

The Secretary
Enquiry into Better Support for Carers

30 June 2008

Acc 17/7/08

Submission No. 850

(Inq into better support for carers)

Dear Sir/Madam

By way of positive feedback I congratulate the government on acknowledging the contribution of carers, and their practical initiatives, in particular the provision of respite services, and bonus payments. I would however urge for the bonus payments to be enshrined as permanent ongoing benefits.

Regarding deficiencies, I call on the Government to subsidize the cost of exercise and fitness for low income persons; Carers and Pensioners. The Government has started to recognize the cost of lifestyle imbalance, resulting in obesity and poor health outcomes. Carers are possibly impacted more than other groups because of their caring responsibilities and limited finances.

The retail rates of exercise classes and gym membership is about twice what any carer could afford. In other words a subsidy of anything less than 50% would not be worthwhile as carers would still not be able to afford to participate.

Whether such a scheme is organized by payment to the retailer or the carer; lets leave the organizational details and costing to the bureaucrats.

The point is that the Government needs to muster the political courage to introduce preventative measures which it knows will produce beneficial outcomes for the whole community in the long run. The cost of doing nothing is more than the cost of seizing the initiative.

Yours faithfully