

"ONE STOP SHOP" for disability

The one thing that stands out to us is that there is not really one source to find out about services, facilities and benefits which may be available to people with a disability.

For congenital conditions a disability is determined very early on by medicos, but depending on the nature of it and the doctor there does not seem to be a natural path to follow for parents to access help.

Equally, perhaps following an accident or later diagnosis of a condition the same applies. We have experienced this with our son, for congenital issues and later as the result of a motor bike accident. It really is very hard for the un-initiated in disability to know what to do or where to go for help.

In spite of us thinking we are pretty smart in these matters it was not until in 2000, 5 years after an accident, when our son was 33 that we became aware from a friend that we may be entitled to a carers allowance or payment. Some years later, also, through another friend, we found out that Harvey could get home help through his local council.

As they say "you don't know what you don't know", and one could be missing out on help, services and financial help.

What is required is a "One Stop Shop", where one can initially be referred to by the medical profession. This "Shop" will be aware of all the services and help organisations available for any and all disability conditions. These would include Centrelink and other government agencies. The "Shop" will be available to all from the very young to the ageing.

Generally, the various organisations will be able to provide advice or direct help. In the case of Centrelink there should be a special department or desk that deals with all financial assistance available and which informs applicants as to what is available. It should not be left to the applicant to somehow find out from other sources what may be available. The onus should be on Centrelink to prompt claims of assistance entitlement.

regards

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