

25 July 2008

AOC 1617108
Submission No. 833
(Inq into better support for carers)

Gwendoline

Secretary
Inquiry into Better Support for Carers
Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth
PO Box 6021
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Secretary

I 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.

Contribute to Society by doing the job which the Government would have to pay someone else to do therefore saving the government millions of dollars each year.

It affects my life looking after my son for 34 years. I worked for 12 years but had to give up work due to Arthritic knees condition, had an operation, shortly after I had to take on full time care for my husband which caused constant stress leading to on going fatigue.

The Barriers to social and economic participation for carers are unable to work as caring for both my husband and son leads to a huge decrease in income and we struggle to make ends meet leading to having no money to put away for retirement. An extra payment for Carers be paid by the Government into a superannuation fund would be very useful and appreciated.

Centrelink have the repetition of forms and letters addressed to Ernest & Gwendoline
'Centrelink was advised of Ernest's death on Tuesday 2nd January 2008 and their files have not altered as yet and this is very distressing.
It would most helpful if there was a direct phone line to local Centelink centres instead of 1800number in another state which is quite impersonal.

Unreasonable reporting requirements, having to report being absent from the person being cared for. Is there a 'fine punishment' if the carers should forget to make a report, it would add to the stress as carer dread extra expense.

My son was diagnosed with intellectual impairment, slow muscle and speech development, we never received any funding from DSQ to assist with his care. Only receiving mobility allowance and rent assistance.

Neil socially capable of physically working (gardening 3 mornings a week). Social activities confined to hours of 8am to 12noon, 3 classes a week. Unable to go to entertainment such as movies, theatre etc like other members of the community. When person caring for unco-operative adds to stress of caring role.

The practical measures required to better support myself would be provision of a support worker on days when my son is not working, to free me up to attend to personal and business matters and maybe even find a little time for myself to follow my own interests.

Provision of superannuation fund passed into by government for carers. Assistance with the costs of disability aids and equipment which are very expensive.

Thank you for taking my views into consideration as part of the Committee's Inquiry. I look forward to reviewing the recommendations you make in order to improve support for carers.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'G.D.'.

Gwendoline