



In this edition:

- Newsflash:  
Spinal Treatment  
Australia's New Industry  
Partner—HMNS
- Blake Caracella—A very  
Lucky Man
- National Spinal Cord  
Injury Network
- Message from the  
Chairman Rick Harley
- Calendar of Events
- PNCSA City Expo and  
Seminar Report
- Some Education
- Grange Lottery Winners

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## Blake Caracella – A very Lucky Man

Recently, Collingwood footballer Blake Caracella sustained an injury whilst on the football field. In the June 3rd Brisbane match, he collided with another player and fractured his neck and bruised his spinal cord. Collingwood doctor, Paul Blackman, said that the injury was comparable to a car crash or a fall from a large height. Indeed, Dr Black went on to say that he was "quite close" to becoming a quadriplegic. Fortunately however, he will make a full recovery. Nevertheless, this incident is a clear example of how easy it is to sustain a spinal cord injury and how unpredictable it can be. Caracella is very lucky not to be confined to a wheelchair, however other people in similar situations are not this lucky. There are approximately 300-400 new cases of spinal cord injury each year. Spinal cord injury changes a person's life, and places a care burden on the community as a whole. This burden includes costs for in-hospital care, employment/unemployment costs and care costs. Spinal Treatment Australia is working towards negating this cost by finding treatments for the problems caused by spinal cord injuries and in the future, by finding a cure. We believe this to be very important and hope that you will continue to support us in these aims. Remember, spinal cord injury can happen to anyone, and this is why we need as much support as possible to improve the lives of those with spinal cord injuries.

## Newsflash:

### Spinal Treatment Australia has a New Industry Partner – HMNS

It is an exciting time here at Spinal Treatment Australia. Health Management and Nursing Services (HMNS) has entered into a strategic relationship with Spinal Treatment Australia as our new Industry Partner. HMNS has donated funds to our organisation and has agreed to further contribute by joining our fundraising committee, increasing our networks and by assisting in the organisation and operation of events and initiatives. In addition, they will improve the public's knowledge of our organisation by adding our logo to their website and advertising materials. HMNS is Adelaide's Premier Nursing Agency and supplies well-trained, qualified, nursing staff to hospitals and aged care facilities. This partnership will allow Spinal Treatment Australia to grow due to the improved brand awareness, funding and knowledge and we welcome this initiative. There is a clear link in our professions and we feel that this partnership will be a very positive step and will continue into the future.

## National Spinal Cord Injury Network

On May 30th, Chairman, Rick Harley and CEO, Neil Sachse travelled to Sydney to attend the inaugural meeting to establish a national spinal cord injury network. This network aims to develop a working network of industry professionals to regularly review the status of spinal cord injury research and rehabilitation around the world and to consider conducting multicentre trials through collaboration with the various groups involved. The meeting was a success, with all parties excited and motivated by the initiative. A steering committee was formed, with participants representing the various states and their differing interests. The SA representative on this steering committee is Dr Ruth Marshall, the Director of Orthopaedic, Amputee and Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Services at Hampstead Rehabilitation Centre in the Royal Adelaide Hospital. This steering committee will meet together to develop the structure and protocols for this network to operate, and report back to the other members within the next six months. This represents a significant development in the field of spinal cord injury treatments and we are pleased to be a founding member in this exciting venture.

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN RICK HARLEY

The members of our **Medical Advisory Board** are as follows:



**Professor Robert Rush** – Researcher  
Flinders Medical Centre, who completed our  
initial research

**Dr Ruth Marshall** – the Director of  
Orthopaedic, Amputee and Spinal Injury  
Rehabilitation Services at Hampstead  
Rehabilitation Centre

**Mr Glenn McCulloch** – Neurosurgeon,  
Past President of the Australian Society for  
Neurosurgeons

**Mr Matthew McDonald** – Neurosurgeon

**Mr Peter Riley** – Neurosurgeon

**Mr Michael James** – Chairman of the Royal  
Adelaide Hospital Ethics Committee

**Ms Gillian Clarke** – Senior Research  
Associate at the South Australian spinal cord  
injury research centre

Welcome to the July edition of Stand Up, our quarterly newsletter. The past couple of months have been busy for Spinal Treatment Australia with the PNCSA City Expo, the trip to Sydney for the National Network meeting as well as the drawing of the Grange lottery! I'll leave you to read all about those exciting events elsewhere in Stand Up and I hope you enjoy hearing of our activities.

