



**Committee, IC (REPS)**

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**From:** Christopher Avram  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 16 February 2011 9:55 AM  
**To:** Committee, IC (REPS)  
**Subject:** Aged care hostel experiences - high speed Internet access

Hi,  
The aged have special problems accessing the Internet because of their shared living arrangements.

I have been a high speed Internet user since 1995. I have supported the technology needs of aged members of my family since that time.

The problems I have found are:-

1. Telstra Bigpond Cable has not been available because the building owners and Telstra could not agree to allow cable wiring to the room.
2. At one nursing home, I was able to have a dedicated direct telephone line installed and got good dial up and later ADSL over it.
3. At another nursing home, because of the PABX, I was prevented by the building owner from having a direct phone line installed, although the resident's room had a PABX telephone I was not able to get ADSL nor dial up access.
4. In this same second home, I was only able to get wireless broadband, BUT the large brick building had many pockets of radio blackout inside the building away from the windows away from the street. I was prevented from installing my own external antenna by the building owner.
5. When Hospitalised, I was requested not to provide wireless broadband in the hospital (switch off mobile phones etc).

In all cases, the residence was close to the telephone exchange, inside the Optus and Telstra cable TV area of supply, and in a heavily populated area, but with plenty of fixed line capacity and no pair gain (inner suburbs of a large city).

My observation was that Internet access for the aged is not just a technology issue but also one of legal rights, and that large building shared accommodation often prevents the normally liberating wireless access from being a practical alternative. Even this problem of building shielding is solvable by appropriate legal rights, as explained in the next paragraph.

At my work, a new building was built with metal walls, preventing wireless access inside the building, the solution was to install leaky coax in the ceiling.

I suggest legislation requiring shared accommodating be built or retrofitted with passive technologies to facilitate wireless access in shared living spaces, and that prohibits building owners and managers restricting access to the proposed NBN in residential spaces. Access to the Internet, at the highest rate is a human right, since it is essential to properly exercise our well accepted rights. As has been said, we have only those rights we can enforce. Freedom of association is just one right that in 2011 in Australia requires enforceable (high speed) Internet access. We need to be able to enforce that right.

Regards

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