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For NDIS participant Lee, hearing loss has always been part of life.

‘My parents first noticed I wasn’t responding to sounds when I was a baby,’ he said.

‘From 6 months they were fortunate to secure funding to support me through Hearing Australia.’

Today, the 30-year-old is doing more than building his own future – he’s helping build much-needed homes for Australians.

Working in the construction industry during a nationwide housing shortage, Lee credits government-funded hearing supports, first through childhood hearing programs and later through the NDIS, with giving him the confidence and certainty to build a successful career, marry the love of his life and plan for a family of his own.

Growing up, hearing assessments and hearing aids were par for the course for Lee.

Through the publicly-funded Hearing Services Program, he got the support he needed to communicate, learn and participate alongside his peers.

At 26, Lee was no longer eligible to continue in the Hearing Services Program, so he applied for the NDIS. He met the access criteria and felt fortunate to know he was eligible for further support.

‘My NDIS funding is incredibly important to me because it removes a major source of stress from my life,’ he said.
‘Living with a hearing disability can be challenging and without this support I’d be worried constantly about how I was going to afford the equipment and services I need.’

Lee relies on specialised equipment that can be costly to buy and maintain. Through his NDIS funding, he can access hearing aids, repairs, maintenance and audiology support.

‘I don’t have to worry about unexpected costs or delays if I need repairs, adjustments or new moulds. It means I can continue functioning at my best.’

The benefits go well beyond hearing.

Lee said NDIS funding has allowed him to focus on his career, relationships and long-term goals.

‘It’s given me greater independence, stability and confidence in my future,’ he said.

‘Now I’m married, I’m a homeowner and looking to starting a family. It’s a huge relief to know my disability-related expenses won’t impact our plans or limit the life we want to build together.’

Professionally, Lee has thrived.

After gaining a Bachelor of Construction Management (Honours) and a Certificate III in Carpentry, he has moved up into senior leadership as a trades manager.

Communication is at the heart of his work.

‘Around 95% of my job is communicating with trades, site managers, construction managers and more,’ he said.

Every day Lee coordinates people, solves problems and ensures work keeps moving.

‘Without my hearing supports, I couldn’t do my job the way I do. If I didn’t have all this help, it wouldn’t be possible.’

Lee’s story demonstrates how disability supports benefit not only participants, but the wider community.

With confidence his disability-related hearing needs are covered, Lee’s been able to build a successful career in one of Australia’s most important industries, contributing his skills to deliver homes for others while building a secure future for his own family.

Lee believes Australians are fortunate to have access to schemes that provide this kind of support.

For Lee, the NDIS has done more than fund hearing supports. It’s provided certainty, independence and the opportunity to contribute his skills where they are needed most, while giving him the confidence to plan for the future, knowing his hearing loss won’t stand in the way of him achieving his goals.

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