

Submission No. 602

(Inq into better support for carers)

A.O.C. 8/7/08

26 - 06 - 08

COMMITTEE SECRETARY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FAMILY, COMMUNITY, HOUSING & 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.

I AM WRITING AS AN OLDER CARER AND THE THINGS THAT STRESS ME MOST ABOUT BEING A CARER. AT THE AGE OF 61 MY HUSBAND HAD AN ACCIDENT IN OUR BACKYARD RESULTING IN AQUIRED BRAIN INJURY. NOW 10 YRS. ON HE IS 71, I AM 67. HE DOES NOT ENJOY COMPANY, HAS TO HAVE SURROUND SOUND ALMOST 24 HRS A DAY (T.V./RADIO) HAS LOST CONVERSATION SKILLS, REPEATS THINGS CONSTANTLY AND CAN ACT LIKE A SPOILT CHILD. I WORRY ABOUT MY FUTURE BECAUSE OF THIS AND I FEEL MY ROLE AS A CARER IS BASICALLY NURSEMAID, HOUSEKEEPER/MAINTAINENCE PERSON.

AS TIME GOES ON I FACE THE PROBLEM OF WHO CARES FOR HIM IF I GO BEFORE HIM (AS CARERS OFTEN DO) HE CAN NOT LIVE ALONE AS HE CAN NOT LOOK AFTER HIMSELF.

I NEED HELP WITH THIS PROBLEM NOW AND THINK THAT PERMANENT CARE FOR MY HUSBAND WOULD BE THE BEST SOLUTION FOR ME, BUT THAT IS PROVING HARD TO COME BY, AS HE IS ASSESSED AT THE MOMENT AS "LOW BAND" THE FACILITIES ONLY WANT BEDRIDDEN PEOPLE AS THEY RECEIVE MORE GOVERNMENT FUNDING FOR THEM. THEY TELL ME THE SITUATION IS TAKEN ON NEED. WHOSE NEED, LIVING WITH SOMEONE WITH A MENTAL AFFLICTION IS VERY STRESSFUL AND VERY DRAINING, I WOULD NOT WISH MY POSITION ON ANYONE.

OUR MAIN SOURCE OF INCOME IS AGED & CARER PENSION PLUS CARER ALLOWANCE, SO IF MY HUSBAND WAS TO GO INTO PERMANENT CARE IT WOULD BE A FINANCIAL STRUGGLE ON A SINGLE PENSION TO KEEP THE HOUSE MAINTAINED AND TO LIVE, BUT I GUESS I WOULD RETAIN MY SANITY!

THANK YOU FOR ALLOWING ME TO VOICE MY OPINION, TAKING MY VIEWS INTO CONSIDERATION AS PART OF THE COMMUNITY INQUIRY. I LOOK FORWARD TO REVIEWING ANY RECOMMENDATIONS YOU MAKE TO IMPROVE LIFE FOR CARERS IN AUSTRALIA.

YOURS FAITHFULLY

ELIZABETH