

Dear Sir

I would like to make a submission on behalf of my father (83 year old pensioner widower) and the many elderly pensioners that I know around the South Granville area. This area has a high proportion of elderly pensioners and it can be considered a low socio economic area. This area is the opposite of the affluent eastern suburbs or north shore

My father like many other pensioners rely on their aged pension as their sole income. They may be lucky to get a few hundred dollars interests from what little savings they have in the bank. A loaf of bread and a 2 litre bottle of milk is approximately \$5.00 (no name brand) and multiply this by 2 and it comes to \$10 a week. When the pension is approximately \$270 a week, this works out to be 5% of their weekly pension.

The biggest problem is unexpected house repairs plus the utility bills, council rates and medicines. Do you know how much a pair of glasses cost. You would not find any for under \$150.

The cost of living is definitely increasing and when people who are working think the price of fruit and vegetables are dear (currently broccoli is about \$8.00 kilo; lettuce \$4.00 each) imagine how the pensioner feels

One elderly pensioner was in one of the big supermarkets and took home the peeled outer lettuce leaves that would normally be thrown into the bin!!

Unless you are close to someone who is on a pension most people have no idea of how the cost of living impacts on their daily lives. When you are in the workforce spending a few dollars on a cappacino is nothing but to a pensioner this would be considered a real luxury. How often do you see elderley pensioners in Parramatta at Gloria Jeans or Starbucks?

I really urge the politicians and parliamentarians to spend a day at Delwood Shopping Centre South Granville to see how the pensioners live. There is nothing like being out in the coalface to see the reality

I strongly urge the utility allowance be increased especially during winter when the electricity bills go up.

Yours sincerely

Shirley Fong