

**Submission
No 7**

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

Name: Mr Evan Starling

Date received: 4/08/2008

The Director

General Purpose Standing Committee No 2

Parliament House

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Re: Inquiry Into The Program Of Appliances For Disabled People (PADP)

My name is Evan Starling and I have been disabled from a very early stage of my life. I am now 35 years of age and have had total need for the use of a wheel chair for the last 20 years. I am unable to walk.

My disability is Charcot Marie Tooth Disease (CMT) also referred to a muscular atrophy. Essentially my disability is the lack of muscle development below the elbows and knees and this has impacted on my life style considerably to the extent that my only means of mobility is with a wheel chair. Fortunately I can still drive a car with the aid of disability adaptations.

During the past 20 years I have had a need for four wheel chairs. The first two chairs were factory made glide models provided through PADP. As my medical condition deteriorated, I found there was a need for a more specialized wheel chair to assist me with mobility and I sought the input of Mogo Pty Limited who design and manufacture a wheelchair to assist a person's disability.

Naturally in moving towards a designed and manufactured wheelchair the costs grow compared to a factory produced glide model that is issued under the PADP scheme.

My medical condition precludes me from working and therefore my finances that rely on an invalid pension do not go any where near towards meeting the cost of a Mogo produced wheelchair. In this regard my father has paid for the past two Mogo chairs that I have required. The most recent being \$3,756.30 for which I applied to PADP some seven months ago through the Mona Vale Hospital and was assessed by an occupational therapist (OT) as to my needs. Not surprising, the OT was not aware of my CMT medical condition and had not heard of Mogo, which is one of the leading manufacturers of specialized wheelchairs. What really concerns me is the need to be assessed by an OT when my medical condition has been known to my general practitioner for many years and is aware of my wheelchair needs. I believe it would be more appropriate for medical practitioners to sign off on PADP

requirements and eliminate OTs which can further delay the submission for assistance due to the lengthy wait to be seen by an OT.

When a replacement wheelchair is required, unnecessary lengthy delays with the decision making process through PADP, generally means that alternate finance has to be found to purchase the wheelchair. My parents are ageing and are now reliant on an aged pension, and financial assistance may be a thing of the past. Similarly my parents have had to finance the purchase of my car to afford me a degree of mobility.

Could I please enquire if the Committee has representatives from the disabled community amongst their committee members so that balanced and equitable input to the findings of the committee will be achieved? In this regard, I would like to make myself available. I am educated to HSC levels with a diploma in counseling and some years of experience working as an advocacy support person to people with disabilities.

Yours faithfully

Evan Starling

31/7/2008