

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

REC 21/7/08

Submission No. 987

(Inq into better support for carers)

Dear Secretary

We 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.

We are submitting to the Inquiry because...

There are too many anomalies between what the government says carers can have and what service providers give carers. The government needs to centralize the service provisions, eliminate most of the service providers to reduce overhead costs associated with management and administration. The government needs to recognize the support of Carer Support Group Facilitators who give voluntarily to assist carers and steer them in the right direction. Too many service providers "fob off" the carer when they approach the service provider for assistance. Majority of service providers believe it is "their money" and not the carers entitlements.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

1. The role and contribution of carers in society

As a carer facilitator, we feel that our role is...

To provide information and support for carers on how to access their entitlements. We are, however, providing much more. We provide social connectedness. We even take on the role of providing respite. We are the only friends they sometimes have. We fundraise to provide an outing to strengthen the carer and give them a short break. We arrange workshops through applying for funds from agencies/etc. This can be very difficult because we are not always successful and there is usually a shortfall between what we need and what we might be given.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

2. The barriers to social and economic participation for carers

As a carer support group facilitator, we know that carers face the following problems ...

CENTRELINK – the attitude where carers are forced to come in on bended knees to beg for support and entitlements.

ISOLATION – especially in rural areas.

LACK OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT – especially in rural areas.

Without association with a Carer Support Group, the carer has no social connectedness.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

3. The practical measures required to better support carers

As a carer support group facilitator, we know carers need help with ...

Have GPs better educated in options and support for carers. There is too much publicized information in pamphlet form – the information is too general. Centrelink attitudes and forms are in major need of overhaul and change. Public advocates are needed to assist with the paperwork and bureaucracy.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

4. Strategies to assist carers to access opportunities and choices

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

Not regarding carers as simpletons. Not denying carers a full pension. Providing funding for alternative therapies which are not currently recognized by the funding agencies/service providers. Ensuring service providers know how to be creative in spending the dollars to suit individual needs.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

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

Signature

BEVELY
CHERYL

VERONIKA

ELISABETH

JOHN

Print your name

JULY 4 2008

Date

BRIGHT CARER SUPPORT GROUP KIEWA VALLEY CARER SUPPORT GROUP
MYRTLEFORD CARER SUPPORT GROUP

c/o 1535 Great Alpine Road SMOKO 3741

email -

Postal Address

Contact Telephone Number