

From: Shanty
Sent: Friday, 27 June 2008 9:18 PM
To: Committee, FCHY (REPS)
Subject: FW: Secondary Submission for 'Better Care for our Carers' Parliamentary Inquiry

SHANTY

I have initially sent a submission previously in regards to the above enquiry regarding 'Better Care for our Carers', as listed below. But since my initially submission there has been something that I have overly dismissed and feel that it should be inclusive and additional to my original submission.

As stated previously I am a mother of three autistic children. I heavily rely on financial and special support within the systems. Majority of that support is state and federally funded. There are various support networks that are currently funded by all aspect of the Australian government and can be resourced if you have the know how to apply. But unfortunately there are certain government departments whom take advantage and manipulate extremely vulnerable Carers within the system, to access government funding, to fund their organization.

As a Carer you go with 'good faith' and trust to the people who handle budgeted, tax payers money to do the right and appropriate thing, especially when these government agencies, departments and institutes rely on you as a Carer to make the application to access these funds. One area I would like to point out as special scrutiny is the Department of EDUCATION and schools who cater for special needs children.

As Carers of special needs children we go a through excruciating process in having to fight for access for financial support for our children within an educational setting. However with my experience it seems many Principals of a Special Development School setting are taking advantage and exploiting parents with special needs children and denying these children the appropriate specialized support they deservedly are entitled to through assessment and application.

You ask, why does my referral have anything to do regarding better care for our Carer's. Well as a Carer with special needs children, I have been subjected to indiscretion and non accountability by the professionals to state they are using government funding in the best interest of the child. The amount of unnecessary stress and illness to carer's in respect to this process is immense and many prefer to not 'rock the boat' in the case of being victimized by 'the hand that feeds you'.

My personal experience? I reside in the state of Victoria and the state government governs the education aspect of my children's welfare. There is a 'Program for Student Disabilities' which all disabled school aged children need to under go before they access state funding for their child to support. For example additional support of an integration aider, speech pathologists, to enable the children to the rights of education. This process is costly to the parent/carer and in some cases extremely stressful to them as well.

To outline this in detail, each of my children are given a level of funding for additional support within an educational setting. Two of my children are on level 3 at a cost of \$18300.00 per anum. My third child is on level 5 at a cost of \$31,600.00 per anum. A total receipt to the SD School of \$68,200.00 per anum. This entitles my children to additional support of education of Occupational Therapy which they receive none. Speech Therapy which they receive none and Teacher's assistant, which again they receive none. The school do not make accountable to the level of need and requirement in what the state government have granted at a funding level for each of my children. The funds are pooled by the school to service other areas of the school environment. So when state government think they are doing the right thing regarding their policies and the care to the disadvantage, third parties are siphoning and redirecting disabled children's justified funds. If the public sector schools where in a commercial domain then I'm sure they would be up for fraudulent charges!

My point is that there is currently government funding for the children of Carers in this field but it is being exploited by certain school Principals at the expense of the special needs child and of the benefit of the government funded special development school.

Yes as Carers we do need to be recognized regarding our work and commitment we give as carers. But can you so far recognize some adversities we have to face?

I'm sure I might not be the only carer who has pointed out an unforeseen perspective in regards to better care for carers. But as Carers we seem to be abused and been taken advantage of. There is government support out there but manipulated by others.

I personally go through enough heartache and pressure with the future and prospects of my children and I urge the government to undertake a national audit of all aspects of federal and state government departments to make them accountable and ensure that tax payer monies are worked to the benefit of the people Carers care for.

I would greatly appreciate that this enquiry would encourage scrutiny and audit of all federal departments and even the referral to state government, with connection to Carers and their families. This is to enforce that their department polices are adhered to.

Before federal government start throwing money at a problem, they need to audit the current problems that exist. You do this you make my job easier as a Carer and Parent!

Yours sincerely

Shanty