

A.O.C. 16/6/08

Dear Secretary

I wish to make a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth's Inquiry into Better Support for Carers.

I am submitting to the Inquiry because...

as a former carer for ten years receiving the same payment as the age pension, which I now receive, we are, and always have been, the lowest paid workers in the community, on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, no holidays, and often over years that should have been the best years of our lives. We cared not because we had to, but because we wanted to, in order to give a less fortunate person some quality of life.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

**1. The role and contribution of carers in society**

As a carer, I <sup>felt</sup> ~~feel~~ that my role <sup>was</sup> is...

to look after someone whose frailty meant they could often not look after themselves, washing, cooking, cleaning, medical appointments, accountant, learning to close my mind to unwarranted and unmerited hurtful criticism, just being there all the time.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

**2. The barriers to social and economic participation for carers**

As a carer, I <sup>face</sup> ~~face~~ the following problems ...

No peace of mind. Constantly, day and night, being instantly ready to give assistance, with little or no respect. Coping with a beautiful person whose mind no longer accepted reality. Never breaking down physically or emotionally.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

3. The practical measures required to better support carers

As a carer, I <sup>needed</sup> need help with ...

As a carer I coped alone, other family being otherwise occupied. A day's break once or twice a year was all I got. When I look back over the years I wonder how I coped. At the beginning, had I been able to see the future, I wonder if I  would have had the courage. More information is attached on a separate sheet

4. Strategies to assist carers to access opportunities and choices

I think the Government can better help carers by ...

Allowing carers and their carer's free public transport  
Providing half price fuel for driving carers by way of a card to be presented at refuelling.  
Money is usually always short, so the Government yearly grant should continue.  
Carers/pensioners paying HBA etc should not ever have to pay out of pocket expenses.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

Thank you for taking my views into consideration as part of the Committee's Inquiry. I look forward to reviewing any recommendations you make to improve life for carers in Australia.

Yours sincerely

Kathleen

Print your name

7 - 6 - 2008

Date