



- **Little bit about myself and My communication problem**

My name is [REDACTED]. My communication disorder is a moderate to severe stutter that I had since I was about four years old child.

Myself, my brother and parents migrated to New Zealand in 1997 we became New Zealand citizens and then we migrated to Australia in 2003. I became an Australian citizen in 2008.

I have completed three university degrees both in Australia and New Zealand. I am currently working full time [REDACTED] in Melbourne.

- **How I found out that I have a communication problem**

I am an extroverted stutterer. I started noticing it when I was about five years old. It is obvious that I stutter because both myself and others notice whenever I stutter. When I was going through primary and secondary school other kids were making fun of my stutter and bullied me because of my stutter.

- **Your experience of communication disorder**

It is a very debilitating disorder because it affects every aspect my life from day today communication with family and friends to forming relationships, job interviews etc. It has a profound effect on my self esteem. I am struggling to communicate effectively with my work colleagues and other members of the community. So, my stutter is not a pleasant experience in any shape or form.

- **How it has impacted on your life (things that you do, or no longer can do because of your communication or swallowing difficulty)**

It is hard for me to communicate effectively during job interviews because I missed out on jobs that require reasonable communication skills. I believe I am a very intelligent person who has a great potential to achieve greater goals in life and serve the community in a very

productive manner. Also, I suffer from anxiety and depression due to my stutter. It's directly affecting my quality of life.

- **If you have worked with a speech pathologist, how it has helped**

I have worked with a speech pathologist for about three months through the University of Otago, New Zealand. It was a free service available for students. The techniques that they wanted me to practice did not make a significant improvement to my speech.

- **How and where you access speech pathology services, whether you had to wait and whether you have received enough services. Even if you did have to wait or didn't get the services you needed, tell the Senators how that has affected you.**

I lost my faith on Speech pathology since my first experience. I have joined the McGuire programme in 2011. Since I joined the programme my speech improved but there is lot more work to be done to become a fluent speaker.

I would like to see more resources allocate to people who stutter to become confident speakers, communicate effectively and to become productive members of the community.

For example:

- Access subsidised counseling services for stutterers who suffer from anxiety and depression.
- Government funded mentor programme for stutterers.
- Career counseling for stutterers in order for them to face interviews confidently.

Thank you,

Yours faithfully