Des’s story 2

When I was working up in the Murchison, part of my job was to visit the communities. And there’s a community north of Meekatharra where I used to very regularly visit as part of my working. And I became good friends with the old traditional elder for many years and we got on extremely well.

He sort of showed me around, introduced me to his culture and his country. And, of course, eventually he got sick. And he was a diabetic and being an old traditional person, he wasn’t very compliant with his medication. His diabetes got on top of him to the extent where they had to amputate.

He was then confined to a wheelchair. But all the while he was in hospital down in Perth, he was under the care of the physiotherapist. And they looked after him extremely well. They provided him with all the equipment and the instruments that he needed, and they took a very keen interest in him and really, you know, helped him.

While he was in Perth, he had a prolapse and he went into a coma and they thought... Everyone thought that probably could be the end of it. But being traditional Aboriginal people, with a strong fighting spirit, he came out of the coma. And to the extent that he was well enough to be sent back to the community.

They provided him... The Health Department provided him with a wheelchair where he can go around the community and visit all his people, plus the fact they also used to take him out to the bush, you know, and he could drive around in his wheelchair.

I’m very proud of what they done for him, you know, they basically brought him back from the dead and gave him the last few... 12 months of his life back in the community. And to me, that’s a very wonderful achievement.