

## THE FACTS

### Some Facts About Queensland's Disability System

#### Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme

- There are approximately **1,890,800 Australians using aids and equipment to assist with activities of daily living.**<sup>6</sup>
- **1 in 10** (425,320) used equipment or an aid to help them cope with their condition or manage with their everyday life.<sup>1</sup>
- A further 85,064 Queenslanders living in private dwellings made modifications to their home to enable them to cope with restrictions to their activity level or to continue to live in their homes.<sup>1</sup>
- **The Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme does not have strategies to deal with repairs and maintenance of aids and equipment.**

#### Hospital and Community Health Care

- Existing admissions and/or discharge planning procedures for people with disability entering and exiting the public hospital system are **not inclusive of families, carers, friends, allies and support staff.**
- Between 1 April 2006 and 3 June 2006, the Community Visitor Program identified 732 new health care issues with an additional 378 around support **indicating that community health care issues for people with a decision-making disability in Queensland requires immediate attention.**<sup>1</sup>

#### Personal Care

- **1 in 5 Queenslanders has a disability.**<sup>1</sup> Of these 850 640 Queenslanders living with a disability 3578 are listed as waiting for services as at November 2006.<sup>2</sup>
- **DSQ provided funding to 82 new clients** in Queensland between July and December 2008.<sup>3</sup>
- Between July and November 2008, **58 Adult Lifestyle Support Program applications were made by people with disability** living in the Darling Downs-South West Queensland Region. According to the Minister for Disability Services **no funding rounds in any region around the State were granted** in this period indicating no packages were granted.<sup>4</sup>
- A Senate Committee Report into Funding and operation of the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA) made the following recommendation: **the fourth CSTDA commit to substantial and additional funding to address identified unmet need for specialist disability services** (particularly, accommodation services and support).<sup>5</sup>

#### References

1 Australian Bureau Statistics (ABS), 2008. Population statistics as at March 2008.

2 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2007. Current and future demand for specialist disability services. Disability series. Cat. No. DIS 50. Canberra: AIHW. These figures do not include those who apply for support directly through an individualised service provider or those who never apply for government funded supports.

3 Queensland Government, 2009. Letter from Minister for Disability Services, The Honourable Lindy Nelson-Carr MP, dated 9 January 2009.

4 Statistics provided by Member for Cunningham, Mr Stuart Copeland, dated 12 January 2009.

5 The Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs, 2007. Senate Committee Report: Funding and operation of the Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement. Canberra: Parliament House.

6 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2003. Population Statistics.

For more information, please visit the Disability Alliance website  
[www.disabilityalliance.org.au](http://www.disabilityalliance.org.au)

## THE STORIES

### Stories from fellow Queenslanders living with disability

While statistics play an important role in highlighting the issues and impacts on people with disability, personal stories are powerful in a way that statistics are unable to be. They lessen the emotional distance between yourself and your audience. Here are just three of the many thousands of stories from fellow Queenslanders living with disability:

#### **Bobby talks about his experience trying to secure a wheelchair:**

I had a wheelchair it was half and half, it was broken. Things were collapsing and wheels were falling off. I had to wait 12 months for my new wheelchair. My old wheelchair, one day it collapsed on me. It's not right - a person shouldn't have to wait 12 months when your own wheelchair is broken – and they know it's broken – it's not right!

#### **Rachel needs interpreters for the care of her child**

I'm not very happy with the Hospitals when they forget to organize Interpreters, and so they don't arrive. I went to the Hospital when I was pregnant and there was no Interpreter booked. I was very emotional at that time and did not know what to do.

Being concerned about my pregnancy I had to use a written form of communication. This did not suit me as English is my second language. I was uncertain as to what they were telling me – as I needed a Sign Language Interpreter to help me communicate. It was the fourth time an Interpreter did not arrive. This is a problem for me when Interpreters are not booked, so I try to use pen and paper to communicate but it's not the same, and I get upset. I try to do the best for my baby. I want to be well informed for my child's sake. I need the Interpreters so I can communicate.

Some people think I'm not good enough so I try very hard in reading books. I also email my sister and mother who live in Adelaide to ask questions and get information on how to look after my baby. I am not happy that Interpreters are not booked – it has happened four times.

#### **Uncertain times for Steve as funding is withdrawn**

Approximately 20 years ago, Steve was involved in a car accident and following a lengthy stay in hospital, was eventually able to move into his own home in the community.

Steve was provided with minimal support of approximately 25 hours per week to assist him with personal care, cleaning and accessing the community. Over the years Steve's care needs have increased, while at the same time the 25 hours of support he originally received eroded to 20, to 18 and now is 15 hours of support per week.

Steve's relationship with his service provider deteriorated to the point where the service provider has stopped providing support. They can do this because Steven is under a block funding arrangement. Steve has been told that he will need to find another service provider and that he will be provided with Emergency and Crisis non-recurrent funding which will be reassessed after 12 weeks.

Steve now finds this situation extremely stressful as his funding is no longer recurrent and there is no guarantee it will continue after the initial 12 week period. Steve has been given no assurances that he will continue to get funding or with which service provider.

Steve has not been told when the next funding round will be announced or what will happen if he is not successful in obtaining recurrent funding. (Story adapted from SUFY Annual Report, July 2007-June 2008)

For further stories please feel free to visit the Disability Alliance website [www.disabilityalliance.org.au](http://www.disabilityalliance.org.au)

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT WE ARE TALKING ABOUT REAL PEOPLE LIVING REAL LIVES IN QUEENSLAND, YOUR FRIEND, YOUR FAMILY MEMBER, YOUR CO-WORKER, YOUR NEIGHBOUR. THESE ARE YOUR STORIES AND THEY ARE POWERFUL**