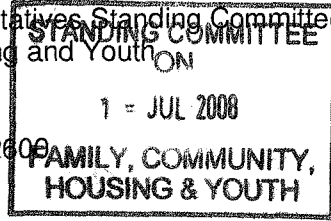


A.O.C. 8/7/08

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



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've been caring for an acquired brain injury person (my partner) for 22 years. Formerly I was tertiary educated in Applied Science (Foods/Nutrition) & prior to 2002 I was fully self-employed for 6 years, then salary employed by others. Due to my partner's

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...

Vital to the person being cared for and society in general. Carers reduce the dependency on facilities/institutions where high level care is provided. Carers save tax-payers/Gov't money by keeping those with chronic illness, disability & frailty at home. Carers give, often at great personal sacrifice & commitment,

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 ...

Time constraints and lack of availability at short notice.

Discrimination & social stigma.

Carer health problems-unable to attend to promptly which causes complications/worsening of condition.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

I am submitting to the Inquiry because...

deterioration in health I was granted Carer Payment & Allowance in 2002 and have remained on such to date. However many complex, long-term problems have arisen during this period.

The consequence of these problems prompted me to seek a Carers Support Group in my area (Wynyard, Tasmania). My concerns and difficulties were tempered by those of other Carers (both past and present). The emotional and financial burden was overwhelming. Reluctantly I assumed the role of Carer Support Group Co-ordinator for a twelve-month term, which is still current. All the while knowing that my personal needs or crisis as a full-time Carer had to be somehow deferred at great detriment to my own needs.

1. The role and contribution of Carers in society continued...

strength, companionship, care, love and support to those that society often reject. Carers endeavour to enable those they care for with an ability to function and exist with dignity and purpose. As a long-term Carer, I personally feel that our role is underestimated and not fully understood.

3. The practical measures required to better support carers

As a carer, I need help with ...

The availability of Carer Respite Services. Current Carer Benefits
are inadequate. Financial hardship is forcing Carers to question
their Caring Role. More emotional and community support.
Acceptance.

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 ...

Increase the awareness of our situation. Provide a superannuation/
retirement fund for long-term primary Carers who cannot undertake
full-time employment elsewhere. Regional areas, such as Tasmania,
require more assistance regarding accessing help, options &
advice. Carer Support Groups need funding to operate effectively.
Training to re-enter the workforce needs to be flexible.

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

Gail

Print your name

27 June 2008

Date