

**From:** Spanner In The Works [no-reply@malehealth.org.au](mailto:no-reply@malehealth.org.au)  
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**To:** [pauillhuillier@bigpond.com](mailto:pauillhuillier@bigpond.com)



December 2020

[www.malehealth.org.au](http://www.malehealth.org.au)

## The end of the year is in sight!

However you've got through 2020, you made it! From lock down and isolation to embracing technology and finding new ways to connect.

We learned to wash our hands (properly), cover our mouths when we cough and keep a little bit of distance between those we aren't as close to.

The Spanner team hopes you also looked after your overall health...did you see your GP for a full physical health check? Did you go when you didn't feel the best?



When was your last service?

Have a wonderful Christmas and New Year.

Stuart and the Spanner team



## Check this out: **John Paul Young's** new release is sure to make you smile

In a special collaboration with the Australian Men's Shed Association, the one and only JPY has released this extremely catchy tune and we think you're going to love it.



To watch the music video, filmed at an Australian Men's Shed, [click here](#).





## What the Shed has done for me | **What can I do for the Shed?**

About me — by Martin Israel

I have a positive attitude towards life not allowing my disability (blindness) to hold me back. I was raised in a family that valued being helpful and it's better to give than to take. So I'm passing these traits onto our children and 10 grandchildren.

For 7 years, I have volunteered at the Australian Red Cross (Blood Bank).

At home and at the Shed, I use my skills to make toys and puzzles for Aged Care, kindergartens, schools — and recently completed 750 items for children with cancer. These things bring me great joy.

### **Faced with retirement, after working hard since 16, having purpose each day, what now?**

Daunting yet a little exciting. I had to give careful consideration to what I could do.

A chance meeting between my son and a Shed member started the ball rolling.

Don, who went and goes out of his way to take me to the Shed and home, overcame my first barrier of transport. He became and is a close friend.

The first day I went along with trepidation. Warmly welcomed, I felt at home and joined up there and then, my new sense of purpose started that day. That happened over 6 years ago.

About 12 months ago, a member was in hospital and I decided to visit him. His response was great so I became Welfare Officer for our Shed.

I telephone members if they have been unwell and since COVID I have telephoned each member at least once every two weeks to check in and have a chat with them.

I also encourage them to call each other...calls I know they enjoy making.

### **Stop the press...the other day I had a tumble.**

Broken, bruised and in hospital, life turned full circle as I received calls from my fellow Shedders. How did that make me feel?

It warmed my heart and filled me with great emotion to know that someone cared enough to call.

Whilst writing this piece for the newsletter we were still in lockdown. It won't be long before we are all back in The Bayside Men's Shed and in good company.

**Please consider becoming your Shed's welfare officer.**

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## **When negativity is the elephant in the room**

**Do you battle feeling negative?  
How do you recognise when  
negative behaviour is pointing to  
a problem greater than just a  
crappy day?**

[Read more here](#)





## Looking after a **loved one** this Christmas?

Christmas can be both joyous and a challenging time for those looking after someone with dementia, a disability, chronic ill health or any other circumstance.

But being prepared and starting conversations with your family now can make a difference.

Use this Christmas as an opportunity to reminisce with loved ones about the memories of times you've all shared with your partner.

Give your partner an opportunity to talk about a happy time they still remember. Get out the photo albums and play music your partner loves.

Encourage your family to ask your partner about things they'd like to know or learn about them.

Your family might offer, "Just come to our place for Christmas, we'll do all the work!". They may not be aware of the difficulties that can create for you and the person you care for.

You may not want to sound ungrateful, or you worry you would upset them.

**So here are some suggestions:**

- Explain that a change of environment can be unsettling. Ask the family to come to you instead — and bring the Christmas meal with them.
- Explain that routine is important and ask for things to happen as routinely as possible, like the time you have your meal.
- Plan for some rest or quiet time for your partner in amongst the activities.
- Be honest, and don't feel guilty about asking for what you both need.

**Most of all remember to share the care during the day.**

You don't have to do it all.

For information or support please click on the links below.

[Carers ACT](#)

[Carer Gateway](#)



**Have you ever stopped to think about what you would want if you couldn't make your own decisions?**

Here is a set of free programs that increase your knowledge about advanced care planning for you and your family.

What is an Advanced Care Plan? It's a written document that states your preferences about health and personal care, and preferred outcomes should you be unable to communicate those things due to poor health.

[To find out more go here](#)



## Do you consider **yourself** a problem solver?

“Men tend to, in coping with things, be action oriented and have a problem solving approach,” says Professor Suzanne Chambers AO who is the Dean of the Faculty of Health at the University of Technology Sydney.

“If you think of your body as a car and maybe the engine as the beating heart, you

need to maintain that car and look after it.

“And if the spanner is not working for the particular problem that you’ve addressed, maybe a different tool is needed. And maybe you even do need a specialist mechanic.”

Speaking to The Shed Wireless recently as a special guest on ‘Ask the Doc’, Suzanne points out that your health deserves the full focus of that action-oriented, problem-focused approach that so many men pride themselves on.

“It’s about saying... I only get one life and I want it to be the best it can be. And if I don’t feel as if I’m travelling as well as I should, then I’m going to take some action and get someone to help me with that.”

You can listen to the full interview on Episode 7 (Season 2) of The Shed Wireless.

[Just click on this link and hit play](#)



## Did you know **nearly 1 million Australians** are living with psoriasis?

Living with psoriasis is not only physically demanding but can have significant impacts on your mental health too. The Get Psorted Facebook group provides safe, secure and simple information that can help to proactively manage your psoriasis. It also has a range of videos so you can hear from others who have similar experiences — and are keen to learn from one another.



Try these links for more information:

[getpsorted.com.au](http://getpsorted.com.au)

[facebook.com/getpsorted](https://facebook.com/getpsorted)

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## Health events this December

December is awareness month for:

Aids | Disabilities | Volunteers

1 Dec | World AIDS day

3 Dec | International day of persons with disabilities

5 Dec | International Volunteer Day



“A Man Too  
Busy To Take  
Care Of His  
Health Is Like  
A Mechanic  
Too Busy To  
Take Care Of  
His Tools.”

The Fresh Quotes

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**Share your health story. The Spanner team would like to hear about your health and wellbeing experience. Send your story to [info@malehealth.org.au](mailto:info@malehealth.org.au)**

For an easy print version of this newsletter [click here](#)

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# Spanner in the Works? Check your symptoms



Feeling unwell and not sure if you need a doctor? The *Health Direct Symptom Checker Tool* can help you decide what to do next.

**Get started with the Symptom Checker.**



*A men's health initiative by the  
Australian Men's Shed Association and Healthy Male*



**GET IN TOUCH** [info@malehealth.org.au](mailto:info@malehealth.org.au)

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