, we have just added that to my very impressive medical resume.

Little did I know that come Sept 2021 I would add more issues affecting everything I had known.

It started with electrolyte issues due to a high output ostomy. Previously I had low magnesium which left me taking supplements every day. This time it was potassium, a WHOLE new ball game. Potassium is what makes your muscles move and therefore your heart pump. After being in & out of hospital for about



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A Patients Perspective... by Kelly Moss

a month trying to regulate it, it wasn't playing nicely. I was having bloods almost every day to check because it would decrease faster than it should. By Nov 2021 it had dropped to a dangerous level.

It was back to hospital.

I admit, I am a hospital snob now. I only go to the same hospital, the same ward, every time. The nurses know me really well. I know them. I've watched them get married, have kids, their kids get married & have kids. New staff are told I'm special & not always in a good way, lol!

It was night shift handover so both shifts were still there. 2 of the nurses were leaving and walked past my room & thought I was crying. Thinking that was odd they asked the nurse who was on duty to go in and check on me. He did straight away, and as he rolled me over, realised I was going blue and having a cardiac arrest. (I wasn't crying, I was trying to breathe)

All staff sprang into action. Six fractured ribs later I was in ICU, but I was breathing.

Apparently, even though I was on IV potassium my level had dropped to 1.7. At that level my doctors were amazed I had recovered from the cardiac arrest.

I don't remember anything of the first 2 weeks. I stayed in ICU another 2 and half weeks while they tried to work out why my potassium levels dropped so quickly.

There was something seriously wrong. (It turned out my high output stoma was

to blame.) It was quite an ordeal with everyone checking I was still breathing, something I wasn't really used to. I was used to gut problems, but not having people fuss over whether I was breathing or not.

About 8 months after my cardiac arrest I was told I was suffering from PTSD, from the trauma of the cardiac arrest.

It took the better part of about seven months to get the potassium under control.

I wasn't in hospital, for that entire time, but I did learn the warning signs and could ask for help as soon as I needed it, getting to hospital and the treatment I needed. Eventually, after many more hospital visits we got it sorted out.

The next issue was another parastomal hernia and another surgery to fix that with some mesh

to give it some support. Within three months that hernia was back, and I was getting really, really frustrated. I was not coping. It was just one thing after another.

After 27 years with my stoma, I had it relocated to my left side. I now have another hernia on the left side and more surgery to fix that.

That wasn't enough. I also had shoulder surgery because of my arthritis and associated degeneration.

I've had two other minor surgeries for hernia repairs. All up, eight surgeries and a cardiac arrest in just over three years. There were times in that three years I wasn't sure I was going to wake up the next day because my mental health was so poor.



I didn't have time to have a break from any of it. I used to say: when you get knocked down, you get back up. But I wasn't even getting to my knees before I was getting knocked down again. That was difficult. Even my bears weren't making me feel better. It's taken a long time and I'm still not back to normal, mentally, but I'm getting there.

Physically, I'm doing a lot better. I've got my potassium completely under control (and it has been for just on two years now). I'm still in recovery.

I'm only four weeks post-surgery from my last hernia repair. My shoulder's doing great, thank God. My arthritis is still kicking me around though.

It's been difficult. But I do get to go swimming again soon. Because of my arthritis, the only exercise I get to do is in a pool and I can't do that post-surgery. When you've had seven of them, it makes life difficult. I like to swim five times a week, which is fantastic. I love it. It's my one hour of pain-free everything.

Despite it all, I can say right now, that I am definitely on my way back. I can see the light at the end of this very dark road and I'm getting back into my bears.



I'm so proud of what I've achieved and accomplished in the past 29 years. Besides staying alive with all my health issues and 3 suicide attempts (between ages 25-31 yrs - thankfully unsuccessful due to my ostomy and my inability to absorb) the bears are my greatest achievement.

I'm doing something so important in so many ways it's given me a purpose again.

It's giving people hope that having a bag isn't the end of your life, it's just a bag.....who cares. Nothing to be ashamed of, nothing to be embarrassed about and these little bears are just continuing to do good all over the world. How can you beat that. I'll keep forging ahead. It's looking a little brighter one bear at a time.

