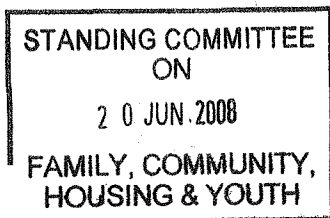


12th June 2008.



Submission No. 275

(Inq into better support for carers)

A.O.C. 30/6/08

Secretary  
Inquiry into Better Support for Carers  
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.

My role as a carer is to care for my wife who has a Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) which, combined with a mobility disability, forces her to use a wheeler walker around the house, and the use of a wheel chair for rare outings.

I contribute to society by freeing the public system of a multitude of health workers who would have the tasks of otherwise seeing to the overall well being of my wife 24 hours a day 7 days a week if I were to be unable to care for her myself due to my becoming ill or otherwise incapacitated.

Although we are both in private health, once again to relieve the strain on public health, it is expensive and there is no provision as far as I know, for any support for carers.

I find it difficult financially because being on the age pension with no other means of support, carers allowance excepted, if a Doctor suggests a medical aid which could give my wife a better quality of life, I am unable to acquire such aid for lack of funds.

The measures that would better support me in my role as a carer would be free medical treatment to enable me to stay reasonably healthy, as not all Doctors bulk bill, and financial assistance to acquire much needed aids as is required.

In summary:

perhaps a health card much like the DVA white card to enable carers to a better health system whilst in a caring role

a pool of health aids, for example, a hospital bed, which could be allocated to the carers person of responsibility to enable them a better quality of life at home

lastly, if the above are not to be considered, financial aid in the form of a tax free more generous allowance should be considered, as the age pension and carers allowance is well behind the cost of living, and although carers do what they do out of love for the person they care for, they take the burden away from the public system and should be recognised for their contribution to society.

Thank you for taking my views into consideration as part of the Committees Inquiry. I look forward to reviewing the recommendations you make in order to improve support for carers.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin.