



Carers a 'crucial lynchpin' of the community

Committee listens to carers in Melbourne

Support by Australian's for their family members and friends who have a disability, mental illness chronic condition, or who are frail aged is a 'crucial lynchpin' of strong communities according to Carers Victoria.

The House of Representatives Family and Community Committee will be listening to Carers Victoria, among others, at a public hearing in Melbourne on Tuesday 12 August for the committee's inquiry into better support for carers.

Carers Victoria notes that most Australian's will provide some form of care across their life span. Recent figures from an Australian Bureau of Statistics survey found there were over 2.5 million carers in Australia, including more than 470,000 primary carers – people who provide the most care to a person needing support. However, the longer people act as carers the more likely that they will become socially isolated, exhausted and suffer financial pressure.

Committee Chair Annette Ellis (Member for Canberra, ACT) said that the committee had been struck by the range of challenges most carers faced on a day to day basis. With over 1200 submissions received so far, the committee has had a window into the lives of many carers.

The committee will also hold a roundtable discussion with a number invited carers at the public hearing in order to hear from more carers first hand. The committee will be asking for suggestions on how to make carers' work easier.

The day's program is as follows:

9:00 am – 4:45 pm, Tuesday 12 August 2008 The K Room, Level 1, Parliament House, Melbourne

9:00 am	Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists (RANZCP)
9:30 am	Victorian Mental Health Carers Network
10:15 am	Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)
10:45 am	BrainLink
11:15 am	Carers Victoria
11:45 am	Carers Roundtable
2:00 pm	Brotherhood of St Laurence
2:30 pm	Huntington's Victoria
3:00 pm	MS Australia
3:45 pm	Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO)
4:15 pm	Australian Association of Families of Children with a Disability
4:45 pm	Close

Members of the public are welcome to observe proceedings.

For media comment, please contact the Committee Chair, Ms Annette Ellis, on (02) 6293 1344 (electorate office).

For all other inquiries please contact the Inquiry Secretary by phone on (02) 6277 4566 or by email fchy.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/fchy