



## BECAUSE I CAN

### Introduction

The Eastern Collaborative Project (ECP) partnered with the Southern Services Reform Group (SSRG) to develop a workshop promoting consumer independence, well-being, quality of life and capacity to remain living in a community of choice.

This innovative program is based on principles that reflect a self-management model: client-centred practice, managing your own care and support, partnership and active participation, informed decision making and goal orientated practice embedded into a solution focused approach.

### Background

In 2005 members of the Eastern Collaborative Project (ECP) commenced a journey using self-management techniques as a tool for community wellbeing. There appeared obvious synergies with the ideal of consumer empowerment leading to more choice and control in how people lived their lives.

The ECP was a founding member of the South Australian Self Management Alliance (SASMA), but felt that there were further opportunities to embed the principles within the broader community care sector as opposed to solely within the chronic disease management arena.

The SSRG joined the South Australian Self Management Alliance (SASMA) in 2012 with the goal to utilise self management principles more broadly in the aged care sector.

As a master trainer in the Stanford Chronic Disease self Management program, the SSRG project officer had been involved in a number of programs that centred on empowerment, motivation and self-management. This included a Carers Health Project (Carers Australia, 2008) which evaluated health and wellbeing in programs adapted from self-management models, adult education methods and the Cultural Respect framework.

### Research and evidence

The Because I Can program was initially written by consultants, Leap SA, in response to a project plan produced by the ECP and SSRG. The work was inspired by the Stanford Chronic Disease Self-Management model which was developed by Professor Kate Lorig and others at the Stanford School of Medicine, Stanford University in California (2006). This model focuses on peer leadership - participants learn from each other through sharing experiences and collective problem solving.

Using an action research methodology the workshop program was delivered to 104 participants in 9 separate trials that informed program modifications and review. The changes included the development of the Driving Wheel resource and the concept of a Tool Kit (goal setting, decision making and problem solving) to overcome barriers to arrive at the Destinations (eat wisely, natural exercise, managing tiredness, understanding emotions, relaxation and breathing, belonging and support networks, positive self talk and communication skills).