



## **Better Care for our Carers**

### ***Overwhelming response to inquiry***

The House Family and Community Committee has been delighted with the overwhelming response to its inquiry into better support for carers.

Carers are those who look after others, usually family members and friends with a chronic illness, disability or frailty. So far the Committee has received some 1,200 submissions to the inquiry, most of these from carers themselves. Because of the demands placed on carers they are often exhausted, socially isolated and under financial pressure as they find it difficult to access the jobs market.

“The fact that so many carers have taken scarce spare time to contribute to the inquiry indicates their levels of concern” said Committee Chair Annette Ellis. Ms Ellis reminded people that the inquiry was a public process and that as soon as the Committee meets to formally receive these submissions, they will be placed on the Committee’s website for all to read.

Public hearings for the inquiry have already begun. These hearings provide an opportunity for the Committee to talk first hand to carers and to the groups that support them. Ms Ellis reported that the first hearing, in Perth on 23 July, had been a great success. A feature of the hearing was a round table meeting with individual carers which enabled them to raise their concerns with the Committee in an open public debate. Ms Ellis said that the Committee would repeat these round table meetings at all other hearings, including those already scheduled for Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Brisbane.

Ms Ellis predicted that the Committee would also travel to other capitals and to rural areas. The submissions received so far indicate that carers in regional and remote areas face even greater challenges of isolation, finding services and respite.

People interested in the inquiry are encouraged to check the Committee website regularly ([www.aph.gov.au/fchy](http://www.aph.gov.au/fchy)). Submissions will be made available as quickly as possible and details of future public hearings will be posted. Transcripts of the public hearings will also be made available shortly after the hearings are held.

Ms Ellis said the inquiry was an important and timely opportunity for carers to have their say in a public process. The Committee looks forward to meeting more carers, listening to their concerns and discussing ways in which the government can offer them better support.

**For media comment**, please contact the Committee Chair, Ms Annette Ellis, on (02) 6293 1344 (electorate office).

**For all other inquiries** please contact the Inquiry Secretary by phone on (02) 6277 4566 or by email [fchy.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:fchy.reps@aph.gov.au) or visit the Committee's website: [www.aph.gov.au/fchy](http://www.aph.gov.au/fchy)