

Submission No. 782
(Inq into better support for carers)

From: Maureen
Sent: Monday, 30 June 2008 7:21 PM
To: Committee, FCHY (REPS)
Subject: Carer's inquiry submission

Acc 15/7/08

Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth
PO Box 6021
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
AUSTRALIA

Carer's inquiry submission

As a carer of my son for the last 22 years and at my age of 54 I feel there is a desperate need for respite.

I have always worked part time up until my son turned 18 and finished school. I had to relinquish my job to look after my son fulltime.

I did not received respite for two reasons one being I have always believed there is someone worse off than me and the fact I have to actually beg to receive help. And you will find that a lot of parents just do the same as I have done all these years and soldiered on not complain and not ask for help, we think why bother....

I have just finished over 6 months of chemotherapy and radiation therapy for breast cancer; I had to belittle myself to ask for assistance from the commonwealth respite agency for respite which I received for a period of 6 weeks for a period of 2 hours a week. WHAT A JOKE!

So can you imagine trying to shower & bowel clean out your dependent while trying not to throw up from the sickness chemo causes?

I have always agonised over what will happen to my son when I'm no longer here to care for him, now the time may be sooner than I once thought.

It's sad to hope that your child goes before you but that is a reality for parents of disabled children, which cause us stress and depression.

If it is group respite it also needs to be appropriate to the mental capacity of the person seeking the respite.

Young children shouldn't have to spent their lives in nursing homes with old aged people
And people of mild intellectual disability don't want to be put into respite with severely disabled people.

Thank you.