

Joint Parliamentary Committee – NDIS

Bob Lee, Coordinator of Sunshine Coast Citizen Advocacy. 40 years experience in a range of service provision for people with disability.

Focus on financial effectiveness, readiness and role of independent advocacy.

Interest in the “Common Ground” between goals of Government and Advocacy agencies. I.e. We share an interest in PWD being safe, secure and having opportunities to share in the life of their community. We share an interest in PWD being supported with government funding..not being abused with it. We share an interest in PWD gaining experience and developing skills which will help them to be less dependent on Government funded services..not more dependent. What makes PWD more vulnerable and more isolated is the failure of systems to genuinely embrace current policies relating to inclusion and person centred support. (overservicing, inappropriate address of needs, congregation, segregation, abuse and exploitation)

People who are supported independently (free from pressure from vested interests) are more likely to be accurate about identifying needs, and willing to choose a long term path of reducing dependence on Government funded services.

Barriers

Presence of a service culture which is focused on maximising income from Government. (Ref media exposure of Employment/Training service practices)

Recent activity of mergers and acquisitions of smaller responsive local services by large organisations. How does that enhance competitiveness and “market forces”, particularly in regional and rural communities.

A belief (in Bureaucracy) that involvement of independent advocacy would make NDIS processes more expensive and more difficult.

Those who most need information and support are not getting it.

Those who could benefit most from individualised flexible support have never experienced it and are not willing to trust the unknown.

State Government and non-Government systems actively preventing access by PWD to independent advocacy.

Families are fearful about the legal implications of contractual arrangements. (ie. Compensation liability for making changes to service arrangements)