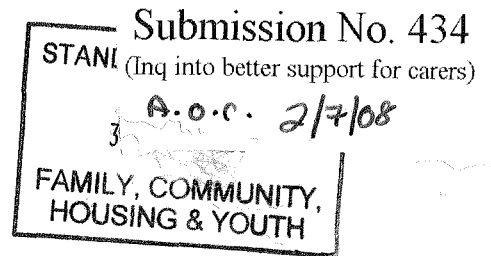


Committee Secretary  
Inquiry into Better Support for Carers  
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family,  
Community, Housing and Youth  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600



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 a mother of three special needs children. I am their main and only carer as my husband is a full time student. My reason for submitting this inquiry is because the new government isn't giving carers and/or those in their care enough resources, financial assistance, respite and emotional support. Carers feel isolated, overwhelmed and fear for the future of those they care for and themselves.

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...

giving quality care 24/7 to those in my care, this in turn frees up government funds and resources to be delegated to others who aren't as fortunate, the government budget would have a serious blowout if all carers were to throw up their hands in despair and say "I can't take this anymore, I'm exhausted, I'm going to have a nervous breakdown, etc no amount of pay could compensate for the time, energy, mental, emotional etc that a carer invests in looking after the person(s) requiring the care.

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 ...

- Isolation/loneliness - only other carers can fully comprehend our workload, issues, fears and our daily struggle to deal with our caring role.
- Mental issues - we are often subjected to massive amounts of stress and inundated with everything that has to be done, the sheer magnitude of dealing with even the basics such as feeding, clothing and ensuring personal hygiene and the like are kept up to a certain standard
- financial constraints mean your diet is normally poor quality, you can't tap into eg. early intervention programs, socialising etc is a luxury and things such as movies, zoo, etc barely ever affordable.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

3. The practical measures required to better support carers

As a carer, I need help with ...

- finding employment, study and child care/respite  
- mental emotional well being - I need to feel good within myself in order to take care of those under my care.

- financial assistance - companion card for all individuals who require a companion and can't venture out alone, I was given a companion card for one of my autistic children but not the other yet they both require 24/7 supervision

- proper carer weeks activities that make us feel like the valuable asset we are to society, acknowledgement is very important to us,  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 ...

providing more quality programs for carers

increasing respite packages

keeping the carers' bonus as this is a crucial life line

raising awareness of just how much carers contribute to the community

time out to recharge our batteries but also more options to enjoy respite as a whole family.

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

PETER

Print your name

17th JUNE, 2008

Date