

Sent: Monday, 16 June 2008 2:03 PM

To: Committee, FCHY (REPS)

Subject: Better support for carers

I am a relatively new carer , and wish to submit the following:

1. After a lifetime of back trouble, my wife was diagnosed with spina bifida some thirteen years ago, but it was not until last year (2007) that we accidentally found that I could become a carer for her – a job I had been doing anyway. There is no information about caring available from government departments until an enquiry is made to them.
2. There is no information published for the general public about services for the disabled other than the more spectacular forms of disability caused by accidents etcetera, especially about caring – it is left to the family to access this information.
3. There is no financial assistance available for supplying or replacing equipment necessary for the welfare of the person being cared for. Therefore it falls to the family carer to partially provide the necessary money.
4. We are age pensioners and find that pensioners are forced to join private medical insurance organizations for some basic services like optical, dental, podiatry etcetera which are not covered by medicare.
5. Because of her disability, my wife cannot drive a car (like many other disable persons). I am therefore her chauffeur whenever she needs to go anywhere. Public transport is almost universally inadequate or inconvenient and taxis are expensive.

Neville