To finish up this roller coaster of ups, downs, and sideways body slams I've been on for more than half my life, a couple of sayings I tell myself:

"Always put one foot in front of the other, regardless of how small the step is"

"The only thing to fear, is fear itself"

Kelly Moss

If anything in this article has triggered anything for you please contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300224636 for support.

DONATIONS

A huge thank you to all our members and supporters for your generosity, without which we would not be able to offer additional services, such as our Stomal Therapy Clinic, STN Scholarship, Zoom member meetings and more.

We have seen a huge increase in the number of members needing our financial assistance and it is so gratifying to be able to offer that assistance. Thank you for making that possible.

I also want to acknowledge our members who are no longer with us and the generosity of their loved ones who made donations on their behalf. A particular thank you to the family and friends of Catherine Rowland. She was much loved and is greatly missed.

Some of you choose to remain anonymous but your generosity and philanthropy are noted with special thanks to the Penn Foundation for their continued support of our STN Scholarship.

The names of those of you who have given us permission are listed below and include donors from 1st October 2024 to 31st March 2025:

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THE NATIONAL PUBLIC TOILET MAP

A Project of the National Continence Program (NCP)

www.toilemap.gov.au

© Commonwealth of Australia 2001 - 2013

The National Public Toilet Map shows the location of more than 16,000 public and private public toilet facilities across Australia.

Details of toilet facilities can also be found along major travel routes and for shorter journeys as well. Useful information is provided about each toilet, such as location, opening hours, baby change room availability, and accessibility for people with disabilities and details of other nearby toilets.

The Toilet Map is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health as part of the National Continence Program.



WHAT DOES THE TOILET MAP DO?

The Toilet Map improves independence and quality of life for the estimated 3.8 million Australians who are affected by incontinence by providing:

- the location of the nearest public toilet
- details of opening hours, accessibility, parking and other features
- the capacity to plan toilet breaks for short or long journeys
- the ability to save toilet information and trip plans
- access anytime using a mobile phone

It is also convenient for people with young families and those holidaying or travelling to new locations.



HOW DO I USE THE TOILET MAP?

- browse the map in a particular State/Territory
- Search for toilets by postcode, town or suburb, near a specific address or location such as a sports ground
- Plan a trip with the Trip Planner - Enter your starting address and destination to get a turn by turn description for the quickest route and the toilets along the way

When you find toilets near an address, at a point of interest or at a latitude/longitude you can select additional toilet features and opening hours in the right hand column of the page.

There are a number of different features listed, including baby change facilities, sharps disposal, MLAK access (see below) and accessible parking.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to release hard copies of the Toilet Map information to the general public. The main reason is that the toilet information is updated on a regular basis and so a hard copy of toilet information would quickly become out of date. However, feel free to print out toilet information from your browser to take with you on your travels.

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The National Public Toilet Map is also available on:-

- Any mobile phone with an Internet browser. Go to m.toiletmap.gov.au on your phone to be automatically directed to the mobile site.
- Apple's iPhone. Just go to the App Store on your iPhone or use iTunes to download the National Public Toilet Map App. It's free.
- You can also use the Toilet Map with a Global Positioning System (GPS).

MASTER LOCKSMITHS' ASSOCIATION KEY (MLAK)

MLAK stands for **M**aster **L**ocksmiths' **A**ssociation **K**ey. The **MLAK** is a master key that fits into specially designed locks allowing 24 hour a day access to public toilets. Eligible people (those with a disability and a letter of authorisation from a doctor, disability organisation, local council or community health centre) can purchase a key that opens all accessible toilets displaying the MLAK symbol.

For information about where to obtain keys or locks within your area, contact the Master Locksmiths Association of Australasia (phone 03 9338 8822).



MLAK FACILITIES

The Spinal Cord Injuries Australia organisation maintains a directory of MLAK-enabled facilities across Australia. To view this directory please go to:- <http://scia.org.au/sci-resources-and-knowledge/public-toilets>



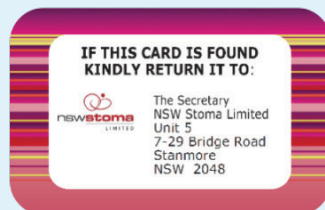
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Where available, a DISABLED TOILET will provide the privacy and space needed for an Ostomate to change or empty their appliance. However, to the general public most Ostomates do not appear as if they should be using them.

