

Queensland taxi subsidy cuts hurt disabled

*People with disabilities in Queensland who use taxis regularly will be significantly out of pocket after the state government slashed the transport subsidy
Courier Mail, Brisbane, AAP, September 13, 2012 ([LINK](#))*

The Taxi Council of Queensland says people who can't drive or use public transport may have to forgo work or doctors' appointments.

Premier Campbell Newman government's austere budget, delivered on Tuesday, included a \$400 per person annual limit on subsidised taxi travel for those with severe mobility impairments.

The government says the cuts will only affect 20 per cent of users.

But the taxi council says that still leaves 10,000 disabled people who might have to quit their jobs or stop going to doctors' appointments because they can't afford to travel regularly.

"In my opinion it's not the government necessarily being mean-spirited," the council's chief executive Benjamin Wash told AAP on Thursday.

"I think what they've done is made a decision in the forward estimates without necessarily considering the broader implications."

Under the subsidised taxi travel scheme, the Queensland government pays half the taxi fare up to \$25 of those who qualify.

They include the wheelchair-bound, those with difficulty walking, people with severe vision impairment or uncontrollable epilepsy, and those with dementia or severe intellectual disabilities.

There was no annual limit under the previous government, which budgeted \$15 million for the scheme.

Mr Wash said the small saving might result in additional costs to the disabilities and communities sector.

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