

Submission No. 133
(Inq into better support for carers)

THE SECRETARY
INQUIRY INTO BETTER SUPPORT FOR CARERS
STANDING COMMITTEE ON FAMILY COMMUNITY, HOUSING
AND YOUTH
P.O. BOX 3021 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PARLIAMENT HOUSE CANBERRA A.C.T. 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 has, for the past seven years has been to care for my disabled partner, a victim of two strokes. In this time, I have mentioned my case more than once to politicians who profess a concern for the plight of carers, but with no real result.

My caring role affects my life all day, every day. I have to be on call and on standby twenty-four hours a day, ready for the next call for help, and ready to handle the frequent mishaps that only the disabled and their helpers would be aware of.

I have no social life, a trip to the supermarket is the only escape from caring, two hours out of the house is like being invited to a party. Transport to anywhere is a major problem, since I am now disabled myself, as a result of the stress of these years, I am now forced to walk with a stick or a walking frame. Needless to say, I cannot drive, so we are totally dependent on buses, which is particularly difficult, or upon taxis, which is extremely expensive. The Carer's Allowance pays me \$98 a fortnight for my toil, this covers about four trips to the doctor for me or for my partner.

I have no social life, the occasional visit from a friend is a major event, friends tend to fade away when disability befalls one. I have had one holiday in five years, this was spent in tears in a hotel room, stressed beyond exhaustion.

The measures that could assist my life would be:

1= A more realistic payment for my toil; after all; to place my partner in care would cost the Government thousands of dollars monthly, the recognition I get is \$98 per fortnight, a princely \$7 a day.

2= Access to reliable home help, Some charities can help, but how clean could your house be with a half - hour's cleaning a fortnight?

It would be a total change to my life if there were more realistic help forthcoming, I eagerly look forward to stepping outside my front gate one day, knowing that I don't have to do everything on my own.

Yours Sincerely,

JUNE 6TH, 2008

Noel