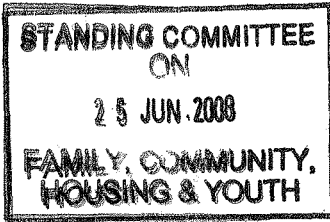


A.O.C. 1/7/08

Submission No. 355
(Inq into better support for carers)



Frank

23rd June 2008.

The Committee Secretary,
Inquiry into Better Support for Carers.

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. As a carer for some six years, the last one and a half of which became more intensive as the health of my wife, for whom I cared, deteriorated, the support for her under the E.A.C.H. package and eventually Palliative Care was specifically aimed at her and not the carer.

As the prime carer, notwithstanding the above, the overriding burden fell upon me and would also fall upon others in this situation. The attention given by professional health care workers although the standard, in my experience, is excellent, cannot replace the dependence on the actual carer. For various reasons, probably the most of which is pride the patient is reluctant to rely completely on the professional and will hold back and refer problems to the carer.

For this reason the prime carer needs to be recognized for his or her contribution to society because of the devotion necessary to be able to shoulder this burden, thus avoiding the need for the patient to be prematurely admitted to an institution costing the taxpayer considerably more than home care.

The MAIN practical measure required, in my opinion, to better support carers, would be to increase the allowances for personal respite and the costs that are allocated to the various support agencies increased to cover this.

More respite would enable carers to pursue greater social and/or economic participation and also alleviate the pressures incumbent on 24/7 caring.