



Sub # 012



PACI encourages and supports people over 50 to lead richer, healthier & useful lifestyles

Established July 2009, Health Promotion Charity. ABN 63 596 313 490.

November 24th 2015

To Clare Keyes
Executive Assistant
Health and Ambulance Services Committee
Parliament House
Brisbane.

Dear Clare,

My name is John Ehm Founding President of Positive Ageing Cairns Incorporated.

Positive Ageing Cairns INC welcomes the opportunity to pen this submission which will lead to the Establishment of a Queensland Health Promotion Commission.

PACI congratulates the Health and Ambulance Services Committee on taking the initiative on this long overdue matter.

Formed in July 2009 as a volunteer driven community organisation and obtaining status as a registered Health Promotion Charity in 2012, we exist to support people over 50 to lead richer, healthier and useful lifestyles. Our principal activity is the Steady Steps Falls Prevention gentle exercise program for seniors.

The Steady Steps program evolved from the gentle exercise classes conducted by the Queensland Keep Fit Association in 1999. In collaboration with Queensland Health & Health, Sport & Recreation Queensland, Fitness Australia trained 25 Fitness Instructors as set down in a Manual written by Instructor Ann Lear, to work specifically with older adults and ran 20 trial programs with 400 participants.

In the early 2000's Queensland Health rebadged the program as a Stay on Your Feet Falls Prevention program.

In 2008 PACI was successful in obtaining a Queensland Health grant and ran a pilot program. It was different to other programs; Fitness Australia qualified instructors became Team Leaders of the classes, volunteer seniors became helpers and supporters in the classes, programs were held in suburban locations close to where the seniors live.

150 seniors participated in 6 locations.

Following this success and with more funding the locations expanded, in 2014, a total of 450 participants exercised in 17 locations. 13 in Cairns itself, Towns, Mossman and Port Douglas in the Douglas Shire and Atherton & Yungaburra on the Atherton Tablelands.

Then the bottom dropped out, a new government cancelled old grants. Extensive lobbying to the present Queensland government has provided no positive answers.

Not to be down hearted PACI has developed strategies to promote a public awareness campaign of the risk of FALLS in people over the age of 65 years and seek financial aid from the community business leaders.

A powerful promotional DVD has been produced and a series of public get togethers' are planned for the year 2016. Financial help from all levels of government will be actively pursued with the ultimate aim of all levels of Government, PACI and local business working together.

Some frightening statistics;

In the year 2014 – 2015 the Queensland Ambulance Service responded to a total of 65,346 CALL OUTS to FALLS - Queensland State Wide figures.

Every Year one out of three seniors over the age of 65 years will experience at least one fall. Currently only two out of five older adults survive a FALL.

Falls are the main reason seniors are admitted to hospital and aged care facilities.

No other single cause of injury, including road trauma, costs our health system more than Falls. Estimated at \$6,500 a Fall. The annual health system cost of accidental FALLS is over \$250 million.

Falls pose a greater risk to aged people than heart diseases, stroke, and cancer.

To help in this submission here are some pertinent points for consideration,

MEETING AN AGEING CHALLENGE;

Australia like the rest of the westernised world is facing an ageing tsunami of people over the age of 65 years, it will peak in 2020. In Queensland 29% of the population is currently aged 47-66. These baby boomers will be living longer than any other generation in history and, by 2050, an estimated 78,000 Australians will be over the age of 100 - that is 1 in 7 of us.

It is therefore essential for the wellbeing of our community and viability of our health system, that the physical health and mental alertness of our seniors be preserved for as long as possible.

A FALL can impact on all of us – every person and family is at risk. The huge number of FALLS in our community dictates that this acclaimed program, Steady Steps, must continue.

THE NEED IN THE COMMUNITY;

Governments provide medical & hospital services to care for people after suffering a FALL, rehabilitation programs are provided after heart operations, after strokes, plenty of advice is given to patients to care for themselves and some once only programs are offered for continued rehabilitation.

