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Modanville National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participant, Luke Murray, said his life is “brilliant” now he has the right accommodation and supports to lead the life he wants.

It’s a very different situation to how he was living only a few years ago.

“I was living in a half-renovated house, which wasn’t entirely accessible and it put my safety at risk,” he said.

Now, the 29-year-old Bundjalung man, who has Cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair, said life is much different. He is out every day, living life to the full, chasing his dream of making it big in the music industry with the “boys” in their band, Brotherhood of the Blues.

The Indigenous singer/songwriter, who fronts the 10-piece band together with two other Indigenous men, said they already have two CDs out and they are working towards releasing a third.

Most days Luke said he attends RED Inc, his local support provider, where he does a range of activities to enhance his social and economic participation.

“I do music classes; I write and co-write songs, drawing on life experiences; I practice my band skills; go to band meetings and I rehearse a lot with the boys,” he said.

“I get around,” he said with a laugh. “It’s a busy lifestyle but I love it. I’d like to do more gigs in the future.”

Well connected in his community and a rising talent, Luke said Brotherhood of the Blues played at the 2016 Byron Bay Bluesfest and this year they were invited back, in April, to play again.

“It was awesome... a great gig,” he said. “A magical moment for us to be with other like-minded artists. I met my idol, Baker Boy. He’s an Indigenous rapper. He’s my favourite!”

Luke accredits his busy lifestyle and steady rise to fame to being able to live in the right accommodation, with the right supports, surrounded by the right people.

“It’s made a huge difference to my health and general wellbeing,” he said. “I’ve also been able to find support workers, at RED Inc, who share my passion for music. It’s been great.

“Some of my support workers are in the band. Taya Oxley plays the keyboard. She used to be a backup singer for Jimmy Barnes,” he said proudly.

Luke said he joined the NDIS two years ago and with his mum, Julie’s help they have been able to make the most of his plan using his Supported Disability Accommodation (SDA) funding and

his core funding to cater for not only his needs but his interests too.

House With No Steps team leader, Desley Freys, said Luke is a popular guy in the house she manages and he shares with four others, and he is in and out having fun most days.

“Luke’s so fortunate. It’s a beautiful place to live,” she said. “It’s only nine km from Lismore. It has big open spaces and a built-in swimming pool. Luke has a huge room with a ceiling hoist, and through his bedroom window, he has a great view of the mountains.

“We’ve also got about eight staff who work 24/7 with Luke and his housemates. Two staff have Indigenous backgrounds, which is nice so Luke is lucky to have that connection,” she said.”

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