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(Inq into better support for carers)

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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

I wish to make a submission in regards to better support for carers.

As a carer my role is assisting my child/young adult to live.

I contribute to society by

- being with both my children whenever needed.
- Educating all who come into contact with them about their disability
- Explaining how to get the most out of them with little disruptive behaviour.
- Being their full time aid.

I think this should be recognised by offering more money within the Carers Payment and increasing this payment as inflation rises.

My caring role affects my life by keeping me busier than I would normally be by having me

- Researched and continue to keep up to date of the two disabilities of my children.
- Talk to family members and friends about the disabilities of my two children, often.
- Attend therapies to ensure development progress.
- Find support groups and attend their meetings to keep up with the latest information on support I can access.
- Go to Individual Education Programs at school for each of my two to help them with their development at school.
- Now employment related meetings are starting.
- Go to specialist and do their programs at home to ensure development progress.
- Fill in numerous forms repeatedly to receive Carers Payment and be able to access Support Providers.
- Attend appointments with GP's and Specialists to fulfil requirements for the above forms.
- Go to meetings to better understand government Inquiries and the submissions needed.
- Find and access help to submit submissions which includes attending meetings.
- I Am always on hand to assist them in any situations throughout the day.
 - They are more often sick or have to be away from school because of their disability.
 - On some occasions the school has even asked for them not to attend as they can not be supervised.
- Excursions often need me to attend to enable them to participate.
- Sport and leisure activities require my attendance for them to participate and I go on committees to ensure the clubs are doing all they can to include my children.

The barriers I experience as a carer in finding and/or retaining employment.

- I need flexibility as well as understanding when my time is needed for my two.
- I may receive numerous phone calls in a particular day because of behaviour problems.
- I may need time off to attend above previously mentioned meetings and appointments.
- School holidays are always an issue especially when they get too old for child care.
- I cannot see this changing much more when they both leave school.

This support would assist me to get on with other factors of my life, including the rest of the immediate family. I am one of the lucky ones to still have the original family unit but my luck may not hold out as the children get older. Tension rises for everyone as time goes on and situations go from dealing with children to an adult with a disability.

Thank you for taking my views into consideration as part of the Committee's Inquiry. I look forward to reviewing the recommendations you make in order to improve support for carers.

Yours Sincerely

Caralyn

The practical measures that would better support me are better education of the community.

- Teachers could include disabilities into the school curriculum and educate the classes at least on the disability that they are in contact with.
- Sign language could be taught in school. This not only covers all disabilities but all languages. Our communication level as a country would grow. This could be used throughout all classes as it takes no extra time do. Simply sign as you speak.
- Provide transitional schools where children could get full on treatment to help them move in and out of the mainstream schooling system as required. Currently in town we have the coice of schools with an SEU or the special school. There are many who don't fill the requirements for the special school but need more help than the SEU's can offer.
- Transitional Employment opportunities is another area of consern. Businesses where all disabilities are welcome and assisted to stay on task would be wonderful. Their produce could be sold to finance the business and this would be good for their self esteem also relieving some most needed support areas. A farm situation is one idea.
- Support within normal work areas, education of the employee, making things more hands on and visual than in the written word.
- Also have Centrelink access the information I provide to them when I originally applied for assistance. All our information on our situation is available to yous we have been registered and receiving Carers Payment for 16 years so why, when they turn 16, do I have to provide all the information again? Your employees can access this information but still you ask the unpaid carers who lack the time, energy and resources to collect it all again or get permanent situations reassessed (including costly doctors appointments) and present it to your employee who has it available to them on a computer, simply to open a new account as adult. We seem to be doing the work for you!