

Hon M Brough

Member for Fisher Qld.

PO Box 6022

Monday 17th February, 2014

House of Representatives

Parliament House

CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Brough,

My sister, Joy Robinson has been living at Stockton Centre, Stockton NSW for fifty years. I am Joys nominated Person Responsible and am contacted regularly regarding Joy's progress and it is a continuing comfort to know how well she is cared for there.

I was already very unhappy with State Government plans to break up the centre and transfer people to group homes, which will be placed under the administration of non-Government organisations from 2018. I am even more dissatisfied since the Federal Government has introduced uncertainty about the future of the NDIS, in re-naming launch sites as "trials" because of very early concerns about budget overruns.

I have always supported the NDIS because I saw it as a way to increase services and choice to people in the community who now have very few supports. I had no idea it would be misused to put at risk essential services that Joy needs and take away her and my right to choose her staying where she is well cared for, safe and happy.

Joy has very special needs because of her severe intellectual disability, which is complicated by serious health problems and ageing.

Joy's special needs mean that she is completely reliant on readily available and accessible services from specially trained nurses, doctors, medical specialists, dieticians, occupational therapists and experts in providing activities that keep her healthy, interested and involved. These professionals come to Stockton where she lives now whenever required. In general community they are in short supply, and those with training in Joy's special needs are virtually non-existent. Even if they were available, because of Joy's disabilities Joy would have extreme difficulties in accessing them.

At Stockton, Joy is very comfortably housed, enjoying her own bedroom and sharing dining and living facilities with her friends. Family members are always welcomed with open arms by staff and clients, and there is even accommodation provided for family and friends if required. I am also completely satisfied with the degree the centre welcomes and maintains interaction with the community, and do not believe that this could be improved by transfer to a group home.

I do not want Joy to have a lesser life than she enjoys now, and hope I have your support in protecting her future wellbeing. I would appreciate your taking up my concerns with the appropriate Ministers.

Thank you, in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Robinson.