

**LifeTec**<sup>TM</sup>  
QUEENSLAND  
towards easier living



easyliving

**LifeTec** Quarterly Review

SPRING 2010



I am pleased to announce the Qld Smart Home Initiative (QSHI) Demonstrator was officially opened by the Deputy Premier, Paul Lucas, on the 28th of May 2010.

This exciting project highlights the benefits of integrating assistive technology within a replica living unit. We believe the Demonstrator will provide clients with a better understanding of different solutions applied to everyday life. The QSHI Demonstrator will be opened Monday to Saturday as part of LifeTec's already impressive display. I would like to thank all funding parties to this valuable project, namely Qld Health, HACC, Tunstall as well as LifeTec.

In the last Quarterly Review I announced LifeTec's recent success in receiving additional growth funding from HACC. I am happy to advise that benefits are already starting to flow to our clients with the appointment of additional health professional staff and delivery of a new customised van for LifeTec's Townsville centre. As a direct result, outreach trips are expected to almost double over the next year, meaning greater frequency and continuity of services for rural and regional clients. Other improvement still to come feature a dedicated client lift and display revamp for our Brisbane centre.

I also take this opportunity to invite you to join us at the upcoming Positive Ageing Conference on the 17th of September 2010. This fun day will feature community, clinical and academic experts who will offer their experiences and insight about extending independent living, managing your finances in the "new normal" post GFC environment, keeping your brain healthy and active, and a wide range of other topics to enhance social, mental and functional health and wellbeing. See [www.lifetec.org.au](http://www.lifetec.org.au) for more information

**James Barrientos**  
Chief Executive Officer

# Smart Home now open!

On the 28th May after several months of careful planning and construction, The Queensland Smart Home Initiative (QSHI) Demonstrator, located at LifeTec's Newmarket display centre, was officially opened by Deputy Premier the Hon. Paul Lucas.

The launch of the Smart Home was an overwhelming success with over 120 delegates representing Government, Allied Health and Community Groups attending the event. The launch was a major step forward in generating awareness for the use of assistive technology for supporting independent living, providing access to care, preventing inappropriate admission to hospitals and residential care, improving outcomes and reducing costs. The QSHI is a project set up by a team of corporate and community organisations, universities and government bodies to educate the community and encourage the adoption of assistive technology for older people, people with special or ongoing needs, and people managing chronic conditions. The aim of the QSHI is to advance the adoption of intelligent assistive technologies and smart homes to encourage and support independent living, access to care, improved outcomes and reduced costs. The QSHI is particularly interested in the benefits of using assistive technology, rather than the development of new devices. Entry to the Smart Home is free, and experienced staff will be on hand to assist with your visit.



## LifeTec Townsville growing again

Since opening its doors 18 months ago, LifeTec's display centre at Domain Central has been met with an overwhelming response. To cater for the demand, and to allow more people access to our services, LifeTec is currently planning an extension to the Townsville site that will see additional space for a larger conference room and an extension to the display area. Remember that we are also open Saturdays 9am to 2pm.

## DVA provider status

LifeTec Health Professionals have recently received individual Medicare provider numbers which allow those staff to undertake work under the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) scheme. It may also allow clients with private health insurance to claim a rebate on some of our private services. For more information please contact our enquiries line 1300 885 886



# INCREASED OUTREACH TRIPS FOR 2011

Regional clients can expect to see more of LifeTec next year, with the outreach program visiting most regions at least twice in 2011. Thanks to funding received by HACC, this will be achieved, in part, with the addition of a new HiAce Van to be based at LifeTec's Townsville office. The staff at Townsville took delivery of the new van in early July, with its first 'road trip' planned for the Central West outreach trip in late August. Outreach trips are currently being planned for 2011. Keep an eye on our website for the new schedule [www.lifetec.org.au](http://www.lifetec.org.au).



# Staff Profile: Chris Sweeney

## Occupational Therapist

“The development of new technologies to assist people with disabilities is exciting. They are providing a greater scope for participation for people who otherwise would be very limited in what they could physically achieve.

“This is what I love about the work I do: finding the right match between the person’s ability and the technology for them to reach their potential. In some cases this may be a device as simple as a battery operated can opener for a person with the use of only one hand to a powered wheelchair with the additional features of infrared control and Bluetooth connectivity for mouse control.

“We all take computers for granted and they are now often very much a part of daily life whether that is for recreation, work or socialisation. How would it affect you if you could no longer use the mouse or keyboard? This is another aspect of our service, in that we can help people explore alternative ways of using a computer. It could be that a joystick or trackball is sufficient as an alternative mouse, or sometimes we need to explore options such as head tracking or eye tracking. Another option is looking at switch use for computer functions. Again it is all about finding the right technology for the person’s abilities.

“It’s also great to see children be able to get involved in the same activities their peers are doing. With the rapid advancement of technology and with new products coming onto the market, the future for people with disabilities is looking a lot more promising.”

Chris has been with LifeTec Queensland for over four years and she still enjoys the challenge of being able to help people achieve and gain back activities they used to be able to do.

If you, a friend or a relative find activities challenging, perhaps consider visiting us at our Newmarket or Townsville centres. Drop-in, look around and have a chat with one of the health professionals on staff. It may be a big step in the right direction.



## Workshop calendar

LifeTec’s 2010/2011 calendar listing of up and coming professional development workshops and presentations can be viewed on our website.

For more information or to request a display or community talk, email us at [mail@lifetec.org.au](mailto:mail@lifetec.org.au), telephone 1300 885 886 or contact us at our Brisbane or Townsville centres.

### Acknowledgement of funding



Disability Services | Queensland Health

### Brisbane

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