

Dec 29/7/08

**Sent:** Wednesday, 2 July 2008 4:10 PM  
**To:** Committee, FCHY (REPS)  
**Subject:** Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth

2nd July 2008

Committee Secretary  
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 believe that my role as carer for my 97-year-old Mother is saving the Government thousands of dollars. My Mother has been assessed by ACAT as being entitled to an EACH Dementia package as she has dementia and requires everything done for her. I cancelled this service because the 'Provider' wanted me to 'help' the person being paid to do the work. Also the service provided assistance only for the light and easy tasks. The best way I have heard this expressed was by a double amputee (legs) who said: "the 'Provider' will only do what I am able to do and charge me, but will not do the jobs I need help with, or can't do."

It would be better if a cleaning and gardening company were employed with the money going to 'Providers' as they would free me up to concentrate on caring for my Mother. As I am 'her security' (geriatrician's words) she is often quite uncooperative with others.

I am in my sixties and the problem I have with caring for my Mother is I become tired trying to fit in everything, as it takes at least 39 hours each week to feed and do her personal care. The 39 hours does not include working both inside and outside the home doing such things as shopping, cleaning, washing, etc, as these are for my husband, my Mother and myself.

I am financially struggling because we have an asset (in the process of being sold) making me ineligible for the carer's pension. As carers are working and contributing to society as well as saving the Government thousands of dollars, the carer's pension should be only income tested the same as a 'Health Card'.

I need help with the heavy jobs around the home like moving furniture, windows, gardening etc. As 'Providers' do only light cleaning this means I have to clean under my Mother's chair as she makes a mess. Our neighbour has a fortnightly cleaning service, but after a glaucoma operation she was able to see how dirty her home is. People the providers send are inappropriate. We need cleaning companies to be given the contract for helping people approved for this service.

The best way to help carers would be to cut out 'Providers' and pay the money direct to carers who would then be the employer of the person doing the work and therefore have a say in the job being done properly. This would be a more efficient use of the funds instead of 'Providers' ripping off the system.

Our income source is nil as we were forced to move the tenants out of our rental property to repair the damage they had done, and put it on the market to repay the money we have had to borrow to live on.

'Providers' should be investigated as they are misleading people by stating they will clean and cook etc then severely limiting what they will do. Also people with dementia need security and by 'Providers' sending a stream of different people it causes stress to both the carer and person being cared for ('caree'?) Even though tasks required are written down in

detail, each time a new person arrives for the job, I have to 'discuss' with him or her what is to be done. The particular 'Provider' I used to have kept telling me the main function of the people they send is to socialise with my Mother. This is about the only thing she does not need. As previously stated it is me she wants to socialise with. I do not have a problem with this. My problem is fitting in the cleaning and gardening.

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,

Gaye