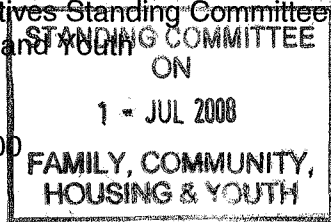


Committee Secretary
Inquiry into Better Support for Carers
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family,
Community, Housing and Youth
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Submission No. 642
(Inq into better support for carers)

A.O.C. 8/7/08

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...

I am a Carer and I also facilitate a Carers Support Group. I believe that Carers are the most ^{amongst} undervalued, overworked, underpaid, powerless people in Australian society.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

1. The role and contribution of carers in society

As a carer, I feel that my role is...

To provide the most loving, devoted, consistent, conscientious care for my husband who has multiple sclerosis. I (and my husband) know more about MS and his particular needs than any G.P. or nurse. We have become MS/Disability/chronic illness "experts" for this I receive \$150 per week!

More information is attached on a separate sheet

2. The barriers to social and economic participation for carers

As a carer, I face the following problems ...

1) I still work (as a social welfare worker) - but with difficulty as my beloved's condition deteriorates. I have to ^{reduce} my hours. 2) My husband is in his mid-fifties. I refuse to "put him" in an Aged Care respite bed just so I can go hiking with my children. I am tired. I need a holiday. I work hard at work & hard at home. I do not get a break. 3) I want to choose when I retire - I don't want to HAVE to retire because my husband's illness dictates I should. He doesn't want that either. Financially we don't want that. Our relationship does not need that burden.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

3. The practical measures required to better support carers

As a carer, I need help with ...

- 1) Appropriate respite for younger people ≤ 65 y.o.
- 2) More, & better funded, in-house respite.
- 3) More funding for Aids & Equipment (we had to pay for the entire bathroom modification which my husband was deemed eligible for subsidy) & we have to pay hundreds of dollars each year for Callahan because getting access is so expensive living with a chronic illness!!

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 ...

- More realistic levels of funding to Carers through Carelink
- More assistance (programs/funding/case workers) to enable carers who also work in paid employment to stay in paid employment. This would help financially as well as emotionally, psychologically.
- Free counselling for carers.
- Free gym membership for carers. (would aid in reducing depression amongst carers)

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

Roslyn

Print your name

26/06/2008

Date