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23 March 2022

As a scientist, Sarah Boyd knows research is vital to finding answers. That's why she's excited about attending the Melbourne 'Live Your Potential Expo' on March 27, to connect with others to learn more about innovative ways to improve her lifestyle.

The 43-year-old Glen Waverley resident and NDIS participant, has Lupus and several other autoimmune diseases, which makes her condition complex and unstable.

"Attending expos, featuring emerging technologies and equipment for people with disability, is one of the best ways to enhance your lifestyle," Sarah said.

"For me and many others with disability, finding the right equipment is pivotal for living a comfortable day-to-day life, and with the disability sector expanding and technology constantly evolving, finding the right equipment and supports can be challenging. That's why I really look forward to disability expos.

"These types of events are eye-opening, showcasing the latest equipment, ranging from something simple like bath chairs to state-of-the-art prosthetics – helpful and often life-changing technologies participants, families, and carers can learn about."

Sarah said disability expos are also great connecting attendees to other like-minded people, resources, and ideas.

"It's better than trawling through websites and information sheets. At an expo you can talk to people face-to-face. You get a chance to tell your story and the exhibitors can tell you about the services and equipment they offer," she said.

"They can say 'Well, we've got this service, this option, or did you know about this?' You can ask questions and within a short amount of time you're connected to so much all under one roof."

Sarah said she wouldn't be able to live her best life without her NDIS funding and the support and equipment it provides.

"I worked as a research scientist but, as my condition deteriorated, I had to give up work. I had to go on a disability pension. It was a huge drop in wages so I'm grateful I've been able to use my NDIS funding to get lots of assistance," she said.

"My occupational therapist (OT), Laura, is great. Recently I started using a walker so she arranged for a professional organiser to come into my home to help me strategically rearrange my furniture so I wouldn't bump into things.

“I’ve also been funded for bathroom modifications which are underway, and less expensive equipment like a swing pour kettle and a tablet timer.

“I have weak hands and wrists, so using the swing pour kettle means I don’t have to pick it up, I can just tip it and pour. It’s safer and reduces the risk of spills.

“The tablet timer has been great too. Given my condition affects my short-term memory I’ve taken my medication twice at times, not realising I’ve already taken it, and it’s left me sick, in hospital. It’s a simple device, but for me it’s been lifesaving.”

Sarah has also taken up botanical watercolour art classes, through Friends of the Botanic Gardens, which she said has helped improve her cognitive function.

“I love painting and I find when I do it my cognitive problems aren’t an issue,” she said. “My psychologist said it’s also good exercise for my brain.

“I’m so grateful for all I’ve received through my NDIS plan and through Agnes Simon, my provider at District 360 Supports. Agnes is a wealth of knowledge and she’s not only helped me but plenty of others.

“Agnes is so passionate about helping people with disability and supporting charities, she’s helped to organise the ‘Live Your Potential Expo’ and all profits will be donated to Keeley’s Cause, Carers Victoria, and Friend in Me to continue to support others.”

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