

1-11-09

Senator Rachell Siewert
Chair of Suicide Inquiry
Canberra

Dear madam,

my Schizophrenic daughter, now 52,
and ~~the~~, now 81 came to live in
Brisbane because my family living
here thought we should be near as
we got older. I had heard lectures
by a nurse from a Melbourne University
and thought it would be alright. It
was not what we expected. The local
M. Health ignored a letter from a previous
doctor and treated her for two mental
illnesses, one of which she did not have.
The treatment for the second illness was
forced by order. She slept 16-18 hours
per day and was groggy the rest of the

time. I asked that her medication be looked at. The result of that call was two large ladies from M.H. and a male const female police people with guns. I would not let the police in with guns but the 2 women pushed past me, rushed up stairs and dragged my daughter out of bed and shoved her in a car and took her to hospital. A couple of weeks later she came home with a few hundred tablets of the drug which was causing the sleeping, which she was 'ordered' to take. Before it had been given ^{by injection} ~~by~~ ^{by} I did not know that she had so many tablets. The end of that was she wrote me a note saying that she might as well sleep all the time as most of it. I found her barely breathing, called an ambulance and she was saved. I made a big row about it and she is now not taking that drug and

with the proper medication is back to being the usual happy self that she is normally and most of the time. I note that the doctor at the hospital told a MHE tribunal that she tried to kill herself because she heard voices that told her to, although he had read her suicide note. I also know of a young man in my son's extended family who succeeded in killing himself when he was sent home against the wishes of his grandmother with whom he lived. He was depressed and upset at a split in his immediate family. I think mental health in this country has a lot to answer for. Also boredom is a big thing. Living on a benefit does not allow for much of a life and to be frank if you are old or on a benefit there is not much one can do. I joined an old people's group here and one Tuesday one played bowls which is beyond my ability and the 2nd Tuesday it was loud music which gave me a headache. In the town where I lived previously I belonged to a 60s Up Club of about 1000 we met once a month for a talk about

Something topical and afternoon tea.
Then one could put your name down for
bus trips (usually to orchards to buy fruit
~~for~~ or vineyards or to scenic spots -
never to play pokies) ^{as I did here once} One could join a
walking group - they went to the foot-
hills of the ~~pretty~~ malayas in India, an opera
group, a theatre group, a reading group,
cats and ^{gardening} crafts, ^{car orienting} and so on. I belonged
to a group of about 30 who took it in
turns to have "elevenses" on Sunday
One took a bottle or two of wine and
something for lunch. Having lived
also in England for 3 years while
travelling in Europe I have come to
the conclusion that for the elderly
~~it~~ ^{this} is the most boring place to live.
And as for mental health, well that
in my daughter's case has taken a turn
for the best and at the moment she is
with the encouragement of several people
~~writing~~ ^{writing} a biography of her life with a ^{an}
illness. She was a teacher, worked for TV and met
your faithful ^{4 members of}
Shirley Thompson ^{the royal family}
^{and}
^{travelled}
Before we came here

P.S. I have just remembered
that a Finnish lady I met at the
Old Peoples Club also died myster-
iously. She had been used to an
exalted life style - private planes,
great hotels. She was very lonely
and unhappy, bored literally to
death, I think. I invited her to
meals and listened to her stories
but it was not enough.

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