

Everybody's Game

A resource kit for clubs to better support people living with a neurological condition or have experienced a stroke

Founded in 1952, ACH Group believes that growing older is a journey, not a destination. We think of it as turning a new page.

Our 1700 specialist staff and hundreds of volunteers share the belief that everyone should be valued and respected, connected to their communities and in control of their lives.

We are here to listen to what is important to you, so that we can help you navigate the range of opportunities available. We offer advice, and support you to choose the life you want to live, where you want to live it.

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What is the Inclusive Football Model?

How to use the resource kit

The Inclusive Football resource kit has been developed by ACH Group in partnership with Football South Australia (FSA), Flinders University, local soccer clubs, people under 65 living with a neurological condition and subject matter experts, as a product of the learnings from the 'Everybody's Game' project.

The resource kit is a practical guide with information and resources to help local football clubs to provide a greater level of support, and an environment inclusive of people living with a neurological condition. Whether you need information or more formal support, the resource kit can provide you with the basic knowledge and/or the links to the further resources. This resource kit can be a handy reference guide to prompt discussion and planning, when assessing your own clubs accessibility.

The kit is divided into sections with different tabs for ease of use and navigation. You can read the kit from beginning to end, or go to specific tabs depending on the information you need at the time.

This kit is available as an online flipbook at achgroup.org.au

The background

The needs of people living with a neurological condition may be complex, and different from person to person. A progressive, and eventually life-limiting condition, cognitive impairment can be very different from many other disabilities.

A lack of social and community initiatives to suit their needs has a great impact on the individual as well as their family. Some of the impacts may include but are not limited to:

- reduced options for participation in sport and recreation
- decreased participation in physical activity leading to poorer health and worsened symptoms
- decreased social and emotional wellbeing due to lack of opportunity for connections with people of similar age and interest
- isolation from their community
- faster progression of their illness
- impacts on their self-esteem and sense of identity due to loss of meaningful activity and stigma

The COVID-19 pandemic has added to the restrictions on people living with a neurological condition. Dementia Australia CEO Maree McCabe highlighted the affect on people living with dementia by stating "people impacted by dementia already experience lower levels of social engagement, inclusion and connectedness within their communities. This, coupled with the restrictions enforced through the COVID-19 pandemic, has meant that people living with dementia, their families and carers are even more vulnerable to adverse mental health outcomes".

What is Everybody's Game?

The Everybody's Game project, led by ACH Group in partnership with FSA, Flinders University and local clubs, aims to redress barriers to community engagement for people under 65 living with a neurological condition or have suffered a stroke.

ACH Group recognise that people living with disability, in particular people with a neurological condition, may face many challenges within society when attempting to engage with their local community.

The project, funded by the Department of Social Services, and selected as part of the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building – Social and Community Participation Initiative, aims to build the capacity of local football clubs in Adelaide, through working with people living with a neurological condition to understand their needs and how to educate local clubs to provide the best support.



The 'Inclusive Football Model' is a collation of the findings from the project and provides a framework to creating a more inclusive, accessible, safe and informed club environment that values the contribution and experience of people living with diverse needs.

What is a neurological condition?

A neurological condition is defined as a disorder that affects the brain, spine and nerves with damage to the structure, biochemistry or electrical pathways. Neurological conditions can be present from birth (congenital), genetically acquired and acquired through sudden onset.

There are many recognised neurological conditions, some relatively common, but many rare. Examples of neurological conditions include:

- Dementia
- Alzheimer's disease
- Parkinson's disease
- Motor neurone disease (MND)
- Stroke
- Multiple Sclerosis (MS)
- Acquired brain injury (ABI)

Regardless of the cause, depending on where the damage has occurred, determines to what extent communication, vision, hearing, movement and cognition are impacted. Some symptoms or presentations commonly seen include, but are not limited to:

- Memory loss
- Paralysis
- Poor coordination/balance
- Loss of sensation
- Pain
- Behaviour change

The importance of inclusion

Every person, regardless of disability or other difference, has the right to choose and participate in community sporting activities. Being inclusive is about providing a range of opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to participate, learn, contribute and belong by supporting them to take part in the most appropriate manner possible.