To help avoid such problems, **an information card** has been provided to all NSW Stoma Limited members. Keep the card in your wallet or purse for quick access if needed.

You can also show this card when asking to use the toilet at a shop, restaurant or other business. It doesn't guarantee access to their toilets (as every business has different health and safety rules), but it proves you have a genuine medical condition that requires the urgent use of a toilet. Many places will try to help you.



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Anne Marie Lyons STN. **Mobile:** 0468 582 951

Email: stomanurse@nswstoma.org.au

The NSW Stoma Clinic (free to members) is open from 11am to 1pm at half-hour intervals on the first 3 Thursdays of each month in the private room at our office in Unit 5, 7-29 Bridge Rd Stanmore. Our lift has wheelchair access. Please phone to organise a free consultation. Anne Marie is also available for phone & email consultations

OSTOMY NSW LIMITED CLINIC

Phone: (02) 9542 1300

Due to the relocation to temporary premises, the free Clinic is only by phone consultation. Please ring ONL to make an appointment.

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Email: Alyssa.higoe@health.nse.gov.au

Holly Ravenscroft **Phone:** (02) 6656 7820

GRAFTON BASE HOSPITAL HOSPITAL

Jane Kulas STN CNS **Phone:** (02) 6640 2222

GRAFTON COMMUNITY HEALTH

Jane Kulas STN CNS **Phone:** (02) 6641 8200

HUNTER VALLEY PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Alison Lincoln STN **Phone:** (02) 4944 3777

Email: alison.lincoln@healthcare.com.au

JOHN HUNTER HOSPITAL

Phone: (02) 4921 3000

Email: HNELHD-JHStomal@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

Karen Cole STN; Mitchell Eddington CNC)

Renee Bootland CNC

JOHN HUNTER HOSPITAL STOMAL THERAPY OUTREACH CLINICS

Outreach clinics are held in the following locations on the dates listed. To make an appointment please phone John Hunter Hospital Switch: (02) 4921 3000 and page: 36206 or **email:** HNELHD-JHStomal@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

Bookings are required and priority is given to patients who haven't been reviewed by a stomal therapy nurse in the past 5 years.

Nelson Bay Polyclinic: 8.30am-2pm

2025 Dates: 10th April & 15th Oct

Muswellbrook Hospital: 2025 TBA

Tomaree Community Hospital: 2025 TBA

LINGARD PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Phone: (02) 4969 6799

Alison Lincoln STN

Email: alison.lincoln@healthcare.com.au

LISMORE BASE HOSPITAL

Ed Cooke STN

Email: ed.cooke@health.nsw.gov.au

Phone: (02) 6621 3252 or (02) 6620 2850

Outpatient service also available Tuesday and Friday

LISMORE COMMUNITY HEALTH

Jane Kulas STN CNS

29 Molesworth Street, Lismore.

Phone: (02) 6620 2967 **Fax:** (02) 6620 2963

MACLEAN DISTRICT HOSPITAL AND COMMUNITY HEALTH

Jane Kulas STN CNS

MAITLAND PUBLIC HOSPITAL

Phone: (02) 4936 5507

Annika Leyshon, Remedios Wilson STN

Email: remedios.wilson@health.nsw.gov.au

Phone: (02) 4939 2000

MAITLAND PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Anita Moynihan

Phone: (02) 4931 2304

MANNING HOSPITAL (TAREE)

Phone: (02) 6592 9469

Karla MacTaggart STN (Mon. and Tue.)

Mobile: 0419 859 281

Jordan Chapman (Wed. to Fri.)

Serving towns & communities between Wingham, Forster, Tuncurry, Taree, Harrington, Gloucester and Bulahdelah.

NEWCASTLE PRIVATE HOSPITAL

Cecilia King STN **Phone:** (02) 4941 8741

Email: Cecilia.King@healthscope.com.au

PORT MACQUARIE BASE HOSPITAL

Kate Hallett STN (Mon & Wed)

Mobile: 0427 795 765 **Phone:** (02) 5524 2060

Email: kate.hallett@health.nsw.gov.au

PORT MACQUARIE AND KEMPSEY COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES

Maria Emerton-Bell STN CNC &

Casey Lucas STN CNS

Phone: (02) 6561 2790 Port Macquarie

Phone: (02) 6561 2790 Kempsey

Email: MNCLHD-StomalTherapy-HMN@health.nsw.gov.au

Serving towns and communities between Laurieton, Port Macquarie, Kempsey, Wauchope, South West Rocks and Stuarts Point.

