

Media Release

For immediate release

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NDIS Participant fights for improvements in support to young people at Aged Care Royal Commission

James Nutt was severely injured at age 19 in a serious assault leaving him with a significant disability. James was forced into Aged Care services for several years as a young man because other services weren't available. It took him 14 years to find suitable services and accommodation with Summer Foundation supported by Disability Support Provider, Ability Options.

James believes it was imperative for him to appear before the commission to present his story. He stated,

"I believe every Australian should have choice, control and independence to make our decisions. I want everyone to know my story as it should not happen to anyone else".

James has made massive efforts supported by his service provider Ability Options to submit a statement to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety and he has travelled from Newcastle to Melbourne to tell his story in person, supported by two Disability Support Workers.

"The teams from Ability Options and Summer Foundation have really supported James to ensure his story is heard and to change services for the better" said Julia Squire CEO Ability Options

Danielle Hazelwood, Manager – Support Coordination at Ability Options, said

“James is really passionate about appearing before the Royal Commission, so we contributed by providing supports to James to travel to Melbourne from his home in Belmont. It took us about 20-25 hours of coordination hours to plan the logistics. The main focus was to ensure flights and accommodation were suitable for James’ complex support needs and for him to have the support of the Disability Support Workers he has chosen.

James’ story could help change services for people with a disability forever and we are proud to be part of his efforts. He’s a very determined gentleman and we are doing everything we can to help. The Commission has also been fabulous in enabling James to be there in person”

Julia Squire added

“ Even though James’ flights, transfers and accommodation have been taken care of by the Royal commission, he has had to dip into his NDIS funding for the additional hours required for support coordination as well as, two 24/7 support workers for the visit. This means that the appearance in Melbourne at the Royal Commission has been a direct cost to James personally. We hope this can be addressed and also by the Royal Commission into Violence Abuse and Neglect in Disability to help everyone who wishes to tell their story”

Contact **Sam Fenton** for more information or interviews

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