When it comes to participation in the community, people living with a neurological condition face barriers such as accessibility, lack of appropriate support, lack of opportunities, transport difficulties, inclusiveness and discrimination to name a few.

A survey conducted by Inclusive Sport SA in 2019, into the attitudes and behaviours of members from sporting clubs in South Australia identified, that an alarming 60% of participants believed that their club would not know where to start when trying to incorporate people with disability into teams and club roles. A further 88% of respondents indicated that their clubs and state organisations should arrange more training for coaches and volunteers around inclusion, highlighting the importance for this toolkit.

The resources in this toolkit will help your club to upskill and open its doors to people living with a neurological condition and their family. By helping your club become more accessible and disability-friendly this will provide new experiences and opportunities for all.

At ACH Group, we believe in supporting people to continue in active and valued roles which are meaningful to them, be it existing roles or new.

Making your club inclusive

Before you start, complete a quick self-audit of your club to see how inclusive your club is.

The audit will provide areas of improvement when looking to include people from diverse backgrounds. The checklist may also assist in the further development of a Disability Action Plan, should the club look to take inclusion to the next level. The checklist provides a snapshot, but does not cover all elements required of an inclusive club. The checklist is located in the resources section.

How inclusive is your club? **Audit your club now.**

After performing the audit of your club, how did you score? What are areas that your club could improve on?

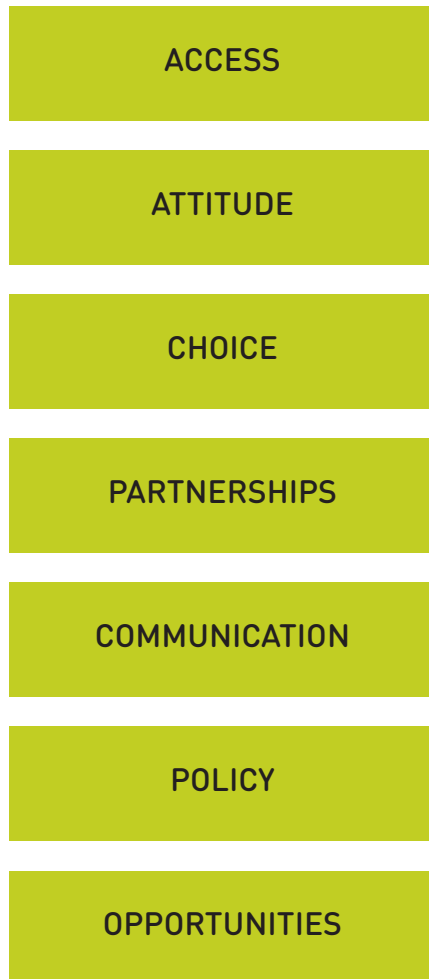
As you may have seen, inclusion extends beyond physical accessibility to the club. The goal of inclusion is to ensure fair participation for people with and without a disability. A number of important factors make up inclusion, and they will be covered in this document.

When getting involved with their community, some of the most commonly reported barriers for people living with disability include:

- exclusion from participating in social events and activities
- reduced self-confidence and dignity
- physical access barriers – getting to the event, parking at the venue, venue accessibility
- attitudinal barriers - staff awareness, assistance, language
- socioeconomic barriers – activity costs, event costs
- communication barriers – language, signage, access to materials and information

7 Pillars of Inclusion

When understanding and addressing barriers to participation, we will use the 7 Pillars model, developed by Play By The Rules. The model provides a 'helicopter' view of inclusion which looks at the common elements that contribute to creating inclusive environments. The seven pillars are:



ACCESS

Physical access to your club is important for people living with diverse needs. This is usually the first thought when considering inclusion and creating an inclusive environment.

When analysing your facilities, think about:

- providing ramps for people who use a wheelchair
- people with injuries or on crutches
- proximity to public transport
- making sure to reserve disability parking places in front of facilities
- ensuring toilet or canteen facilities are accessible to all
- handrails where stairs are present

ATTITUDE

Attitude is often cited as one of the biggest barriers. A positive attitude can go a long way to making your club more inclusive.

Think about the following at your club – What is the current attitudes around my club? How do I feel about inclusion? Is my club ready to welcome people with disability or those from a diverse background?