ST VINCENT'S PRIVATE HOSPITAL (LISMORE)

Tracey Eason

Phone: (02) 6627 9448 or (02) 6627 9449

TWEED HEADS HOSPITAL

Siobhan Mills STN **Phone:** 0427 064 815

Email: Siobhan.Mills@health.nsw.gov.au

TWEED HEADS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Lisa Clare Stomal/Continenence Advisor.

Phone: (07) 5506 7540

Email: Lisa.Claire@health.nsw.gov.au

Covering Tweed Heads Hospital & Communities from the Tweed Heads NSW/ QLD border to Bangalow.

NEW ENGLAND

TAMWORTH BASE HOSPITAL

Robin Skillman CNC **Phone:** (02) 6767 7733

Serving towns and communities between Tenterfield, Boggabilla, Mungindi, Moree, Wee Waa, Quirindi, Armidale, Walcha, Uralla, Guyra, Bundarra, Tingha, Glen Innes, Emmaville, Ashford, Warialda, Inverell, Bingara, Barraba, Boggabri, Manilla, Gunnedah, Tamworth, Werris Creek, Nundle.

NARRABRI COMMUNITY HEALTH

Lavinia (Alvin) Hill **Phone:** (02) 6799 2800

WESTERN NSW

ALBURY WONDONGA HEALTH SERVICE

Phone: (02) 6058 1800 **Mobile:** 0457 522 000,

Gerardine O'Brien, Amanda Forbes

ALBURY WODONGA PRIVATE HOSPITAL

(AWPH/ASG)

1125 Pemberton St., Albury 2640

Gerardine O'Brien STN **Phone:** (02) 6022 4350

Email: gerardine@alburysurgical.com.au

BATHURST HEALTH SERVICE

Louise Linke NP STN

Phone: (02) 6330 5676 **Fax:** (02) 6330 5742

Email: louise.linke@health.nsw.gov.au

Serving Bathurst, Orange, Parkes, Forbes, Cowra, Lithgow, Condoobolin and surrounds.

BROKEN HILL BASE HOSPITAL

Shirley Victory (resources person only)

Phone: (08) 8080 1642

DUBBO BASE HOSPITAL

Renee Chandler

Phone: (02) 6809 6000 **Mobile:** 04208 769 873

Email: Renee.Chandler@health.nsw.gov.au

Serving Dubbo, Cobar, Coonamble, Narromine, Nyngan, Trangie, Warren, Wellington, Baradine, Gulargambone, Coolah, Gilgandra, Coonabarabran, Dunedoo, Gulgong, Mudgee, Bourke, Brewarrina, Collarenebri, Goodooga, Lightning Ridge & Walgett.

GOULBURN COMMUNITY HEALTH

Natasha Baker

Email: natasha.baker@health.nsw.gov.au

Michelle Pratt

Email: michelle.pratt@health.nsw.gov.au

Phone: (02) 4825 4700

GRIFFITH BASE HOSPITAL

Phone: (02) 6969 5555 (ext. 695)

GRIFFITH COMMUNITY HEALTH

Bethany Gill STN **Phone:** (02) 6922 9903

Email: Bethany.Gill@health.nsw.gov.au

ORANGE HEALTH SERVICES

Joe Webster STN

Phone: (02) 6369 7455

Email: Joseph.Webster@health.nsw.gov.au

WAGGA WAGGA BASE HOSPITAL

Irene Cozens **Phone:** (02) 5943 1545

Karyn Bowering **Phone:** (02) 5943 1500

Naomi Smith **Mobile:** 0412 324 136

WAGGA WAGGA RURAL REFERRAL HOSPITAL

Karrinda Kenny **Mobile:** 0412 324 136

YOUNG MERCY CENTRE

Contact Community Nurses

Phone: (02) 6382 8444

Serving Young, Harden, Cootamundra, Boorowa, Grenfell and district.

