

## Hevi's Story

Hevi is a woman in her mid-30's living with her young daughter in a small town. A few years ago she was involved in a car accident which left her in a wheelchair. This led to some very difficult years for Hevi and her daughter, having to adjust to some big changes in their lives. With the help of her health professionals, Hevi made a successful application to the NDIS. For the last two years she has received financial assistance to pay for the support and therapeutic services she needs. Unfortunately in the last few months Hevi has noticed the service she employs to provide her with support work each day is not as good as it used to be. She is getting a different support worker every few days, they are often late, and her attempts to speak to someone about her concern hasn't improved the situation.

### Self-Advocacy Steps:

1. Connect with self-belief and personal support:

After initially feeling helpless and upset about the situation, Hevi reminds herself why she applied for an NDIS package. It was to help make her life easier not harder, so if things aren't going well she should speak up. Hevi also discusses the situation with her neighbour, with whom she is good friends and who has helped her find out how to navigate challenging situations in the past. Her friend encourages her to take her concerns further and not just ignore her feelings of upset and stress.

2. Identify your needs and wants:

Hevi identifies the need to speak with the person who manages the support workers, not the receptionist who hasn't been helpful when she has tried to raise her concerns before.

3. Research your self-advocacy pathway:

With the help of her neighbour, Hevi finds information on the service's website about who the manager is, including his contact details.

4. Clarify your rights:

Hevi and her neighbour also take the time to read through some information on the NDIS website together, which helps Hevi to feel more confident of her rights when she is accessing a service.

5. Make a plan:

Together in conversation with her friend, Hevi decides to write an email to the manager. She still finds it challenging to have conversations confidently in English, so she knows that an email she has prepared in advance will be easier. It will also mean she has a record of her interaction with the manager.

6. Communicate clearly and respectfully:

Hevi then writes a brief email to the manager of the service, outlining her concerns, her attempts to address the situation already, and the outcome she is hoping for.

7. Document and follow up:

Hevi chooses to only communicate by email so that everything is fully documented and she can put a lot of thought into what she says and how she says it. With English being her second language, Hevi feels more confident with her neighbour helping her, and by going over what she has written making sure it is right.

Outcome:

Hevi receives an email response from the manager of the service apologising for the issues she has been having. He acknowledges that they have had a lot of illness in the support worker team lately which has made it hard to provide a consistent service. He shares that they have employed additional support workers to address this and that he is working with the team around issues such as worker consistency and arriving on time to ensure that clients are not being negatively impacted. The manager asks Hevi to be in touch with him again if she doesn't see an improvement in the service she is receiving within two weeks.

*If this story resonates for you and has inspired you to start your own self-advocacy journey please see our [Self-Advocacy Resources](#) and [Contact Details](#) page to help you get started.*