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Santi Martinez missed the regular day-to-day tasks many of us take for granted.

The Colombian-born 40-year-old from Perth was diagnosed with Limb Girdle Muscular Dystrophy 2A in 2014, at age 30.

Santi’s condition is slowly weakening the muscles in his hips, shoulders and arms.

Impacting his mobility, it makes it so much harder for him to do regular everyday tasks.

Simple things like walking, showering, dressing, preparing meals and doing his own washing became difficult, taking away more time in his day.

Working full-time for a Melbourne-based business while also running his own, Santi knew his way of life would eventually change. But joining the NDIS as a participant some years after the Scheme was first rolled out in Perth in 2014 made the change a whole lot easier.

‘The NDIS has meant a lot to me. Since I’ve been part of it many aspects of my life have changed. Now I have access to do things I never believed I could,’ he said.

‘I could do everything when I was younger. I know how to cook but as my condition got worse just preparing simple things like a breakfast would take me around 2 hours.

‘Then taking my clothes out of the washing machine got harder and harder. My shoulders and arms used to be full of bruises trying to get them out.

‘I used to support my elbow and my arm through the washing machine opening, so my arm was black all year, but after joining the NDIS that all changed.’

Grateful to live in Australia and have access to a life-changing Scheme, Santi said so many aspects of his life have improved.

‘Everything is a lot easier now with the equipment and daily support I get,’ he said.

Recently, Santi moved into his own home, where he managed the build.

‘I got support to include all these accessible features. It’s incredible,’ he said.

‘In my old home it was difficult for me to move my arm to turn switches on and off or even open the blinds. Now I can control everything on my phone, everything is made for me.

‘In my previous house it used to take me around 2 hours to get ready every morning. Now it takes me 45 minutes or less. It’s saving me a lot of time!’

Marvelling at all his supports, Santi said it’s his power wheelchair he loves most.

‘It’s been one of the best things I received. I can stand with my chair and go around from a standing position.

‘I’m a social person and I love to socialise and talk with people, so it means I can look directly into a person’s eyes and not have to look up at them all the time, which would often give me a sore neck and inferiority feelings,’ he said.

‘I also love music, and I assist at festivals, concerts and music related events.

‘From the standing position I can truly enjoy the music and experiment moving my body in different ways. It’s incredible,’ Santi said.

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