

NOV 28 17 108

**Submission No. 1066**  
(Inq into better support for carers)

Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth  
PO Box 6021  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

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 almost 20 years of age and my brother is almost 17 and we have been helping our Mum care for our Dad for 16 of those years. Our life has been and continues to be very different to any of our friends. Even our friends who have divorced parents or are part of a blended family have far less responsibility than we do and have more opportunities to do the things they want to do.

One of the hardest things about being a Carer is not being able to do simple things that other families take for granted. As Mum has always been Dad's main Carer she rarely managed to go to our sport or our practice times when we were young as she was always looking after Dad. Mum always had to try and find another parent from the team who could pick us up and bring us home. It was hard knowing that both Mum and Dad would have loved to have been at our games if they could have. In later years respite has been provided to Mum on Saturday mornings so she could take us to our sport. We loved having her there and she loved being there. This respite time went by quickly and we always had to hurry home and couldn't attend any of the after games get togethers as we needed to be home for Dad or again Mum would have to ask someone to take us and bring us home. Mum never managed to work on the school canteen but she did sometimes manage to get there for reading because she could usually juggle that around the time a volunteer was looking after Dad.

The things that stress me most about being a Carer is never having any privacy. We often have a personal care worker in the home first thing in the morning and last thing at night and it's hard to relax and be ourselves until they have left. My brother and I can at least go to our room but Mum always has to be on call and has nowhere to be alone. As a young Carer I worry a lot about Mum and Dad especially when they are upset about a lack of staff or the problems they have to deal with on a daily basis. They are both very positive people but at times get down. Mum and Dad both want my brother and I to follow our dreams and have a life but we worry about them and how they will manage when we are no longer available to help. It has been a long 16 years and it doesn't get any easier with time.

I need help to assist me with my studies. I want to be a commercial pilot and am currently working two jobs to save \$60,000 for the course. I would love to have a mentor to ask for advice about my chosen field so I could discuss with them the best flight school to attend, where to get my hours up etc. At this stage there is no Government assistance or HeCs so I am saving very hard so I don't have to borrow a lot of money. It would be great if the Government could recognize my caring role (for 16 years) and assist me in subsidizing me for my training.

I think the Government can better help Young Carers by listening to what their needs are as they would differ from person to person. In our situation we would like to have properly trained professional people that we can trust in our home and with our Dad (this would allow us to relax and not worry when we do go somewhere); sufficient funds to allow Dad to be cared for so that we can go to school or work without being called home to look after him; assistance with being able to attend courses of educational merit or for interest both financially and with respite time and some respite time that allows us to have some sort of a social life.

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

Callum  
3 July 2008