With respect to the medical side of our organisation, we have coordinated a meeting with the professionals (neurosurgeons, clinicians, researchers, ethics consultants and physiotherapists) to take our research to the next necessary step – to a human clinical trial. If you are not aware, we have commissioned research which discovered that nerve fibres can regenerate in the central nervous system, past the site of the injury. This signifies a major advance in the field and has positively affected the way people think and view spinal cord injury and its treatment.

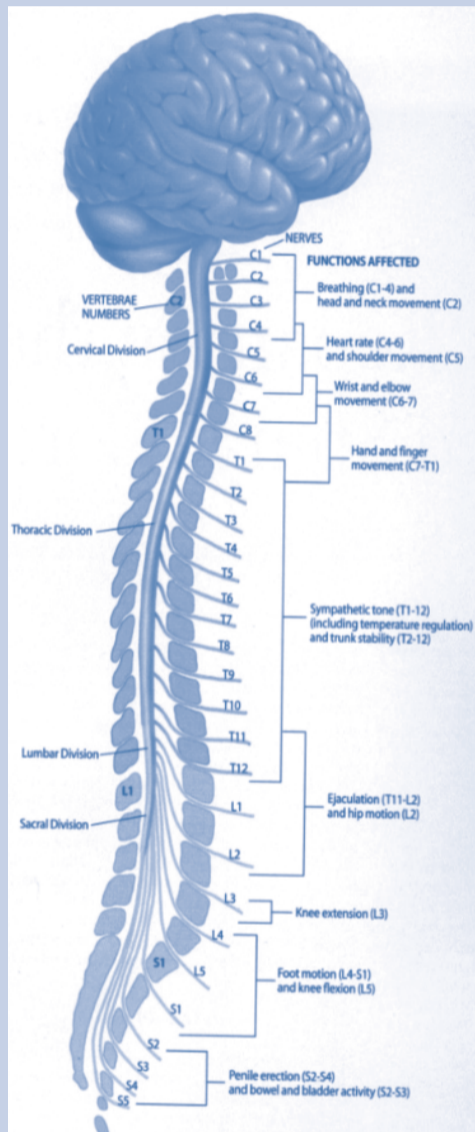
During these planning meetings, a number of medical professionals in the field have agreed to become a member of Spinal Treatment Australia's Medical Advisory Board. This is exciting news as it means that we can seek advice from those in the field at any time and benefit from their experience and knowledge.

A priority of Spinal Treatment Australia is to apply our nerve-regenerating research to humans via clinical trial, as this is the next step for its widespread use by people with spinal cord injury. Unfortunately, the beginning of clinical trials for this research has taken a backwards step, due to late changes which affected the acceptability of the delivery system. Therefore, we need to conduct further research to determine a delivery system appropriate and acceptable for humans, before trials can occur. This further research will take approximately 12 months to complete and cost approximately \$100,000. Your support can help make a difference in this objective.

I am very excited by the support of our Medical Advisory Board and we thank them for becoming an important part of our organisation. The necessary further research cannot happen without significant funds. This is where your support benefits. Public support is essential in order to improve the lives of those with spinal cord injury. Thank you for your support and I hope you enjoy this edition of Stand Up.

## Time for some Education

This picture of the spine shows the various functions that the spinal cord controls. When an injury is sustained in the spinal cord, all function from that point and lower will be affected. In complete injuries (where the spinal cord is completely severed/crushed), all function is lost. However, in incomplete injuries (where the spinal cord is injured, but still has some nerve pathways intact), some function may be retained below the site of the injury. Therefore, each person with spinal cord injuries is different, resulting in further challenges for treatment and its design and delivery. Nonetheless, we are making inroads, and will continue this into the future. We hope you will also continue your support in this venture.



## Physical & Neurological Council of SA City Expo and Seminar

### “From Research to Practice”

May 24 and 25 saw Spinal Treatment Australia attend the Physical and Neurological Council of SA's City Expo and Seminar. This event involved over 25 different disability organisations as well as experts in the fields of physical and neurological disorders and disabilities. The seminar was held on May 24, entitled “From Research to Practice”, with keynote speaker Professor Marcello Costa. There were a number of different speakers with many topics covered, including Peer Mentoring in spinal cord injury, Stem cells and their promise for neuroscience and group circuit class therapy for stroke survivors. This was a very informative day and kept our organisation up to date with advances

in the field of neuroscience and possible applications of developing technologies to spinal cord injuries. On both days, Spinal Treatment Australia also had a booth where we displayed information about our organisation and our activities, where people could speak to our representatives and ask any questions. These displays received positive feedback and will be used again for different events. All in all, it was a successful event, as our attendees were educated in issues in neuroscience, furthered our branding and allowed a forum for networking and discussion.

