

Attention : Senators.

For many years I have been frustrated and angry with the lack of services available for my hearing care.

I am 31 years old, I have a severe profound hearing loss and wear two hearing aids. I work full-time in the Hospitality Industry and study part-time at Newcastle University. I speak orally and I was born genetically deaf. I had a disability pension till I got my full time job at the age of 21. Back then I had access and full care. Now I cannot afford to get new hearing aids, pay for my hearing tests, repairs, moulds and batteries.

I have been to a private practice and could not afford their care anymore. I have a full private health cover insurance that does not cover my hearing aids or even repairs/moulds etc.

I am very frustrated that I have a choice....

1, Give up my full time career, (worked for 10 years) and go back on the disability pension and get FREE hearing care.

2, Keep my low income job, and put up with my old hearing aids, pay for the batteries and many years to come I might loose my speech.

It is outrageous!!

It is very unfair that many low income earners work hard, stay in the job and not get those benefits, we pay taxes and the services from Australian Hearing (Federally funded) should be available for **ALL DEAF AUSTRALIANS**.

Myself and many other low income workers would want to keep our jobs. We would save the government welfare expenditure (disability pensions) a large amount of money if there was an incentive for low income workers to stay employed and get FREE hearing health care. We would want to be able to hear better like everyone else such as the elderly, children and deaf adults who are already enjoying the benefits of the hearing world.

I don't want to make a choice, I want the Government to make an investment in hearing care for ALL Australians.

I would be better off to apply a disability pension through Centrelink and get free hearing health care. It is plain wrong and stupid for me to do that. I'd rather work full time and be able to have the same audiologist since I was a child and have the wonderful service that Australia Hearing Services already provide. They have my records since I was a child and the private practice cannot have access to them.

This needs attention, everyone should have **equal** access to hearing care, pensioners, the children, the elderly and of course workers who pay their taxes.

It is discriminating that some Australians are being excluded (tax payers) from the Federal Government Hearing Services, who had care before and at the age of 21 and they are being told to go elsewhere and pay for themselves.

I have many friends who gave up, they don't wear hearing aids anymore because they work, they learnt sign language and don't speak very well, they also have lost their speech. They cannot afford to replace, and repair GOVERNMENT ISSUED HEARING AIDS.

Some people have made a choice to get Cochlear implants..... why??? Because it is FREE!!

It is being funded by Medicare. I think it is wonderful but WHY cant we get hearing aids funded for those who wanted to make a choice.

Something has to be DONE!!

Thank you