

Submission
No 57

**THE PROGRAM OF APPLIANCES FOR DISABLED
PEOPLE (PADP)**

Name: Ms Jackie Kay AM JP

Date received: 5/09/2008

Dear Ms. Duffy,

I apologise for my tardy submission regarding this inquiry. I am currently in China attending the Parlympic Sailing competition in Qingdao (as a guest of IPC).

I have had Multiple Sclerosis for twenty-six years, using a wheelchair 100% for 8 years. I have had only one experience with PADP, after which I decided not to attempt obtain further funding.

In 1995 when I needed to procure a wheelchair because of the difficulty I had in walking I was pointed towards PADP. At that time I was able to walk a few steps and drive my car. I therefore needed a lightweight wheelchair that I could easily fold and lift into my car so I could walk a few steps to the driver's seat.

PADP advised that I could only receive minimal funding (about \$700 from memory). The type of wheelchair that I could purchase for that amount was not suitable because they are too heavy and cumbersome. I therefore accepted the \$700 and added another \$1,500 of my own money so that I could purchase the right wheelchair for my then current needs. That high quality, lightweight wheelchair has served me well for all that time.

I never again applied to PADP for any type of equipment assistance as the attitude of PADP personnel was that of intolerance, making me feel that I was begging for favours and I should be grateful for PADP's assistance - even if that assistance was not catering to my actual needs.

To obtain the \$700 from PADP I needed to make an application and wait for several months before the funding was approved. Luckily I was in a position to wait, but since then as I have needed additional equipment I have not been able to go on a waiting list but need the equipment immediately.

I am a proud and independent person. Rather than be made feel beholden for equipment that I physically need, I would rather go without or save up and purchase what I actually need - when I need it.

I hope that in the future PADP could be made more "user friendly", dealing with applications in a timely manner, managed by well-trained and efficient staff who are able to accurately assess the needs of the applicants, without the applicants feeling like unworthy recipients of charity.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need additional information. I will be back in Australia on Sept 20.

Best regards

Jackie Kay A.M., J.P.