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Sharon Whitfield and Lacey Amos have the closest of mother-daughter relationships.

The pair, along with Lacey's elder siblings Matthew and Neliska, spent Lacey's childhood doing the same activities as most families – hiking, swimming and going to the beach.

Discovering Lacey had cerebral palsy at age two, never stopped Sharon from giving her the same opportunities as her siblings.

“Lacey hit all her normal milestones as a child but she never walked, it took a little while but we eventually found out she had cerebral palsy,” Sharon said.

“She did begin to walk a little bit with the aid of a walking frame, but she eventually gave up on the walking and went into wheelchairs.

Lacey attended mainstream school, even taking up swimming in her late teens – at one stage she held the 50 metre freestyle record for her class – but after the family moved from Mackay to Barcaldine, support was hard to come by.

Lacey, 32, joined the National Disability Insurance Scheme in February 2018 and Lacey now receives funding for support workers who visit the house for four hours a day, five days a week.

Her support workers spend time playing games with Lacey – a keen scrabble player – and take her out to socialise in the community.

“Previously I would have said the support was not here in our region, but we just didn't know they were there, it's all there.

“The support workers have just opened Lacey up, she's out this morning with people in town, she goes to bingo and goes to the library and plays virtual reality games on their television.”

Along with support workers, Lacey also receives funding for occupational therapy, physiotherapists to help with her breathing and posture, and speech therapy to help with her communication as she has been non-verbal for the last 10 years.

“We've used some low tech devices in the past to help her communicate, but with the speech therapist, they're going to help us with a speech program so Lacey will be able to use her eyes to work an iPad to speak to us.

“Someone has your back now, and we've got this lovely little support group behind you if something isn't going right.

“To know that Lacey has funding behind her if we actually need something and we don’t have to put it on hold, I just love that.”

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