Your answer is probably 'yes', but the truth is that most people have good intentions, but it does not often translate into action. If they did, the statistics above would look very different. Modifying policies, practices, processes and activities to become truly inclusive may seem like a huge task, but it doesn't have to be. It starts with a small shift in attitude.

CHOICE

Choice is all about providing options for people to decide how they want to get involved. Sport is not 'one size fits all'. The focus for clubs should be to find practical ways for all people to participate in sport at a level of their choice. Inclusion is about providing a range of options both on and off the field.

A lack of choice is often stated as a reason for non-participation, especially for people with disability. So, what's the best way to create more choice for more people? Talk to the people who want to be involved and include them in the decision making process.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are all about creating relationships with individuals and organisations to achieve a common goal. You don't need to tackle inclusion on your own. There will be other organisations in your community who share your inclusion goals and will work collaboratively.

Think of what is possible, and how your sport or club can be flexible and adaptive to meet the goals of these organisations to achieve joint outcomes. Partnerships with disability service providers or state organisations can go along way to achieving great outcomes and inclusivity within your club.

COMMUNICATION

Effective communication is critical to the success of inclusion. Inclusive communication means you may need to change your habits and adapt your methods on how you speak, listen and write to new and existing members.

Here are some tips to make your communication more inclusive:

- Use person first language (i.e. person with a disability)
- Use simple, direct language
- Avoid stereotypes
- When sending out communication, is your content accessibility friendly?
- Use clear graphics and well-contrasted colours throughout the designs
- Signage and information that is easy to read and in logical locations
- Use images or graphics where suitable instead of words (i.e. toilet signs)



For more information regarding communication, refer to the following resources:

Accessible communication | Online Accessibility Toolkit

www.accessibility.sa.gov.au/introduction/accessible-communication

Accessible and inclusive content | Style Manual

www.stylemanual.gov.au/accessible-and-inclusive-content

POLICY

Policy considers how your club commits to and takes responsibility for inclusion.

A good policy offers clear direction and guidelines for everyone involved in the club and will help to set realistic and consistent goals and objectives.

Policies are most useful and effective when promoted and communicated to all members. A policy that is difficult to find (i.e. sits on a shelf in a clubhouse or is buried deep on a website) is useless and ineffective. It is always a good idea to involve a person with disability when designing club policies.

OPPORTUNITIES

Participation in sport has so much value beyond the sport itself. Sport provides opportunities to be healthy, make friends and learn new skills. Sport assists in the growth and development of communities.

However, a lack of awareness of the value and barriers to inclusion reduces the potential to see the opportunities and options available to include people from a range of backgrounds and circumstances in all facets of sport. When we see the person first and what unique skills and abilities they can bring to your club, and not the barrier, the opportunities open up in front of us.

One practical way to open up new opportunities is to look at ways to modify what you currently do to ensure everyone is getting a fair go.

Consider

- Including people with disability in decision making
- Undertaking further training to further increase the clubs knowledge and practices of inclusiveness (links provided in resources)
- What other organisations can you partner with to work towards the common goal of inclusiveness?
- Revisiting the self-audit to see how the club can improve with the new information.



The Coach

The coach plays a vital role in making the sport and activities inclusive of people living with a neurological condition.

When planning activities, it is important for the coach to consider each participant's movement capabilities. Depending on the level of ability, and difference between each participant, adjustments or modifications may be required to ensure all participants can be included.

The TREE model is a practical tool designed to help coaches modify activities to be more inclusive of participants with a range of abilities. There are four essential elements of an activity that can be modified to make it more inclusive.

Teaching style

Rules

Equipment

Environment

Teaching style

The way the instructions are communicated to participants can have a significant impact on how inclusive it is and how much participants will understand the instructions. Using a combination of strategies will help ensure communication is effective and appropriate. Try these:

- Keep instructions short, simple and concise
- Loud voice and speak slower if required
- Use visual aids and demonstrations
- Guide the participant through the activity
- Use questioning to check participant understanding

If you require further support, try engaging the family member(s) or carer to assist and provide tips.

Rules

Some participants living with a neurological condition may find it difficult to understand and follow rules. To support the participant, simplify or change rules as needed. As their skill levels and understanding increase, gradually re-introduce the rules.

