




Speech by

Seath Holswich

MEMBER FOR PINE RIVERS

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ACQUIRED BRAIN INJURIES

 **Mr HOLSWICH** (Pine Rivers—LNP) (2.58 pm): Last month I had the humbling opportunity to spend a day with families who have been impacted by acquired brain injuries. I cannot even begin to comprehend what it must be like for a family, who are living a fairly average life, to have their world turned upside down in an instant by an accident or a virus that leaves one of their family with an acquired brain injury.

For someone with an acquired brain injury, to have any chance of recovery requires intense physiotherapy and intense treatment over a sustained period. The cost of this treatment to families as well as the emotional and physical burden it places on the immediate family are overwhelming to comprehend. What I experienced in this short visit with these families is not so much that life goes on hold while they care for their loved one but more that their life changes forever so they can provide the level of care and treatment required.

I also learned more during this experience about the failures of our health system and our society in general to provide adequate support to people with disabilities and their families. It appears that, if you want to give your loved one any chance of recovery from acquired brain injury, you need to fight against the system in order for it to happen. It appeared to me that the worse your injury, the more chance there is that you will be put in the too-hard basket. It is a shameful situation when people are treated this way.

It is for those reasons that I am pleased to support organisations such as Brainwaves, which is an organisation that is based in the Moreton Bay region that is in the process of setting up a therapy and support service in the region for sufferers of acquired brain injury and their families. Local organisations such as Brainwaves are offering hope to families and offering a chance of recovery for sufferers. But when your loved one requires six to eight hours of physiotherapy and rehabilitation every day of every week then it is not long before constant therapy simply becomes too expensive for any family.

Whilst the National Disability Insurance Scheme will not solve every problem, a properly funded NDIS will go a long way towards ensuring that those suffering from disabilities are given more of the treatment and care that they require and deserve. It is time that the federal government finds a way to properly fund the NDIS to ensure that we can see dramatic improvements in the level of care provided to those with disabilities.

Brainwaves and other organisations like them operate on a shoestring budget and exist only because of the dedication of a committed team of volunteers. I commend them for the work they are undertaking and hope for their sake and for the sake of all of those in our community with acquired brain injuries that the introduction of a properly funded NDIS will not remain simply a pipedream.