



**THE HON JUSTINE ELLIOT MP
MINISTER FOR AGEING**

Mr Peter Demmery
2/8 Park Street
PORT MACQUARIE NSW 2444

Dear Mr Demmery

Thank you for meeting with the Minister for Human Services, the Hon Chris Bowen MP, and I during the Community Cabinet Meeting held in Port Macquarie on 25 August 2009.

In the meeting you raised concerns in regards to the need for support for speech processor upgrades for Disability Support Pensioners with a cochlear implant.

As acknowledged by the Prime Minister, in his comments during the public forum, there are gaps in the current provision of hearing services. During our discussion, you conveyed the range of difficulties and expenses incurred by your son Luke, and other people in similar situations, in replacing cochlear implant speech processors.

The Government will consider the issue of support for Disability Support Pensioners with a cochlear implant within the Hearing Services Program. However, as you acknowledge, the change that you are proposing would have significant policy and funding implications that require broader Government consideration.

I hope that you found the meeting of benefit and wish you all the best in your endeavours.

Yours sincerely

JUSTINE ELLIOT

16 OCT 2009