

24.7.08

Secretary
Inquiry into better support for Carers
Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth.
P.O. Box 6021
House of Representatives
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.

My role as a carer is as a carer for my daughter and her husband. (both are on disability pension) They are in an independent living situation but need constant help with shopping, doctors visits etc. as well as with accessing anything that requires transport in their lives such as sport and leisure. I also supervise their home duties as they do not receive the help of a support worker. I am in constant phone contact with them. I had to attend a tribunal in Brisbane in order to get a Carer Allowance to look after my daughter and son in law.

I contribute to society by providing them with the above service thereby not needing the services of a government paid support worker

I think this should be recognised by the government by providing an allowance to assist me to continuing to support my daughter and her husband also to cover my time, petrol, etc

My caring role affects my life by using my time that I would like to use to take up other duties or employment or go fishing with my husband. It affects his life because he has to go fishing all by himself. Holidays have at times had to be put on hold.

I find it difficult financially as my daughter and her husband live approx. 30 kms away and going daily to support them is a financial burden to us. My husband and I are pensioners I am 66 and my husband is 70 yrs old and we have a limited budget. Also limited energy. If they want to go to a social or sporting function we have to take them and thereby incur the cost of the transport and the entry to the function. If they had a card - which stated that they could not access the facility without our support - and that card would help cover our costs

The barriers I experience as a carer are that I am tied to looking after my daughter and her husband. If I want to go anywhere or do anything or need to have an operation then I have to find someone else –a friend who is willing - to take over from me for the day, week or whatever time I need to attend to my own problems. This is a huge problem because other people do not have the time to spare. I am not able to have the lifestyle that non-carers have because my life is dictated by the needs of my daughter and her husband.

The practical measures that would better support me are: -

Support respite type of support that I could call on in an emergency (operation) or be able to have a short holiday.

Financial support would be an increase in

1. Carers Payment,
2. Petrol Vouchers
3. Discount on Car Service
4. Card that would allow me (when assisting my daughter) to travel or enter a function free or at a reduced rate.
5. Phone Vouchers.

Thank you for taking my views into consideration as part of the Committee's Inquiry I look forward to reviewing the recommendation you make in order to improve support for carers.

Yours Sincerely



LENA