CANBERRA AND DISTRICT

ACT COMMUNITY HEALTH CARE

Olivia Dyriw CNC

Phone: (02) 5124 9977

CANBERRA HEALTH SERVICES

Anju Mamachan STN.

Phone: (02) 5124 2222 (then page stomal therapist)

NORTH CANBERRA HOSPITAL

Marree Pegrem STN **Phone:** (02) 6201 6334

COOMA HEALTH SERVICE

Vicki Black STN **Phone:** (02) 6455 3222

COOTAMUNDRA HOSPITAL

Raylene Godvier

Phone: (02) 6942 1861 **Mobile:** 0419 123 508

QUEANBEYAN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE

Jo Morgan STN

Phone: (02) 6150 7144 or (02) 6150 7670

Visits patients in Queanbeyan & Yarralumla areas.

Volunteering

I'd like to let everyone know about one of the most rewarding experiences that I have had for many, many years. I'm seventy five years young and have been an ostomate and member of NSWStoma for nearly five years.

For nearly three months now I've been working as a volunteer at the Stanmore office and warehouse and I thoroughly enjoy the opportunity to give a bit back. The last time I did any volunteer work was way back in the 1980's when I'd shave the old blokes in the local nursing home every third Sunday.

I'm sort-of retired now, so I can give four hours a week to NSWStoma. That's all it is, four hours from 10am to 2pm. I chose Tuesdays as my rostered volunteer day and I've filled in a couple of times when a volunteer was away. Even though it's only four hours a week, Mary and Carlos, in fact everyone made my start back into the workforce easy and with no hassles. They even threw a birthday party for me after I'd only been working for a few weeks.

The work tasks are not hard or difficult, not strenuous or intense but it's all very rewarding. I leave at the end of

my shift, with a real sense that I've done a worthwhile job and made a bit of a difference.

I have been amazed at the huge range of product inventory that we handle and I'm slowly getting to know the code numbers of the different bags, spacers, belts, straps, tapes, accessories, creams, sprays and powders. I've met and traded stories with many of our members who pick-up their monthly supplies from office reception.

At the moment, I think there are nine or ten of us volunteers supporting the permanent staff whose workload seems to be ever increasing.

Ideally, we'd like some more volunteers so that we have two or three volunteers available to help each day, Monday to Friday.

The work tasks are spread around and include admin and reception duties in the office, and receive stock, pick and pack, despatch and handle member pick-ups in the warehouse. Training is provided and travel costs are reimbursed.

Randall Cadby



VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Ever thought of volunteering?

Volunteering not only benefits your association, it's good for you too.

Gain professional experience, meet new people and learn new skills while helping us improve and expand our services. Volunteer workers at NSW Stoma are valued and appreciated and play an important role in supporting our strategic objectives. We currently need assistance in the following roles: stock receipt and dispatch, administration and customer service/reception. Whatever your skills, full training is provided.

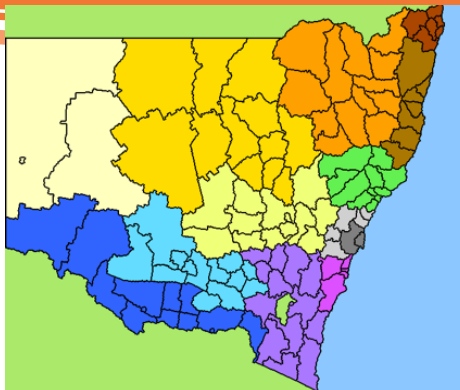
While the majority of volunteers working within the association environment either have a stoma themselves or have a close family member who is living with a stoma, our association welcomes volunteer enquiries from any interested person.

NSW Stoma Ltd provides a clean, safe, friendly and happy work environment and we are seeking friendly positive people to help us cope with our ever-increasing workload.

To apply download our application form here:

<https://www.nswstoma.org.au/volunteers/>

or just email volunteer@nswstoma.org.au and we will send it to you.



Ostomy Support groups are a great way for ostomates to support and care about each other. Friends and family are also welcome to attend support group meetings.

