

To: Committee Secretary
 Inquiry into Better Support for Carers
 House of Reps. Standing Committee on Family,
 Community, Housing + Youth

Dear Sir / Madam Secretary,

I wish to
 make the following submission to your
 committee for better support for carers
 I feel my role is to care for my
 daughter who is developmentally disabled
 I have effectively cared for her for
 55 yrs. I am 85 myself and have
 had 7 children.

I have made my contribution to
 Australian society by supporting my
 deceased husband who worked for many
 years on the Snowy Mountains Scheme
 & bringing up my children who now
 make their contribution in various ways.
 I continue to contribute to Australian
 society and save the Australian taxpayer
 by not having either myself or my daughter
 in care. I cannot fully participate in social
 life because of these demands which have
 always had to take precedence in my life.
 Juggling the needs of 7 children one of
 which whom is developmentally ~~developed~~^{disabled} has
 been more than challenging as you might

imagine. Often it has been ^{with} and felt like as if there has been very little support. It has only been relatively recently that attitudes towards developmentally and indeed many disadvantaged persons ~~and~~ have changed. There is a legacy here that one continues to deal with. Also the recognition of the role of carer and financial support for this - we save the community a great deal of money - is only just beginning to be understood.

One of the big things that worry me most about being the carer of my daughter for so long is her future when and if I am no longer able to care for her and when I die. My children hopefully will be able to play their part but they have their lives, work and relationships. Things are very different in approach now with women working and the pace of society and patterns established with my daughter and myself will cause difficulties and upsets when change inevitably comes. I and my children are trying to address these things but it is very important that services are in place that are flexible to the needs of and circumstances of carers in different situations. What works for you may not work for me. Carers need an active say in how the financial support they are entitled to and the services that are set up to help them are used. Respite is very important.

So is being able to access transport for this and other services as I do not have a car and no longer drive. If 2 separate groups

One of the big difficulties for me has been accessing services due to the complex nature of the relationship between federal and state funded services. In some cases people are not even made aware of what they are entitled to and need these things to be set out in an understandable way and with someone sensitive to their particular needs to explain it. Simplifying the process by which carers can access the funds and their having more control over how they can best use these funds with the help of community based services in place to assist would be very ~~helpful~~ helpful to all involved with the caring. For my part money for programmes to teach my daughter computing are more than useless. Examples like this have been offered to me on a number of occasions. Cooking classes, one to one outings or group social outings and simple craft programmes for my daughter are very useful. So is respite for both of us and of course transport.

Summing up I'm pleased that the government seems to be more in touch with the role carers play as a significant unpaid workforce often ~~trying~~ working under sometimes very difficult circumstances to help those we care for. If they seriously support our efforts and those of the service providers who support us we can go forward to a fairer go for all Australians.

As it is often those that do the real work that society could not function without that are undervalued, under paid, overworked and go unrecognised.

With time this erodes our values and the whole society is poorer and the problems become bigger and seem insurmountable.

I am glad to see the Government and society are seriously addressing and continuing to build a better Australia for everyone.

I hope my submission which ^{one of} my daughter has helped in writing helps this process.

Sincerely,

Hilary