



Home Care Package client Brian Edwards shares a laugh.

Keeping care at home

COMMUNITY INTERLINK PROVIDES MANAGEMENT OF HOME CARE PACKAGES FOR THOSE WHO NEED ASSISTANCE TO CONTINUE LIVING AT HOME

Brian Edwards greets Community Interlink service support co-ordinator Sally Rivera and Community Interlink case manager/planner Melinda Decicco at the front door with a gleam in his eye and a cheeky sense of humour. He tells his visitors about his solution for the recent plastic bag ban.

"I head down to the shopping centre with pillowcases to put the groceries in!" he says.

Brian has been a client of Community Interlink, the Home Care Package provider consortium of which GV Health is a member, for four years.

A Home Care Package is a funding subsidy that allows individuals to purchase services so that they can live independently at home. A person is eligible for a Home Care Package if they are an older person needing co-ordinated services to live at home, or a younger person with a disability living in unique circumstances.

Ms Rivera co-ordinates the services funded by Brian's Home Care Package.

"We liaise with service providers and engage people to come and assist Brian

with what he needs," she said. "He has people come in daily to help him get organised and assist with transport to get around."

"Someone comes to put on a sock in the morning, another person comes to take it off at night!" Brian said with a laugh.

"He loves a chat, and we stir each other up," Ms Rivera said.

Brian might see a range of people during the week, up to 13 in some cases, and counts the local ambulance service members as good mates. He's also known as a bit of a social butterfly, making good use of his mobility scooter when getting around town to the post office, a mate's house for lunch or the RSL for the raffle.

"A lot of people know me down there," Brian said, and also noted it was best to arrive early to get the best table.

He also attends a weekly council activity group with about 20 others, which often involves day trips around the region.

As a client of Community Interlink, Brian can use his allocated funds to choose the services he needs.

"There are some things the package won't fund," Ms Rivera said.

"But there are a lot of things the package pays for, like pressure socks, medical equipment, supplies and other therapies."

Brian is particularly keen for the exercise program he'll be joining soon at Aquamoves. In fact, he's so keen that he's organised his taxi a



week early in anticipation.

"There are goals we set, like visiting the exercise physiologist," Ms Decicco said.

"We speak to Brian on at least a weekly basis, and also come around regularly to get an idea of what his other needs are."

the recommendation of a physiotherapist. The wedges, which elevate Brian's feet while he sleeps, were discussed instore and in person, right down to the foam's density.

"The joy things like that bring are so great," Ms Rivera said,

a catalogue, he discovered there were only blue chairs available.

Not to be deterred, he ordered a custom painted version and waited patiently for delivery. He picks up the story at the point when the wheelchair arrived.

"The delivery man brought it in, and I said, take it back!" Brian said with a chuckle.

"I asked for Ferrari red—so it had to go back to Canada to get it right. They all reckon I go faster—I've started a fad!"

Community Interlink Home Care is delivered via a person's local hospital or health service, meaning it offers distinctive benefits including locally-based support staff, advocacy, services and health service network connections.

Learn more about Community Interlink and Home Care Packages services at: www.communityinterlink.org.au

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Ms Decicco also manages Brian's Home Care Package budget, ensuring his funding is allocated in the most effective ways possible.

Brian has recently invested in foam wedges at

"the extra care and touches, making life easier and a bit more comfortable for people."

A topic of great conversation is Brian's customised wheelchair.

Brian tells the story with huge enthusiasm. Having consulted



Brian shows off his Ferrari red custom painted wheelchair.



Community Interlink Service Support Coordinator, Sally Rivera, Community Interlink Case Manager/ Planner, Melinda Decicco and Community Interlink Home Care consumer Brian Edwards.