If you are involved in a support group and would like us to include information about your meetings in our journal and on our website please email: **info@nswstoma.org.au**

For current information on support groups please go to: **<https://www.nswstoma.org.au/becoming-a-member/support-groups/>**

NSW STOMA LTD MEMBERS SUPPORT GROUP ZOOM MEETING

All members, carers & friends are welcome to join our monthly Zoom meeting at **6pm on the first Wednesday of every month**. Hosted by Anne Marie Lyons (STN), Carol Quast, NSW Stoma Director & Ostomate, and NSW Stoma Ltd manager, Mary Egan, this is designed to give information about the services we offer and provide some explanation of the Stoma Appliance Scheme and how to place orders. If you would like to attend please email: **customer.service@nswstoma.org.au** and we will send you a zoom invitation on the day of the meeting. You need to register your

interest for each meeting you wish to attend.

OSTOMINGLE - YOUNG OSTOMATES SUPPORTING EACH OTHER

Looking for some young, like-minded Ostomates? Ostomingle is a group of ostomates 18 and over who come together over a meal to share their ostomy experiences and learn from one another.

Each meet-up will be held at a different venue around Sydney so we can mingle around town.

When: Check with the group organisers for advice on scheduled meetings.

Contact: Renee Constantin
www.ostomingle.com
ostomingle@gmail.com

BEAT BLADDER CANCER

National support group (online via Zoom) for bladder cancer patients/carers from all across Australia. All welcome.

Last Tuesday of every month @ 7:30pm – 9pm AEST

Contact: Adam Lynch **0421 626 016**
Register at **[https://www.](https://www.beatbladdercanceraustralia.org.au/)**

beatbladdercanceraustralia.org.au/

SYDNEY METROPOLITAN AREA

BANKSTOWN – LIDCOMBE AREA

Where: Revesby Workers Club 2B Brett St, Revesby 02 9772 2100

When: 10am-12 noon, Wednesday 2025

Dates: 11th June, 10th Sept, 10th Dec

Contact: Your Stomal Therapy Nurse

or Carolyn Nichols on **0419 335 046** or **carolyn.nichols@dansac.com.au** for further information

Please RSVP for catering purposes

CONCORD AREA

People with bowel cancer and carers/ family are welcome to attend this free monthly service.



NSW OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUPS

Where: Survivorship Cottage, Concord Hospital, Gate 4, Nullawarra Avenue, Concord West

When: Check with the group organisers for advice on scheduled meetings.

Contacts: Sonia Khatri (02) 9767 5943

LIVERPOOL & CAMPBELLTOWN AREA

Where: Campbelltown Catholic Club, 20/22 Camden Rd, Campbelltown

When: Thursday 1.30pm-3pm 2025

Dates: 19th June, 21st Aug, 16th Oct, 11th Dec

Afternoon tea provided. RSVP is essential for catering purposes.

Contact: Erin Wagner - 0419 224 662 or Mathew Sebastian - 0417 026 109 (STNs)

NORTHERN BEACHES AREA

Where: Forestville RSL Club, 22 Melwood Avenue, Forestville

When: Contact for information on next meeting

Contacts: Bob Cooper
email: bob.cooper542500@gmail.com

NORTHERN SYDNEY AREA

Where: Jacaranda Lodge, Sydney Adventist Hospital, 185 Fox Valley Road, Wahroonga 2076

When: First Wednesday of the month 10am – 11.30am

Contact: Nerolie on (02) 9487 9061

PENRITH AREA

Ostomates, family and friends are welcome to attend our educational support group.

Where: Sydney Medical School, Outpatients Department, 62 Derby Street, Kingswood (opposite Nepean Hospital Emergency Department at roundabout, Outpatients is at left-hand side of building)

When: 2pm-3.30pm TBA

Contact: Naomi Houston (Stomal Therapist) on (02) 4734 1245

Naomi.Houston@health.nsw.gov.au

WESTMEAD

Where: Westmead Hospital, Seminar Room 6, WECC

When: Wednesday 10am – 12pm, 2025 Dates: 4th June, 3rd Sept, 3rd Dec

Contact: Lee Gavegan STN

Mob: 0409 962 111

RAMSGATE

The Stomal Therapy Nurses from St George Public, St George Private, Kareena Private, Hurstville Private and Sutherland Hospitals together would like to invite you to attend a stoma support group for ostomates and their families.

