



Speech by

Mrs J. SHELDON

MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA

Hansard 1 August 2001

MEDICAL AIDS SUBSIDY SCHEME

Mrs SHELDON (Caloundra—Lib) (10.21 a.m.): I wish to raise an issue about the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme and how it is underfunded by this state government. In particular, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the son of Denise McNamara, Andrew McNamara, of 19 Helm Crescent, Wurtulla, in which she says that her son had waited for a wheelchair for well over 12 months. When it was unloaded from the truck it was filthy dirty, it took two days to clean, the cushions smelt awful and oozed a thick gooey substance, the colour scheme was all over the place—purple chipped paint, black and white head rest, blue arm rests and rusting—the two tyres were flat, and when they were pumped up they went flat again. After inquiring for some considerable period she was given two very heavy, thick tyres which would not work. Finally the chair was made usable by the community which came to her rescue after a radio interview was held.

She further brings to attention the fact that she has become aware of other families enduring the same sorts of problems over the past two years. One such case involved a girl from Kawana Waters State High School who has spina bifida and who has had the same manual wheelchair from year 8 to year 12. She has been waiting for a new chair for two years. Many children attending the Currimundi Special School have been on waiting lists for manual chairs for three to four years. A gentleman who lives here in Brisbane and who suffers from Becker muscular dystrophy has had his request for a power-operated wheel chair knocked back on several occasions because he can still stand up to urinate. He has suffered numerous injuries due to his falling constantly, and the doctors believe that has resulted from his not been issued with a chair.

What we see here are young children being left and neglected by this state government because it will not adequately fund the Medical Aids Subsidy Scheme. When people need a wheelchair in which to get around and to get to school, as this young boy—Andrew—did, and cannot have it supplied in a fit state to use, let alone the use to which an ordinary person would want to put it, and when it is supplied in a filthy, dirty unworkable condition, they have to ask: isn't it an insult after waiting 12 months to then be delivered with such a chair? This needs attention, and it is needed right now.
