

REC 17/7/08

From: Bill
Sent: Friday, 4 July 2008 5:45 PM
To: Committee, FCHY (REPS)
Subject: Inquiry into Better Support for Carers

Submission No. 864
(Inq into better support for carers)

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 unable to submit a letter by the end of today, due to time restraints. I had rung and left a message earlier this week and today was told that any matters related with the Inquiry into Better Support for Carers have to be in by today. I was advised to send an email with my concerns.

My name is Jill I am the wife and Carer of Bill who is a Stroke Survivor. He had a brain stem stroke when he was 51 years of age, in 2004. He defied all the medical odds and predictions, coming home after 21 weeks hospitalisation. He progressed from being in a wheelchair to walking with an upright walker, to walking with a smaller one, to now walking with Canadian walking sticks. The main legacies he has post-stroke are balance issues, swallowing, right sided deficit and double vision. He was able to take a medical retirement from his IT employment and we have continued on with our lives together.

Stroke is a life altering event for both the Survivor and the Carer. I feel that my role as a Carer is vital, and Carers need to be more proud of this. Time is always an issue. The notice that we got in regards to this Inquiry is an example. I received the letter of notification last Friday 27th June 2008, and we had one week to formulate a letter. I care for my husband, do part-time work as a Community Nurse, and do most of the daily household routine operations. One week is definitely not enough time to plan and write submission that will do any justice. Carers need much more time!

We are involved with a group called WAGS (Working Age Group Stroke). WAGS is a large and successful support group on the Central Coast of NSW for people aged 65 years and under who have had a Stroke, and their Carers and families. We meet on the first Saturday of each month, and at tomorrow's meeting I was hoping to get the views of other Carers, and make a submission on behalf of the 28 Carers in WAGS. I have been told that this cannot be done as today is the final date.

I think the Government can better help Carers by making funds more accessible for support groups. WAGS has played an important part in our lives. We rely heavily on funding grants from the local councils of Gosford city and Wyong, and from other donations. This is done annually, and one of the reasons for our success so far is because of the positive applications. We are unsure of how WAGS would operate without these funds.

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.

Kind regards,

Jill

7/07/2008