

Press Release

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Its time to Switch in Australia with launch of flash walking sticks

Sydneysider Fiona Chapman launches range of stylish walking sticks for the Australian market.

Many people find that at some time in their life they need a mobility aid – or as you and I know it, a walking stick. We are all living longer and there are now over 2.6 million Australians who are over 65. Also it is estimated by the SADC that one in five Aussies young and old have some form of disability. So, many people rely on a stick at some point in their life and up until now their choice has been limited to dull hospital issued sticks or just what's on offer at the local chemist. Fiona intends to change this with the launch of Switch Sticks.

Started in the UK last year by her sister, the business has grown and now supplies many retail outlets as well as selling on the Internet. The sticks are funky, bright and colourful, made of aluminium and are aimed at all ages with a sense of style. They are lightweight, adjustable, fold up to just 25cm and come with a cool little carry case. There are 7 different designs incorporating a range of colours including hot pink, bright blue, emerald green, khakis, earth tones, pillar box red and bold black.

“When I saw what my sister and aunt had created, how great they looked and of course how well they were selling, I thought to myself why not set up a branch in Sydney. We're living longer and I know loads of people who have needed the use of a stick – why not have it as a fashion accessory”, Fiona said.

Vicky Mitchell, Founder of Switch Sticks, said:

“I am delighted Fiona is opening our Australian office - the idea for Switch Sticks was created following the experience of my Aunt. She had to use a walking stick after a hip replacement and we couldn't believe there were no colourful or fashionable sticks available.

We are all hoping Switch Sticks will provide older and less able people with more colour and fun in their lives. Today the walking stick is a functional but dull product and frequently an indictment of people's declining health and old age. I would like Switch to do to walking sticks, what Swatch did to watches, allowing choice, variety and style at an affordable price. I simply do not believe that safety and practicality cannot be combined with fashion and fun. Switch Sticks aims to offer a fresh and funky alternative for those who need to use a stick for whatever reason.”

Switch Sticks has begun selling their unique walking stick designs through mail order in Oz and Fiona who already has an extensive network of medical contacts hopes to use them to expand throughout the country. “I know there will be demand over here – Aussies love fashion and have a great sense of fun – I'm sure they will be popular. Just because you need help walking, why shouldn't you look good too!” So if you need a stick, and have a sense of style – perhaps you should think of switching...

Switch Sticks retail from \$49.95 + P&P, are presented in a stylish gift box and can be bought using mail order through 37 Duke Street, East Balmain, 2041 NSW, email oz@switchsticks.com for more info or visit www.switchsticks.com.au.

Further Switch Sticks designs, including limited editions, will be unveiled in the future

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For more information please contact:

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Notes to editors

Switch Sticks

Switch Sticks is the modern new walking sticks company for all ages. Switch Sticks aim to combine everyday practical use with high-street fashion to provide the user with both comfort and style. The sticks are suitable for a variety of uses including coping with a medical condition, providing a cheeky and colourful symbol against mobility difficulties caused by old age or disability or even just as a simple fashion item to accessorise an outfit. Importantly, the sticks are manufactured by a company with a wealth of experience in the production of medical devices and will come with a CE certification.

Founded by Vicky Mitchell and her Aunt Jean Smith in 2005 the company produces high quality and innovatively designed walking sticks for all walks of life!

Vicky's skills in sales and marketing and Jean's nursing and retail background have come together to create a company that provides people with sticks that compliment their style and outlook. No longer will those with mobility problems have to endure boring mobility aids.

Fiona emigrated to Australia from London in 1994 with her Australian husband, a professor in Obstetrics & Gynaecology, with her then young family of 3. She has spent much of her life working in the field of embryology and is very aware of patient care and the fact that an ever expanding range of more appropriate products are helping patients deal with a variety of medical conditions.

