

19/6/2008

Submission No. 381

(Inq into better support for carers)

A.O.C. 2/7/08

FAMILY, COMMUNITY,
HOUSING & YOUTH

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.

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

Like any parent, as I am, is to provide the person in my care, the quality of support and care that they are entitled too, and to live a fore filled life. Unlike those that care for generic siblings, who fortunately mature and gain their independence in their teenage years. I still have an adult, who mentality has not matured properly, that needs constant care and support. So, in essence, I still have a child in an adult body that needs support and care, 24/7, for the rest of his life. As well, I have to cope with the financial burden due to the constant increase in the cost of living, while my income, the carer pension, which is well below the CPI and basic wage. And also, while doing all of this, I am trying to maintain my sanity and the quality of life that I am entitled to in my aging years.

I face the following problems ...

In a number of areas, and they are as follows:

1. The financial burden of trying to cope in the current and future economic climate, on the carers income, (which is stagnant).

2. The lack of supported accommodation and choice of supported accommodation in the areas where it is needed.

3. The lack of qualified skilled and dedicated support staff.

4. The empathy that the hierarchy have towards the disabled and carers.

5. Support services that put the dollar value before the clients well being and support.

These are just a few of the problems faced by carers. Many more could be stated, but there are too many to list.

I need help with the Following:

1. Financial security, now and in the future
2. Appropriate supported accommodation with a wider choice, and with qualified skilled dedicated support staff.
3. More understanding and information from the appropriate departments.
4. Better service providers, that are dedicated in the clients support and well being, than the dollar value.

I think the Government can better help Carers by the following:

1. Listening to the carers of their needs and support.
2. Have a carer representative, with an equal and unrestrained voice, on all committees, policies and decision making, forums, review panels and etc. An representative not be connected to the government.
3. To review the financial needs and security of carers in the economic climates on a regular basis.
4. To review the value of the carers contribution to eleavating the pressure on the health system. As it would cost the government approximately \$200,000.00 per disabled per year. At present, it is only approximately \$30,000.00 per disabled per year. This is due to the dedication of carers to provide their charges with the support and care, that they are entitled to, for a full fore filled life. This is done by the cares sacrificing their own.
5. The building of a wider choice of quality supported accommodation in areas of need.
6. Review the support staff criteria and pay levels, to attract better and dedicated support staff.
7. Review all departments from the top down

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. I would also be available to discuss my views further.

Yours sincerely

Allan