Remember:

- Start activities with minimal rules (make it easy to remember)
- As participants begin to understand the pattern or flow of the activity, you may gradually introduce the more rules.
- Note: you may be required to prompt and remind throughout
- Minimise time between giving instructions and starting the activity

Equipment

Modifications to the equipment may be required where it may be a limiting factor to a participant's engagement. Modifications that can be made include:

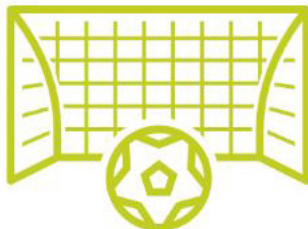
- Size of the ball
- Size of the goals
- Colour of the cones
- Colour of the netting in the goal
- Softness of the ball



Environment

When planning activities remember to consider the suitability of the playing area for the mobility of the participants. It is important to ensure:

- A flat surface to allow the inclusion of wheelchairs or other mobility aids
- A flat surface to reduce the likelihood of slips, trips and falls
- Seating located in areas near activities for participants who have difficulty standing for extended periods
- Adjust the size of playing area to make activities more achievable e.g. increasing the size of the field will allow more time when in control of the ball.
- Consider the weather when delivering activities e.g. rain may increase slips and falls



What is Walking Football and it's use in this toolkit?

Walking Football is a small-sided, low-impact, modified version of the game, suitable for all levels of ability and fitness. The game caters for those who have years of soccer experience, to those with no experience.

Walking football aims to provide participants with physical & mental health benefits, social connectedness and promotes the benefits of ongoing physical activity.

How is walking football played?

- Matches are played with modified formats. Less team members, on smaller pitches with shorter and adjustable game times
- Running is not allowed. One foot always needs to be on the ground
- It is non-contact
- The ball cannot be kicked above head height. With that, there is no heading of the ball. An important rule, especially for some people living with a neurological condition
- The focus is on having fun and making friends

MORE>

For further information regarding walking football or to watch a video explanation, head to:

www.playfootball.com.au/player/walking-football

www.footballsouthaustralia.com.au/walking-football



**WALKING
FOOTBALL**

Guide to delivering Everybody's Game

Before the session

Prior to the session, the head coach or the organiser should consider the following:

- COVID management
- Risk management
- Emergency protocols
- Weather assessment
- Session plan
- Location (surfaces)
- Session length
- Session times

Templates to help plan your sessions are available in the resources section.

Delivering the session

On the day of the session, the head coach and/or organiser should prepare the following:

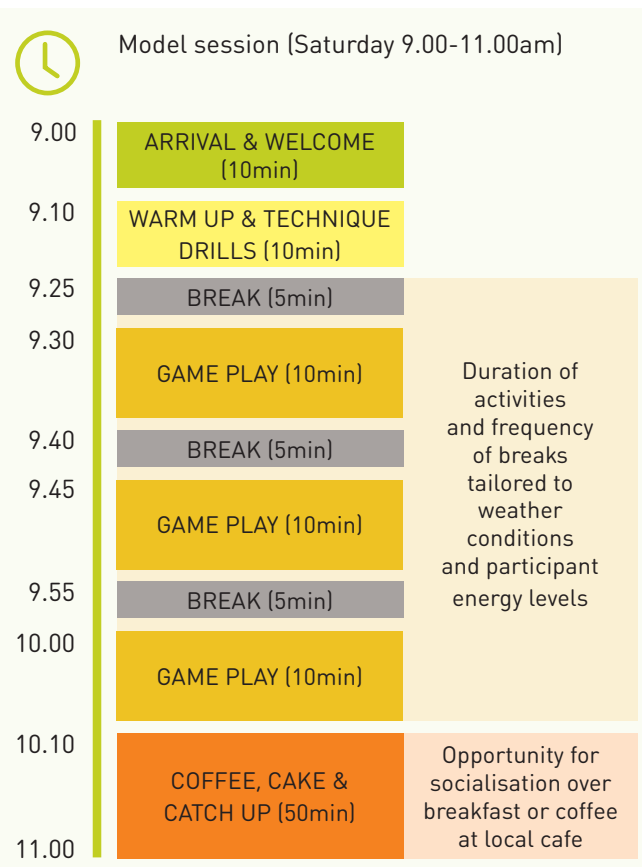
- Shade
- Seating
- Water
- Equipment

The following pages will include recommendations and considerations based on the 16 week pilot of Everybody's Game where the program was informed by participants, their families, carers, local football clubs and subject matter experts.

