

Submission No. 1281  
(Inq into better support for carers)

A.O-C 5/9/08

**From:**  
**Sent:** Thursday, 28 August 2008 11:41 AM

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**From:** Dale  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 27 August 2008 3:54 PM  
**To:** (A. Ellis, MP)  
**Subject:** Carers Leave

Hi

Both my wife and I recently commenced the fulltime, 24 hour a day care of my wife's mother. We are both federal public servants but have noticed inconsistencies with how we are treated from our respective employing departments. With sick and carers leave entitlements they have recently been bundled up into what is termed as 'Personal Leave'.

My wife has recently taken 4 weeks of her annual leave to care for her mother, with assisting also the needs of her elderly father and disabled sister. (Unfortunately she is the only abled body person in her family.) Prior to her scheduled return to work her mother had a fall which has incapacitated her further and also resulted in a short stay in hospital for surgery. As consequence she currently requires constant attention and aid, and will do so for the next 6 weeks (approximately) before she is able to start doing things for herself again. Even then there will be some struggle for her to do everyday tasks.

When enquiring about personal leave to care for her mother she was granted one week of leave. Any other leave was to be annual leave or Leave without pay. She has an accrued amount of 34 weeks personal leave available to her.

29/08/2008

Our question is: With Annette Ellis's experience as Inquiry Chairperson in the recent Carer's Inquiry, were any set recommendations set into place to assist family members who have found themselves in the unenviable position to take on the challenge of caring for a parent at the detriment of their work, family life and even to a degree their health? There may be services that we may not be aware of that may provide some respite, support or even counselling. Any of these would be beneficial for us to be aware of.

My wife's health has suffered, not so much from the constant caring requirements of her mother, but with stressful encounters with an unsympathetic government organisation that stress to her the importance of Business needs over family.

Currently I am just seeking feedback regarding caring responsibilities and what facilities (including leave) is available. My concern is heightened seeing the emotional impact just dealing with a government employer effective my wife.

If you are able to assist us in any way with information it would be most appreciated.

Dale and Sarina