

TO COMMUNITY AFFAIRS REFERENCE COMMITTEE

RE: INQUIRY into HEARING HEALTH in AUSTRALIA.

Following is my submission to the above.

I make these comments as a parent of a profoundly deaf adult who has been hearing impaired since birth.

Over the years I have noted little funding for research into the aetiology of hearing loss, especially non genetic causes.

Prevention is better than cure. We still don't have a probable cause for our daughters loss.

We have always found it a total oddity for hearing services to be lumped with the "Aged". It sounds like the dark ages!

( Interestingly my child has required prosthetic services since the age of 6, which was under the umbrella of "Veterans Affairs" ! ).

The Insurance industry is totally out of touch & discriminatory with their criteria & coverage. I feel Government intervention is needed to address this situation.

It would help enormously if private Health Insurance gave more assistance, especially to the large costs of hearing aids & Cochlear Implants.

It is clear that technology & medicine have moved on to the Cochlear Implant being the most effective management aid to the vast majority of hearing impaired.

And, from a very early age. Surely it would be something our Government should be totally supporting - it's an Australian invention.

Currently there is minimal Government input in this area. Even if there could be a start by providing support services to the pre & post process of having an implant. Currently there is little an adult can access through the Govt hearing services re assessment, advise and importantly follow-up therapy so the maximize benefits can be achieved.

Thankyou for receiving this & I look forward to your report.

Mrs Janet BENTLEY