

Dear All Concerned, More assistance needed for people with intellectual and mental illness.

I've worked as a Registered Nurse for 21 years, 10 years as a Psychiatric Nurse but all I'm seeing is a downward spiral in our health care system. I'm also a mother of a children with a severe mental illnesses and intellectual impairment, she is considered one of the most challenging children in Queensland and has now been placed into Department of Child Safety's Care to get more assistance in a safer environment. I'm now considered a bad parent!! This is the worst situation that any family member could do but there isn't anything else I could do!! Disability Services could not provide us with any more support, Mental Health didn't want to know us, the public hospital system didn't care, private practice attempted every avenue but it continued to fail my daughter. My daughter has been kicked out of every available service in south Queensland. We had high care support at home but that was not enough to provide appropriate care for her, and provide a safe environment for my daughter as well as my family. Remember I'm a registered nurse and my husband is also an experienced disability worker, hired help just wasn't experienced for us to provide us with respite/relief. Community Mental Health provided no assistance at all, she was "too hard", "you guys know what you're doing", yet know one listened to what we needed to continue to help her.....because of her intellectual impairment. There is not enough respite in Queensland for these kids/adults. Disability Services tried but lack of resources on mental illness made it useless. Royal Brisbane Hospital just doesn't have a children's unit for children with early psychosis, but focus on eating disorders. Children with dual diagnosis aren't managed at all....no clinical nurses, no specialized doctors or units and funding?..She is now cared by Department of Child Safety (whom know nothing about intellectually handicapped, physically handicapped with a mental illness) in a house on her own, with 24hour supervision 1 to 2 carers depending on her behaviours. The carers are unskilled and have little knowledge of mental illness or disabilities as they are purely use to kids that have gone into care from abusive families. My parental rights have been ignored as the government know best??

Disability Services have limited supports for the mentally ill and yet Mental Health don't want to help these clients out at all because of the intellectual impairment. Queensland Education don't even acknowledge mental illness.....only autism, so there is whole lot of supports she can't use in the education symptom. My daughter had 4 psychiatrists review her at RBH over the last 5 years, and still QHealth focused on her physical impairment because it was easier but also highlighted the lack of resources for mental illness. I'd love to sit and chat and share my story of my daughters struggles.....so many barriers, so many doors closed in our face. At the end of the day, we need to push more funds, supports for people with intellectual impairment and mental illness. We can not keep discriminating against the disabled!!! Mental illness in the disabled, needs specialized care units in hospital and community, respite, education, medical support, and the hospital system that caters for in the childrens/adults with dual diagnosis in both public and private.

Regards, Lindee