

Submission No. 582

(Inq into better support for carers)

A.O.C. 8/7/08



Victorian Disability Advisory Council

Inquiry into Better Supports for Carers

Joint submission by the Victorian Disability Advisory Council and Carers Victoria to the House Standing Committee on Family, Children, Housing and Youth 2 July 2008

The Victorian Disability Advisory Council and Carers Victoria provide the following joint submission to the House Committee on Family, Housing, Children and Youth in response to the Inquiry into Better Support for Carers.

Carers Victoria is the statewide peak organisation representing carers and a member of the National Network of Carer Associations.

The Victorian Disability Advisory Council provides advice to the Minister for Community Services in respect of whole of government policies and strategies to increase the participation of people with a disability in the Victorian Community.

Carers Victoria and the Victorian Disability Advisory Council are engaging in discourse to progress some of the complex issues in caring and being cared for. The Victorian Government's recently established policy framework, *Recognising and Supporting Care Relationships*, has provided the ambit for this specific discussion. Our dialogue also recognises the tension which occurs from time to time in the representation of the needs and aspirations of both carers and people being cared for including people with disabilities.

We are seeking an Australian society which recognises and supports caring relationships. This includes recognising that for both the carer and the person with a disability, choices and circumstance are interdependent, but that both parties have individual needs and interests and consequently different needs for supplementary support.

It also recognises and supports that both the carer and the person with a disability, are able to pursue individually what they value, but acknowledges there are different degrees of interdependence which also need to be addressed.

It is envisaged that in the case of carers and people with disabilities specific issues will need to be addressed. These may include:

1. Supportive work environments

The opportunity for carers to work and care through the provision of flexible working conditions, as well as the opportunity and support for people with disabilities to be actively employed in satisfying functions.

2. Accommodation

The provision of housing options and choices with appropriate support to allow independent living for people with disabilities where safe and practicable, balanced with the provision of supported housing options to allow carers choice about their capacity to continue to care for people with disabilities.

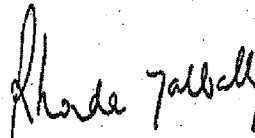
3. Respite

Flexible arrangements and choice in access to respite programs, which provide opportunities for social inclusion for the carer and worthwhile and meaningful experiences for the people in care.

We expect that our continuing dialogue will address these and other relevant issues identifying new policy initiatives. We would appreciate the opportunity of appearing before the Committee to discuss our submission.



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CEO Carers Victoria



Dr Rhonda Galbally AO
Chair, Victorian Disability Advisory Council