Recommendations

- COVID management
 - A management plan is strongly advised, due to the potential vulnerability of the population group
 - A template has been provided in the toolkit. Please check information with your local authorities as information may be regularly updated
- Risk management
 - Should be completed to identify any potential hazards or risks that may affect participation
 - Include protocols in the event of emergency
 - Obtain emergency contact details
- Weather assessment
 - If the club has the facilities, the program can be delivered indoors to eliminate the weather as a factor. However, consider the group you are working with and if there is a heightened risk associated with playing indoor on a harder surface (i.e. falls)
 - Please refer to the Everybody's Game weather policy for more information with regards to changing weather conditions
- Session plan
 - Walking football exercises and drills can be accessed from a number of resources, including Football South Australia. Additional links have been provided in the resources section. An example of a session is provided on pg 25.

- Location (surfaces)
 - Allocate a designated playing area every session to alleviate the risk of confusion of location
 - Other club members should not be prioritised for use of field
 - Check the evenness of the field prior to playing
- Session length
 - 2 hours, split 70/50 minutes
 - Walking football activities followed by an opportunity for socialisation over breakfast/coffee
 - Game/activity length - approximately 10-15 minutes
 - Observe participants, providing breaks as necessary
 - An example of the structure can be seen below



- Session times
 - It was identified that a morning session was the most suitable for the cohort involved with the pilot. Fatigue and weather were the main factors for opting for a morning session. Consider your participants and their needs.
 - Sessions can also be delivered after meal times where energy will be high (i.e. 1:30pm-2:00pm)
- Equipment
 - Use different coloured netting in the goals to clearly identify the targets for participants. If this is not possible, cones should be used in conjunction with the goals at each end to clearly identify the side they are scoring in
- Seating
 - Important to cater for family members that attend and to also provide respite for participants during breaks
- Shade
 - Highlighted as a major importance to provide protection from the elements (rain, wind, sun)
- Water
 - Dehydration, especially in warmer conditions can be a significant issue. For some individuals, water intake may be difficult for a number of reasons. Staff should remind participants to consume water.

Considerations:

- No two sessions will be the same. Coaches must be adaptable and be able to modify exercises and drills accordingly
- The coach should be approachable and welcoming
- Consult with the participants to understand their needs and wants. I.e. activities, break frequency
- Changing ends of attack after a break may cause confusion among some participants, depending on their condition
- Make it fun, and encourage interaction between participants
- Attempts should be made to continue regardless of the weather, by offering the alternatives for participants to still gather and socialise
- Consider your language. Some participants may interpret information quite literally. For example, 'Go stand on the red cone' may result in the participant standing on the red cone
- Provide and engage participants in valued roles around the club
- Implement COVID management given the higher risk for certain individuals
- Invite participants to social events and functions at the club.

Example Session

TEAM SIZE will depend on how many players turn up. Aim for 4v4 or 5v5. You may incorporate family members and carers if required. If there are many players, consider having substitutions or another field of play.

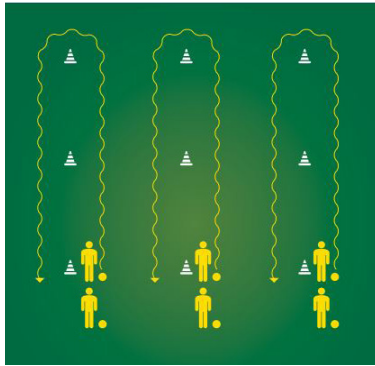
WARM UP will reduce the risk of injury and can prepare the participants for the activities. You may like to begin with walking and dynamic stretches, slowly incorporating exercises with the ball. Below is an example of a session you may deliver:



- Nominate one person from the group to be the 'leader' with all of the other players behind them.
- The person at the front will start walking around the pitch in different directions with everyone else copying them. Encourage 'leader' to make it fun
- Alternate the person at the front of the group so that different people get the opportunity to be involved.

Reminder: Players physical ability may vary, so remind the leader to be aware of the others.

Technical drills



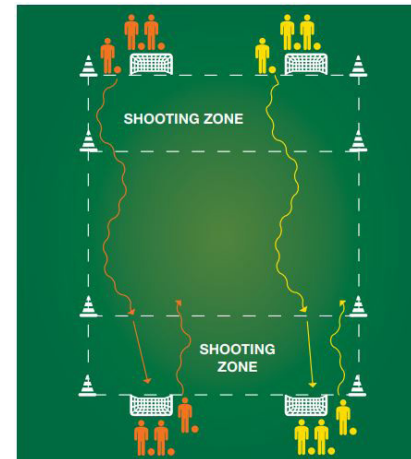
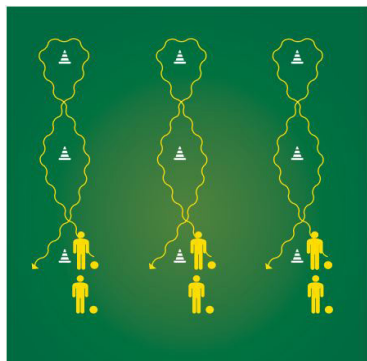
Drill #1
Dribbling relay

- Each player starts with a ball, dribbles around the marker (as shown in the diagram above) and returns to the start
 - Upon returning to the starting point, the next player starts the same pattern
 - Relays can be performed with and without the ball
- Tip:** Keep participants active and avoid long queues

Progression - Dribble in a figure 8 around markers (as shown in the diagram below)

- Encourage to use right/left foot only
- Encourage to use inside/outside of foot only

Progression
Figure 8

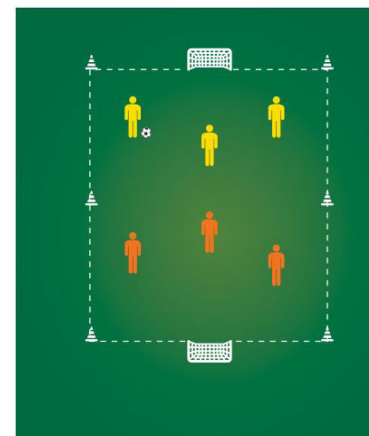


Drill #2
Shooting

- Small goals and a 5m-7m shooting line at each end.
- Players at each end with a ball; On the coach's signal the first player from one end will begin walking with the ball to the opposite goal.
- When they enter the shooting zone they pass/shoot the ball into the empty goal. As soon as the ball passes the goal line the next player can start walking with the ball in the opposite direction.

Note: The diagram illustrates two simultaneous shooting lanes, however, only use one if you have limited numbers.

Match play



- 3 v 3, 4 v 4, 5 v 5 (tailor to suit)
- "Just let them play"
- No goal keepers
- Encourage fun and team work
- Short games - 3 to 5 mins in length (with regular drink breaks)

Field dimensions: L 20m-25m x W 14m-18m

Knowledge Check

Q1. What does TREE stand for?

- a. Teaching Style, Regulations, Equipment, Environment
- b. Teaching Style, Rules, Equipment, Environment
- c. Time, Regulations, Equipment Environment
- d. Time, Rules, Equipment, Environment

Q2. The best approach to take when teaching a person living with a neurological condition would be to ...

- a. do whatever worked with another participant
- b. do whatever worked last time with this participant
- c. approach every session prepared to adapt, using what you know about the disease and what you have learned about the person to inform your actions

Q.3 Which phrase should we use when referring to someone who has a disability?

- a. "Disabled person"
- b. "Person with disability"

Q4. As someone providing support to individuals living with a neurological condition and their families, it is important that you ...

- a. Get to know the person's history, personalise every interaction to suit their interests and avoid taking over
- b. Get the task done as quickly as possible and move onto the next participant
- c. Talk about the negative things/aspects of the disease or appear uncomfortable or uncertain

Q5. When delivering walking football on a day where the temperature exceeds 36 degrees celcius, what should be done?

