

Submission to Senate Inquiry into Aged Care

The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs References Committee
Suite S1 59
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

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Submission from:

Denis Ginnivan
Manager
South West Brain Injury Rehabilitation Service
PO Box 326
Albury NSW 2640

South West Brain Injury Rehabilitation Service is a regional brain injury service provider based at Albury, and services a large rural region in southern NSW and northern Victoria. We provide a wide range of post hospital, transitional brain injury services for people who are returning back into the community. However for those who are severely injured, and have very high level care needs, and do not have compensation, the most likely scenario or outcome is that the person would be placed in a nursing home.

We are aware of many young people who are in nursing homes, a situation which is highly unsatisfactory because of the age inappropriateness, and the subsequent restrictions placed on younger people to conform to older persons' expectations.

As a regional provider we expect to have more clients who will be requiring accommodation after rehabilitation. The inappropriate placement of younger people in nursing homes leads to what I believe to be an abuse of their human rights to live a meaningful life, and to a highly negative scenario in which family members attempt to be supportive. In effect the environment will work against the family's capacity to be effective carers.

In this region our service has embarked on a range of strategies to attempt to address this important issue. They include

- supporting the development and functioning of the national 'Young People In Nursing Homes' project
- community awareness raising through media activity
- development of an application to the Federal Government Innovative Pool – nil result
- collection and presentation of data regarding the support needs of people with high level disability, to the relevant state government authorities in both states.

Whilst there have been a number of regional strategies adopted in relation to this issue, we believe that solutions lie in the extent to which both the federal and state governments jointly respond. The consumers, and their carers should not become the innocent parties in a funding stand-off between these levels of government.

I am more than willing to make a fuller presentation to the inquiry should that be required. This submission does not need to be treated as confidential by the committee.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.