## Grange Lottery Winners

Our major lottery, run in conjunction with Rotary Modbury was drawn on June 26. Congratulations go to the following prize-winners:

Number	Winner	Prize
1st	Peter Hammond	One dozen 1997 Grange
2nd	Dr R J Coulthard	One bottle of 1993 Grange
3rd	Ashlin Eldridge	One bottle of 1997 Penfolds St Henri & one bottle of 1997 Orlando Centenary Hill Shiraz
4th	Colleen Hughes	½ dozen 2004 Hewitson Miss Harry
5th	Helen Eggert	½ dozen 2004 Hewitson Miss Harry
6th	Richard Bowden	2 bottles of 2003 Associates “The Elder” Merlot
7th	Kym Bannister	2 bottles of 2003 Associates “The Elder” Merlot
8th	Max Amber	2 bottles of 2003 Associates “The Elder” Merlot



Thank you to everyone who supported Spinal Treatment Australia by buying a ticket in this raffle. It is appreciated. Good luck for the next time!



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## Calendar of Events

**14th July – International Campaign for the Cure of Paralysis (ICCP) Meeting**  
Teleconference 12pm GMT (9:30pm Adelaide time)

The ICCP is the primary forum for international discussion and information sharing on Spinal Cord research and treatment. We are proud to be a part of this organisation as it improves the overall knowledge in the field through discussion and collaboration. The ICCP has developed the spinal cord injury treatment industry by establishing guidelines on Spinal Cord clinical trials, establishing a young investigator's award for post-doctorate students interested in research in this area as well as raising the profile of this disability and its future on an international scale. The next meeting of this organisation will be held via teleconference on July 14, and Spinal Treatment Australia will participate. If you would like more information on the ICCP, please visit: <http://www.campaignforcure.org/>

**29th August – Dinner with a Minister**  
Parliament House, 6:30 till late

This event is on again! This is where the general public visits Parliament House and has a 3 course meal in their dining room. They also have the opportunity to take a tour of Parliament House, giving attendees the unique experience of seeing the inner workings of the governing seat of South Australia. A Minister will also be in attendance (yet to be determined), giving attendees the opportunity to speak informally with a Minister. The benefits of this event are two-fold for attendees. Firstly, they raise money for Spinal Treatment Australia and secondly, they have the opportunity to meet the Minister whilst enjoying a delicious 3 course meal prepared in the Parliament House kitchens. The cost for this outing is \$80 per head and includes all food and drink, with all proceeds going to Spinal Treatment Australia. Please contact us (8269 7670) if you would like to attend.

**6th October – Andersons Solicitors Pasta Night**  
Marche Club, Cnr Darley and Gorge Rds, Paradise

This annual fundraiser is open to the public and involves an evening of food, drink and entertainment. Come ready to eat, drink and be merry as the entry price (a low \$30 per head) includes all-you-can-eat Pasta, an Elvis floorshow and live entertainment. Auctions, silent auctions and raffles will also be conducted on the night, so you could walk away with great items, for example, AFL memorabilia, dinner for two at Parliament House and a weekend getaway at a B&B and boat cruise. It will be 10 to a table so bring all your friends as well! All proceeds go to Spinal Treatment Australia, and we want to make this year's event the biggest so far! This event is in its 9th successful year, with last year raising nearly \$11,000. Help us top that this year and make it the most successful Pasta Night yet! Please contact us (8269 7670) for ticket information or purchase.

**27th November – Annual General Meeting**  
Spinal Treatment Australia  
173 Main North Rd, Nailsworth, 4:00pm

The Annual General Meeting is a prime opportunity for members of Spinal Treatment Australia to have a voice in its operations and so, we invite all members to attend. To become a member, there is an annual fee of \$10 and for this, you receive updates of our progress and operations through the newsletter, the opportunity to attend the AGM as well as personal invites to all our events. The AGM will appoint the board members and office bearers for the next year; however absentee votes will need to be sent in before the meeting. Members will receive nomination forms prior to the meeting. RSVPs to the AGM would be appreciated.