

Submission No. 1192

(Inq into better support for carers)

AOC 4/8/08

Committee Secretary
Inquiry into Better Support for Carers
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family,
Community, Housing and Youth
PO Box 6021
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 submitting to the inquiry because... as a volunteer and a person who is interested in community matters I am aware of the need for compassion and help to those less fortunate and also as a parent of a family member who suffers a mental illness I have a responsibility and a stake in this area

1. The role and contribution of carers in society

As a carer, I feel that my role is ... one of being there when required to assist and hopefully to help my family member and others who are in need of assistance to handle their situations and to cope and not feel isolated. It is also a responsibility that we as citizens should be prepared to shoulder and to work towards improving their situations

2. The Barriers to social and economic participation for carers

As a carer I have the following problems: ... being pensioners (my wife's) there are financial constraints that make it difficult for people in our situations to manage social relief from our loved one problems (although in my case that's not such a big issue) our biggest area of concern is the provision - or more the lack of proper Psychiatric community care that clients receive from field workers and in the country the difficulty of obtaining access to Psychiatrists

3. The practical measures required to better support carers

As a carer, I need help with

Being accepted as a useful tool by Psychiatric services in the health and welfare of our loved ones.
Being deprived from meaningful discussion with health professionals through "Confidentiality"
Being kept in the dark about changes to our loved ones medication/therapy/care management until it occurs. We should be part of the decision making process.

4. Strategies to assist carers to access opportunities and choices

I think the Government can better help carers by

making an attempt ensure that decisions on respite time are ① necessary ② that are provided to the correct person - carer or client. ③ That the option provided will fill the considered need.

Over some years we have found that the respite offered and taken up by our loved one has been a complete waste of time & money and in fact we were of the opinion that the agency was virtually just qualifying it's work sheet of cases attended to.

Thank you for taking my ideas into consideration as part of the Committees Inquiry. I look forward to reviewing any recommendations you make to improve life for carers of Australia

Yours sincerely

Print name ROBERT

Date 30-6-2008