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Logan man Brendon Woolf takes on NDIS over funding assessment

A Logan man, who became one of the first in the state to use his NDIS payments to move into his own unit, is appealing his funding allocation.



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Brendon Woolf in his new apartment, which prompted him to challenge the amount of NDIS funding he receives.

A wheelchair-bound Logan man is taking the NDIS to court after it shattered his dream of living independently.

Brendon Woolf, 36, who has cerebral palsy, is challenging the National Disability Insurance Scheme over the amount of funds it allocated him.

He has lodged a complaint with the Administrative Appeals Tribunal, after he was deemed not disabled enough to get top-level funding for a unit of his own.

[His dream of moving into his own state-of-the-art unit came true two years ago](#) when he was allocated a soon-to-be-built apartment at Loganlea.

But his plans were shattered when his NDIS assessment only awarded him a third of the funds needed to pay for it

Mr Woolf was told if he could not afford the unit, he would have to find share accommodation with two other disabled people.



Participant Brendon Woolf outside his new home while it was being constructed in Neridah St, Loganlea.

In April, he took his fight over how he was assessed and the level of financial help he would receive to the tribunal in a bid to get his own NDIS-funded apartment.

Despite the funding dispute, this week he became the first NDIS recipient to move into one of the 10 new one-bedroom units in Loganlea.

Even though he is not sharing the unit, his NDIS annual allowance of \$38,000 is well under the \$90,000

required to pay for maintenance and other costs associated with remaining living in the new apartment.

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In his complaint to the tribunal, Mr Woolf said he would be forced to start looking for new “share” accommodation if his payments were not increased in line with what authorities have already recommended.

Treasurer Josh Frydenberg has revealed a further \$13.2 billion will be invested over four years to "meet the needs of Australians with a disability" stating "under the Coalition, the NDIS will always be fully funded". "The NDIS has made Australia a better country, profoundly improving the lives of people with a disability and their families," he said. "A new wheelchair, home modifications, care in the home, and transport to work. Today 450,000 people are receiving disability support. In the last year alone, more than 100,000 people have joined the scheme." Mr Frydenberg also revealed the commitment of \$17.7 billion in new funding to significantly improve the aged care system, funding another 80,000 new home care packages, bringing the total to 275,000. "We will increase the time nurses and carers are required to spend with residents," he said. "We will make an additional payment of \$10 per resident per day to enhance the viability and sustainability of the residential aged care system. We will support over 33,000 new training places for personnel carers and new personal carers, and a new Indigenous workforce. "We will provide retention bonuses to keep more aged care nurses in aged care, we will increase the respite care for nurses, and strengthen the regulatory regime to monitor and enforce standards of care. We will upgrade essential aged care infrastructure in regional and remote areas around the country." This investment brings record investment in aged care to over \$119 billion over the next four years. "We are committed to restoring trust in the system and allowing Australians to age with dignity and respect," the treasurer said.

“My case is about getting my NDIS SDA (Specialist Disability Accommodation) approval changed to a level of funding needed to live on my own as independently as possible,” he said.

“I am doing this because I believe the National Disability Insurance Agency and the SDA panel were not listening to what I was wanting or what my allied health professionals were recommending.

“Unfortunately, however, the NDIS has dismissed the recommendations I made along with my allied health professionals in relation to where I choose and want to live.

“Instead of moving into my own individual apartment fulfilling my main goal of living as independently as

possible, as outlined in my NDIS plan, the NDIS chose to disregard these ambitions and go for what they deemed was suitable for me.

“I believe that goes against everything the NDIS stands for such as choice and control of participants’ support and living arrangements.”



Logan man Brendon Woolf does the washing up in his new home at Loganlea.

Despite Mr Woolf making three attempts to appeal the funding decision made in February, NDIS review department has closed the investigation, sticking to its original funding allocation.

Mr Woolf said despite his concerns, he was happy with Adapt Housing, which co-ordinated the boutique apartment project in Loganlea and helped him realise his dream.

The site includes 10 one-bedroom apartments and two, onsite overnight accommodation units for service providers.

Demand for specialist disability accommodation has risen across southeast Queensland in the past three years, prompting a massive 447 per cent increase in development projects in Queensland between since December 2018.

But despite the surge in building, there was still a huge deficit for the accommodation in Logan according to a report in March last year from Specialist Disability Accommodation Supply.

It found 152 people required housing in Logan but only 29 dwellings were built in the past year.

Only four of the apartments have tenants ready to move into the complex on completion.

Adapt Housing CEO David Whitelaw said many with disabilities were unaware they could now use the NDIS to pay for their accommodation.

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“Many residents living in Logan, who qualify for specialist disability accommodation, may not be aware that they can access brand-new specifically designed, local housing for very little cost under the NDIS,” he said.

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