

A.O.C. 16/6/08

Committee Secretary
Inquiry into Better Support for Carers
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family,
Community, Housing and Youth

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 feel that in many ways we are falling through the cracks in preparing for life after being a carer

Our energy, time and finances are being depleted and the thought of not being able to prepare for the future is scary.

1. The role and contribution of carers in society

As a carer, I feel that my role is...

Looking after my husband to the best of my ability, allowing him to be happy and feel loved, in familiar surroundings.

We have no family so we are really a 'pigeon pair'

There is no way I would leave him but I find small ways that I can do to help my sanity e.g. attend church, get out to shop, go to the gym meet with other carers etc

To be honest my life is on hold, over the past ten years my husband is becoming more fragile, I receive help for his personal hygiene and because he spends most of the day in bed I am able to go out in short bursts in the mornings.

2. The barriers to social and economic participation for carers

As a carer, I face the following problems ...

My husband and I have done everything together, respite care has been suggested, I reject this out of hand as my husband is so comfortable here, I wouldn't put him through a change of environment... If I receive respite what do I do??

Not being able to plan for my future, not having an income and therefore no superannuation

Not knowing what equipment is available to make lifting easier.

Paying GST on home modifications, we paid \$600 on bath room modifications in 2006.

Cost of disability equipment and aids, e.g. toilet seat, walking frame, bed safety, and access to bed/chair lifts

3. The practical measures required to better support carers

As a carer, I need help with ...

Transport, incase of an emergency getting me to the hospital, picking up medication after hours etc my husband has a taxi card but it is for his use only.

Cost of computer/ internet and home lessons to offset the feeling of isolation

Extra activities e.g. access to a gym to keep fit and healthy, visit exhibitions etc.

4. Strategies to assist carers to access opportunities and choices

I think the Government can better help carers by ...

Give consideration to allocating some form of superannuation to those who have given up work to become carers.

It is my choice to be at home to care for my husband but I would like access to either adult education, or work from home, to stimulate, and challenge my life.

Access to different types of equipment and aids to help in the caring of my husband.

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

Print your name

MARY I

PS

The things I miss as a carer

A Companion

Being offered a cup of coffee, someone to discuss issues of the day, the garden or the implications of having gas connected or just ordinary operations in running the house!

Planning meals.

Who decides that more help is needed, those who shower my husband?

They can give all the suggestions in the world BUT where does that leave me?

I feel so inadequate at times! re a catheter or a lift machine?

Have someone to make a house visit in the absence of a doctor.

My dreams are simple; I only want to see Broom and the Kimberly before I am too old to enjoy it!!

^ ^
>(. .)<

ME ^ ^
>(' . ')<