Very little attention and financial help is given to programs that PREVENT problems in the first place and help with continued rehab when a patient returns home.

PACI's Steady Steps program caters for;

Patients who have attended rehab classes at hospitals,
Attended the community 6 week balance & strength classes,
Diabetic folk,
Seniors in the GP's health management plan,
Patients of allied health practitioners.
And seniors of all races colours and creeds.

Participants are required to obtain a referral from their GP or Allied Health person to register.

Driven by the acceptance of this pioneering program by seniors in the community plus the support of FNQ GP's in referring patients to the program is indicative of the need in the community for Steady Steps to expand its services to having 40 community locations in all of FNQ within a period of 3 years. 1000 seniors attending classes every week.

THE COMMUNITY BENEFITS;

Worldwide research confirms that seniors can significantly improve their quality of life through participation in healthy ageing programs and that balance, strength training exercises can help reduce FALLS and minimize harm from Falls in seniors.

Evidence of this exists in FNQ, James Cook University conducted a research project of the benefits of the Steady Steps classes. The full report is available at the PACI office.

Seniors benefit in other areas as well, the social fellowship in the classes, the information shared by guest speakers, the fun of being together plus some laughs all benefit the body, mind and spirit of those attending, makes for an age friendly community.

Then the participants join in with PACI's slogan;
"Grow old along with me – the best is yet to be"

Robert Browning 1864

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One hip operation costs the health system \$50,000.

PACI's Steady Steps program is cost effective. Each class costs the participant \$5.

On top of that are payments to Team Leaders, training, equipment, insurances, marketing and promotional, and admin services.

For \$50,000 PACI can provide services to 20 community hub locations with 600 seniors.

Studies in the USA are now investigating how exercise can help sufferers of mental illness, social isolation, macular degeneration, alzheimers and parkinsons diseases, even old age.

The My Age Care package that commenced in July 2015 and gives control of monies to each assessed senior, exercise expenses can be given to seniors wanting to exercise.

A little known fact is that Health Fund subscribers (with options) can obtain refunds on exercise programs attended.

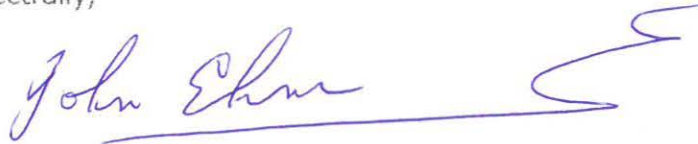
The success of our Steady Steps classes is largely due to the fact that seniors can attend in locations close to where they live. They can be in retirement villages, aged care centres, fitness gyms, community halls, council owned halls, church halls, police community youth clubs, RSL clubs, aboriginal cultural centres, CWA halls & service providers aged care centres.

Our website www.positiveageing Cairns.com.au has all our information.

Lastly I would welcome an invitation to meet your organisation and expand on any or all of the above.

Submitted respectfully,

John Ehm
President



PS. Added information is provided in this kit.

Steady Steps brochure

GP referral form

Allied Health Practitioners referral form

DVD copy of the program

Interim Report from James Cook University

November 2015 Newsletter

President: John Ehm **E:** ehmje@aapt.net.au **T:** 07 4054 3250
Email: positiveageing Cairns@hotmail.com **T:** 07 4041 5552
PO Box 272, Westcourt Q 4870

Patron: Mario Calanna, CEO Calanna Pharmacies
www.positiveageing Cairns.com.au
www.mothmatters.com.au

"Grow old along with me - the best is yet to be." - Robert Browning, 1864.

