

Man with life-threatening disorder needs NBN: 'It's a joke'



by [MEGHAN HARRIS](#)



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A TOOWOOMBA man has slammed the NBN after trying unsuccessfully for months to have the network installed in his home.

George Helon and his mother Elizabeth Helon are doing all they can to be NBN ready by the time their ADSL is cancelled on August 11.

The pair don't simply want the NBN, they need it.

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Mr Helon was born with a multiple-anomaly genetic disorder pallister-hall syndrome, with only 300 known cases worldwide.

The symptoms associated with the disorder may vary however it affects the development of many parts of the body.

Mr Helon is almost profoundly deaf and has been diagnosed with an inoperable 4.5cm brain tumour and gelastic seizures.

He is also a carer for his elderly mother.

The pair has had to phone emergency services in the past for each other and they are both concerned if their ADSL gets disconnected before NBN is installed it could cause life-threatening issues.

They received the first disconnection letter in April and Mr Helon acted straight away.

He visited the Telstra store in Toowoomba to get the NBN connected and due to the medical conditions, his connection was listed as a priority service.

He said since then it had been a nightmare.

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"I have made contact with Telstra and NBN 14 times in the past three months and nothing is happening," he said.

"They either don't show up, don't phone me back and when they have shown up they have said there are issues with our signal."

Last week Mr Helon put in an official complaint in with the Telecommunications Industry Ombudsman.

"It is just going too far. My mum is so stressed, she cries and can't deal with it," he said.

"We have been trying for months to get this connected because we cannot go without internet or a phone connection.

"If something happens to one of us we have to be able to contact emergency services straight away."

Toowoomba has recently been named as one of the most connected regions in the country when it comes to the internet.

The rollout of the NBN network in the region is nearing completion with new figures revealing Toowoomba homes already connected to the NBN were downloading, on average, about 144GB of data each month.

This is about 20 per cent more than the national fixed-line broadband average and the equivalent of watching 144 one hour episodes on Netflix.

Mr Helon said it was a joke.

"If you ask around in Toowoomba, you will find a lot of people not happy with their internet," he said.