Posted on:
23 May 2024

Maintaining her independence, spending time with family and volunteering is what keeps Kerry Kievit smiling.

Diagnosed at 35 with Multiple Sclerosis (MS), the now 59-year-old said all the NDIS supports she gets helps to keep her mobile and for that she’s forever grateful.

Kerry, who is from New Norfolk in Tasmania, said she knows her MS is slowly taking away her independence but funding for a manual wheelchair, a powered wheelchair for outings, a front door ramp and physio and hydro therapies has helped enormously.

‘It makes such a difference not just because I can get around better, but it allows me to conserve my energy to do the fun things in life,’ she said.

‘MS is hard, but being able to remain active and to get out and about is such a good thing.’

Kerry is a keen volunteer, donating her time to support others at MS+ and the Lions Club.

At MS+ she facilitates a free online support group for over 65s.

‘I love it,’ she said. ‘I work with a coordinator, and we help people come to terms with their diagnosis. I also share my personal journey and we provide helpful resources.

‘When you go through something like MS, having people you can talk to who can relate to you and support you in your time of need is really important,’ she said.

With the Lions Club Kerry volunteers in several ways.

‘I help out at sausage sizzles; recently I helped cook a Mother’s Day Breakfast and I also sell raffle tickets. All the money we raise goes directly back into the community,’ she said.

‘Volunteering has been so good for me and it’s very rewarding.’

While MS is a daily challenge for Kerry, she said the supports she’s received have also helped her to remain happily immersed in her children and grandchildren’s lives.

‘My daughter Emma is 38, my son Luke is 37, and I have 5 grandchildren, Zara, Tahlia, Chet, Ava and Lawson,’ she said proudly.

‘What I love best is still being able to spend quality time with them all.

‘We go for family walks; have family BBQ’s and go on lots of fun and interesting excursions. They keep me busy,’ Kerry said with a laugh

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