Where: Ramsgate RSL (meet in the front foyer), Corner of Ramsgate Rd and Chuter Ave, Sans Souci,

When: 11am-1pm Thursdays. 2025

Dates: 5th June, 4th sept, 4th Dec

Contact: Your Stomal Therapy Nurse or Carloyn Nicols on 0419 335 046 or email:

Carolyn.nichols@dansac.com.au

Everyone is welcome. Car parking available. Tea, coffee and finger food provided. RSVP for catering purposes.

ST GEORGE/SOUTH EAST SYDNEY

Where: St George Community Centre, Premier St, Kogarah

When: 11am - First Wednesday of the month (February to December)

Contact: June on (02) 9311 0211 or Allan on (02) 9556 3268

NORTH COAST REGION

TWEED / BYRON AREA

Ostomates, family and friends are welcome.

Where: South Tweed Sports Club, 4 Minjungbal Dr. Tweed Heads South.

When: Check with the group organisers for advice on scheduled meetings.

Contact: Lisa Clare STN

(07) 5506 7540 or 0429 998 928 or

Lisa.Clare@health.nsw.gov.au

Kate Rycroft 0432 251 703 or

rycroftkate@gmail.com

JOURNAL

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FAR NORTH COAST

All Ostomates plus partners and friends are welcome to attend meetings.

Where: Lismore Workers Club, 225-231 Keen Street

When: Check with the group organisers for advice on scheduled meetings.

Contact: Marie Taylor (02) 6686 7248

CLARENCE VALLEY OSTOMY SUPPORT GROUP

All Ostomates plus partners and friends are welcome to attend meetings.

Where: Aruma, 175 Queen St, Grafton

When: Bi-monthly – 2nd Tuesday of the month 2025 Dates: 12th Aug, 11th Nov

Contact: Gary Tobin Ph: 0400 675 277

COFFS HARBOUR

All Ostomates and friends are welcome so come along, have a cuppa and be a part of it.

Where: Sawtell RSL Club, First Avenue, Sawtell

When: 4th Thursday of every second month.

Contact: Mandy Hawkins STN: (02) 6656 7804

Mandy.Hawkins@health.nsw.gov.au

HASTINGS MACLEAY

Where: Port City Bowling Club, Function Room, 4 Owen St, Port Macquarie.

When: 10am - 12pm Third Wednesday of every second month Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec

Contact: Neil 0427 856 630 or Glennie 0410 637 060

MANNING / GREAT LAKES

Where: Venue TBA

When: 10.30-12pm approx.

1st Wednesday of every 2nd month

Contact: Karla MacTaggart STN (02) 6592 9169

NEWCASTLE/CENTRAL COAST REGION

Stomal therapists and company representatives will attend and help with any queries. New members and friends are welcome.

HAMILTON

Where: The Hub, Hamilton Wesley Fellowship House, 150 Beaumont St, Hamilton

When: 1.30pm – 4.30pm approx.

Last Saturday in Feb, May, Aug & Nov

Contact: Geoff on 0425 315 726 or Lynda on 0425 209 030

MAITLAND

Where: Maitland Hospital Education Rooms, 51 Metford Rd, Metford

When: Contact organiser.

Contact: RSVP Annika 0429 002 760 or Jackie 0412 445 498

WYONG

Where: Wyong Community Health Centre, 38A Pacific Hwy, Wyong NSW 2259

When: Contact organiser.

Contact: Local Stoma Therapists:

ph: (02) 4320 3323 email: CCLHD-Stomaltherapy@health.nsw.gov.au

ILLAWARRA / SOUTH COAST REGION

ALBURY-WODONGA

Where: Boardroom, Hilltop Albury-Wodonga Patient and Carer Accom. Centre, 600 Keene St, Albury

When: 10am every 2nd Tuesday of the month. February to December

Contacts: Alex Watson on 0428 578 385 or Liz Landy on 0418 854 574.

BOWRAL

Where: Mittagong RSL Club, 146 Old Hume Highway, Mittagong

When: 1pm-2.30pm Tuesday 2025 Dates: 4th Mar, 3rd Jun, 2nd Sept, 2nd Dec

Contacts: Mathew Sebastian & Erin Wagner, Stomal Therapists, Liverpool Hospital (02) 8738 4308 or Mariam Mellor (Coloplast) on 0400 921 901

Everyone is welcome. Plenty of car parking. Tea/coffee and finger food provided. RSVP 1 week prior for catering purposes.



