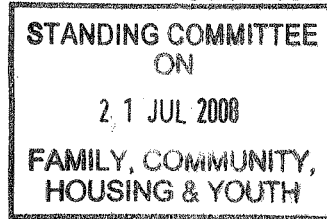


APC 21/7/08

Submission No. 996

(Inq into better support for carers)

Submission Carers.txt



July, 2008

12th

Committee secretary
Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth

Dear Secretary,

I wish to make a submission to the Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth's inquiry into Better Support for Carers.

I face the following problems as cheerfully as I can, because no one likes a miserable old woman.

I care for my son, who is 31 years old (Downs Syndrome) and my grandson, 13 years (ADHD and Aspergers Syndrome). Both are as independent as I can teach them to be, but I can never be certain that they will not forget something important, or misunderstand what they had to do, or be taken advantage of, because of their glib personalities.

So I have to be three persons carer, son, grandson. Everything they need I must check has been provided, monitored, planned ahead. And also be ready to have excuses when something slips through the net.

All this leaves me little time, energy or ability for any social outings. Respite care do their best, but coordinating a "3 in 1" person is not easy.

An ever-present fear is that like so many older carers, my memory constantly lets me down. I am afraid that I might have an accident, fall or become ill or worse of all, drop off to sleep while driving. I know Carer Respite provide excellent emergency care and I have been very grateful to them in the past. I have been planning and training for my son to obtain residential drop-in support and hopefully we are getting closer to the top of the list. I have also tried everything available to help my grandson, who can be violent on occasions. He has made great progress during the last 6 months and it would be heart-breaking for him to go elsewhere and lose much that he has gained.

Personally as a widow, I just sometimes feel intensely lonely, with no one to tell the little news good or bad. At the end of the day.

My story could be repeated many many times over in this area. I hope your Committee will realise the enormous need and how so many struggle quietly with such a burden.

I want to bring to your notice my concern for the children of invalid parents, who are too proud to admit that their sons or daughters, have become carers over time, almost by default.

Thank you for taking my views into consideration as a part of the Committee's inquiry. I look forward to reviewing any recommendations you make to improve the life of carers in Australia.

Yours sincerely,

Mary