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**Submission No. 838**  
(Inq into better support for carers)

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**From:** Joyce  
**Sent:** Thursday, 3 July 2008 12:27 PM  
**To:** Committee, FCHY (REPS)  
**Subject:** Submission into Better Support for Carers

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 am involved every-day with the care of my 35 year old daughter who has mild intellectual disabilities and acrodysostosis. Also, her 11 year old son who has autism and intellectual disabilities who does not have speech and is not able to manage himself independently. My daughter is a single Mum, she will never drive a car and my husband and I are her only family supports.

My husband 68 years, myself 61 work full time to support ourselves and assist my daughter and grandson financially, we live 25kms away from them.

**The role and contribution of carers in society**

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

Making sure she can manage her every day needs, being on call 24hrs.

Help her assist and teach her son independent needs

Help her with decisions she is not able to make eg. Insurance, accounts, following through paperwork from various organisations.

Mow her grass and do maintenance work around her house.

Be her companion and friend

Be her driver to all appointments and outings.

Take over the role of caring for my grandson and giving her the opportunity to participate in supported employment 2 days a week.

**The barriers to social and economic participation for carers**

*As a carer, I face the following problems*

Not being able to take my daughter to outings and have quality time with her.

She is on a disability pension & we cannot afford pleasure trips.

My grandson does not cope in different environments and does not understand social rules, therefore, restricted on places we can go.

My daughter does not drive, therefore the opportunities for her and my grandson to go anywhere is not possible unless I drive them.

No other family members help support my daughter and grandson.

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The demand of caring for my daughter and grandson puts pressure on my husband and my relationship with each other.

I have no time to myself or to take care of my own health needs.

### **The practical measures required to better support carers**

*As a carer, I need help with*

Assistance with being my daughter's carer and being my grandson's main support.

I require help with transporting them to all their outings eg. School, holiday programs, doctor, dentist, specialists, shopping etc.

I need friendship for them other than myself, because of their special needs they do not find it easy to make new friends and can only rely on me for true companionship.

I need respite for my daughter from her son as I can see her health deteriorating as he is getting older and more difficult to manage.

More assistance is needed to be given to my daughter than I can physically provide.

### **Strategies to assist carers to access opportunities and choices**

*I think the Government can better help carers by*

Remunerating carers appropriately, giving them the financial assistance they need to operate and have any quality of life.

Providing a transport scheme for our carers who will never be able to drive a car, therefore, taking the burden off senior members of the family.

I believe the Government should be looking at providing more education programs for people to be trained appropriately in special fields to care for persons with disabilities who are not able to manage on their own and give our carers more respite.

I believe the Government must look into more accommodation places for our young people with special needs. As in my case when my daughter cannot manage my grandson any longer, he will require special accommodation assistance.

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

Joyce  
3rd July 2008

Ph  
Grandmother