EUROBODALLA

All from NSW Sth Coast region welcome.
Phone clinics only during Covid-19 times.

Where: Moruya Hospital, River St, Moruya

When: Check with the group organisers
for advice on scheduled meetings.

Contact: Trena OShea (02) 4474 2666

FAR SOUTH COAST/BEGA AND SURROUNDS

Where: Meeting venue changes,
ostomates advised 10 days prior

When: 11am 2nd Sunday of every 2nd
month: Feb, April, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec)

Contact: Eileen (02) 6492 2530 or
Geraldine (02) 6492 2366

ILLAWARRA

Where: Education Room, Figtree Private
Hospital, 1 Suttor Place, Figtree

When: 10am-12pm 2024

Dates: check with organisers

Contacts: Helen Richards CNC STN

Wollongong Private Hospital

Phone: (02) 4286 1109

richardsh@ramsayhealth.com.au

or Julia Kittscha CNC STN Wollongong
Hospital mob: 0414 421 021

isld-stomaltherapy-NIHG-SIHG@health.nsw.gov.au

SHOALHAVEN

Where: Nowra Community Health Centre,
5-7 Lawrence Avenue, Nowra

Also: Ulladulla Community Health Centre,
cnr South St & Princes Hwy, Ulladulla

When: Nowra – 12th Feb, 25th Jun, 22nd Oct
Ulladulla – 28th May, 19th Nov

2025 Xmas Party: 10th Dec 12pm,
Worrigee Sports Club,

131 Greenwell Point Rd, Worrigee

Contact: Brenda Christiansen

(02) 4424 6321 or 0422 006 550 or

Brenda.cristiansen@health.nsw.gov.au

ACT

Where: ACT & Districts Stoma Association,
2nd Floor, City Health Building,

1 Moore St, Canberra

When: 10am-12pm, Tuesday 2025 TBA

Contact: Your Stomal Therapy Nurse

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WESTERN NSW REGION

BATHURST

Where: Daffodil Cottage, 365 Howick St,
West Bathurst NSW 2795

When: Check with the group organisers
for advice on scheduled meetings.

Contact: Louise Linke (STN/continence
advisor) (02) 6330 5676

BROKEN HILL

Where: Broken Hill Hosp, conference room

When: Every third month or as required

Contact: Tamdra on (08) 8080 1333

DUBBO

Where: Dubbo Health Service, Ian Locke
Building, Room 8 or via Pexip or phone.

When: Check with group organiser

Contact: Stomal Therapy on 0408 769 873

GOULBURN

Where: Goulburn Workers Club 1 McKell
Place, Goulburn NSW 2580. **Dates TBA**

When: 10am – 12pm Wednesday 2025

Contact: Your Stomal Therapy Nurse

GRIFFITH AND DISTRICT

All in Griffith and Surrounding areas
(including Coleambally, Leeton, Yenda,
Hillston and Hanwood) with a Stoma
formation are invited to attend our
meetings and share experiences.

When: Check with the group organisers
for advice on scheduled meetings.

Contact: Barry Maples (02) 6963 5267 or
0429 635 267; Kim Hallam 0434 785 309

ORANGE

Where: Smarter Living Choices,
15 Olver St, Orange

When: Check with the group organisers
for advice on scheduled meetings.

Contact: Louise Linke (STN/continence
advisor) (02) 6330 5676 or Joanne (02)

6362 6184

WAGGA AND DISTRICT

Where: Men's Shed, 11 Ashmont Avenue,
Wagga Wagga

When: Check with the group organisers
for advice on scheduled meetings.

Contact: David (02) 6971 3346 or
0428 116 084



Maria Thereza Asturiano, CeraPlus™ Product User

"I want to make the following clear; I don't have skin health problems, because I use Hollister's pouch. Today I use a CeraPlus™ Soft Convex Pouch which helps keep my skin healthy. People should not be discouraged and think that this is part of life. There is always a solution, and having poor quality of life is not normal."

I'm protected where it matters most

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The testimonials, statements, and opinions presented are applicable to the people depicted. These testimonials are representative of their experiences, but the exact results and experience will be unique and individual to each person.
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