Cairns Campus
PO Box 6811 Cairns Qld 4870 Australia
Telephone (07) 4042 1111
International +61 7 4042 1111
www.jcu.edu.au

Dr Andrew Edwards PhD
Telephone (07) 4232 1653
International +61 7 4232 1653
Facsimile (07) 4232 3131
Email andrew.edwards@jcu.edu.au

24th October 2014

Mr John Ehm
Steady Steps Community Project

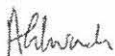
Dear Mr Ehm,

Ref: Research Project – interim observations

I write to you on behalf of Kelly Sinclair of James Cook University. As you will know, data collection for the James Cook University research project of which your Steady Steps programme was an observational group has now concluded. Data derived from our observational project have now received initial attention and look promising for the usefulness of the Steady Steps initiative as a community intervention. However, this is an interim observation and, as I am sure you can appreciate, further detailed and independent statistical analysis is required before such observations can be confirmed. This will be accomplished in a full scientific report which is planned to be completed and submitted for peer-reviewed publication and will thereafter be available for subsequent public dissemination. The publication process is usually 6-24 months.

As a valued community member of our James Cook University research project we will update you on the outcome of the planned manuscript, provide you with a copy when it is formally accepted by a scientific journal and will be happy to deliver an information session to you and your colleagues when the information is in the public domain. I am sure you can appreciate this is not a sponsored, commercial activity undertaken by James Cook University and is instead an independent and full evaluation of the project outcomes which will be completed in accordance with the timeline specified above. We appreciate your interest in this project and congratulate you on running the Steady Steps initiative. We encourage you to continue with this worthwhile endeavour and wish you well for the extension of your work.

Yours sincerely,



A/Prof Andrew Edwards PhD
Head of Sport & Exercise Science



Doctors Referral to Positive Ageing Cairns Steady Steps Program

DATE ___/___/___



Name:

Age (Please Circle)

40-49 50-59 60-69 70-79 80 & Over

Address:

Email:

Phone:

Mobile:



Emergency Contact:

Phone:

Mobile:

Email:



Occupation/s during working life

Interests Now

Have you enrolled in the earlier classes? Yes No Are you of Indigenous/ Torres Strait ancestry? Yes No
 Are you an ex- service person? Yes No Are you an ex-service partner /spouse? Yes No
 Have you a close relative as an ex- service person? Yes No

Sign: _____ Date: _____

Doctors Name: _____

Practice: _____

Our patient, _____ wishes to participate in the Steady Steps Falls Prevention Exercise Classes.

As his/her GP, I support my patients desire to improve their health and wellbeing by attending these classes.

Sign: _____



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To Clare Keys,

The enclosed letter of support from FNQ Docs came this morning
Please put in together with the kit I posted yesterday

Thanks

John Ehm

President: John Ehm **E:** ehmje@aapt.net.au **T:** 07 4054 3250
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SENT 26/11/15

**FNO Docs**
THE HEART OF HEALTHCARE

ABN 70 424 702 153

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

FNQDocs is the peak organisation for General Practice in Far North Queensland. We are pleased to support a submission from Positive Aging Cairns Incorporated (PACI) in to the Queensland Health Promotion Commission.

With over a 150 members, one of FNQDocs key objectives is to support the patient journey through the role of the General Practitioner.

Over the years we have collaborated with PACI to support their Falls Prevention Steady Steps exercise program. For a senior citizen to participate in the Steady Steps program, a participant must have their registration form signed off by their GP. We are pleased to state that in the last Steady Steps program over 400 people registered, with their documentation being signed by over 65 local General Practitioners.

This participation has come about by the education and knowledge program developed by Positive Ageing Cairns Inc. of the Steady Steps program, and the promotion of the program by FNQDocs directly to our GP members.

There is no doubt this has been a successful process and a model that I am sure can be replicated in the future. Already the partnership is developing strategies to have the GP become a more proactive partner rather than a reactive one by developing tools to enable the GP to develop referral pathways to the Steady Steps program.

We note that not only does PACI support the steady steps program, it is an advocate for senior citizens in all aspects of a better senior's quality of life.

PACI is ideally placed to understand and present matters associated with health promotion in the senior citizen arena. Consequently we endorse the submission from PACI to the Queensland Health promotion Commission.

Yours faithfully



Peter Cook
Chief Executive Officer

25 November 2015

P: (07) 4042 7333 **F:** (07) 4042 7300
117 Anderson Street, Manunda QLD 4870 PO Box 192, Bungalow QLD 4870