



A.O.C. 7/7/08

Submission No. 564

(Inq into better support for carers)

23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2008

Jan

Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing & Youth  
PO Box 6021  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Secretary,

I contribute to Australian Society by being a carer for my husband over many years after he was diagnosed with a disability 25 years ago. Since we both retired in 1997 as working was too difficult for him my caring role has increased immensely in the past 7 years as he is confined to a wheelchair. We worked hard to put enough money away for his future so does not rely on government help except the carer's allowance which we are grateful for. I feel so sorry for people who are in financial difficulties as I know just how much money we have to spend each week to meets his needs.

The things that stress me the most about being a carer is the future, as being 65 myself the toll on my body with helping him and the lifting of wheelchairs is getting difficult and participating in a social life and enjoying my grandchildren is something I really miss.

Help is needed in the area of difficulties in accessing services which I found to be extremely difficult and some sort of guide to be available to find services in areas of respite in case of emergencies and help when the carer just feels that they at rock bottom and need a break.

In the past 7 years my husband has had 4 operations and each time he has been sent home far too quickly and it is always left with the carer to be a nurse as well, which plays a big toll. Being a carer, (especially a self funded one) is saving the Government heaps of money and there needs to be more help out there, even though I am paying for all my services, such as Equipment, Physiotherapists, Rehabilitation, Personal Care and 3 Hours respite per week was so hard to find and so stressful.

I just hope I keep well as I would hate my children to have to carry on my role as a 'carer'

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,