- a. Consult participants if they would like to play
- b. Provide shade & water
- c. Increase the frequency of breaks
- d. Minimise the length of game play
- e. Closely monitor participants conditions
- f. all of the above

Q6. Delivering the walking football session at 7:00pm is a suitable time for people living with a neurological condition (more specifically people with conditions that suffer from fatigue). True or False?

- a. True
- b. False

Q7. What are some of the modifications that can be made to the equipment?

- a. Size of the ball
- b. Size of the goals
- c. Colours of the cones
- d. Width of the goals
- f. all of the above

Q8. What is NOT a typical symptom of a neurological condition?

- a. Loss of memory
- b. Behaviour change
- c. Loss of balance/coordination
- d. Hair loss
- e. Paralysis

Useful Contacts

Inclusion Resources

Active Inclusion

Our mission is to continue supporting the South Australian community, individuals and families by delivering best practice inclusion and diversity programs and advice to local government, peak body organisations, businesses, local sporting clubs and recreation groups.

o www.activeinclusion.com.au

Play by the Rules

Play by the Rules provides information, resources, tools and free online training to increase the capacity and capability of administrators, coaches, officials, players, parents and spectators to assist them in preventing and dealing with discrimination, harassment, child safety, inclusion and integrity issues in sport.

o www.playbytherules.net.au

Inclusive SA

The South Australian Government is leading by example and working to improve access and inclusion for people with disability. Inclusive SA is our commitment to creating a more inclusive South Australia. It is our first State Disability Inclusion Plan, bringing together State Government agencies and local councils to reduce the barriers faced by people living with disability.

o www.inclusive.sa.gov.au/

Inclusion Training

Creating a Dementia Friendly Community

The Dementia-Friendly Communities program can help you make simple changes to support people living with dementia. Get the tools, resources and support you need to make a difference. This is your invitation to join Dementia Australia's community of dementia friendly businesses and organisations

o www.dementiafriendly.org.au/get-involved

Active Inclusion

Active Inclusion can tailor quality interactive and relevant training solutions to support your staff to understand the drivers of success and get results.

From practical advice and program frameworks; problem solving and communication techniques; and engaging service delivery models we understand that inclusion affects more than 'the bottom line'.

o www.activeinclusion.com.au/active-inclusion/training/

National Disability Service

National Disability Services (NDS) is Australia's peak body for non-government disability service organisations.

o www.nds.org.au/events-and-training/all-events-and-training/disability-aware-an-awareness-and-inclusion-program-2515

Peak Bodies

Information regarding specific conditions:

Dementia Australia

- www.dementia.org.au/

Parkinson's SA (The Hospital Research Fund)

- www.fightingparkinsons.org.au/

Stroke SA

- www.stroke.org.au/

Stroke Foundation

- www.strokefoundation.org.au/

MS Society SA & NT

- www.ms.asn.au/

Huntington's SA & NT

- www.huntingtonssant.org.au/

MND South Australia

- www.mndsa.org.au/

EG Resource Kit

Click here to access the Everybody's Game resource kit and templates

Walking Football resources

For additional drills and information:

The (English) Football Association Walking Football Toolkit

- www.somersetfa.com/players/ways-to-play/walking-football

Football Australia Coaching Resources

- www.playfootball.com.au/coach/footbballaus-resources

Football South Australia

- www.footballsouthaustralia.com.au/walking-football

Answers to knowledge check questions

Q1. B (Teaching style, Rules, Equipment, Environment)

Q2. C approach every session prepared to adapt, using what you know about the disease and what you have learned about the person to inform your actions

Q3. B "Person with disability"

Q4. A Get to know the person's history, personalise every interaction to suit their interests and avoid taking over

Q5. F all of the above

Q6. B False

Q7. F all of the above

Q8. D Hair loss

We would like to extend our thanks to the Everybody's Game Reference Group and anyone involved for their keen insights and valuable contribution to the development of the inclusive football model and resource kit.

*Anyone in close association with the person with disability can be regarded as a 'family member' or supporter regardless of whether or not they are related.

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ACH Group is a not-for-profit community organisation promoting opportunities and services to support good lives for older people since 1952.

Let's talk **1300 22 44 77** Visit **achgroup.org.au**

