

To: Committee, Mental Health (SEN)
Subject: submission select committee on mental health

Submission to Senate Select Committee

I have worked in mental health as a senior registered nurse for over 35 years and have a son aged 24 with a mental illness.

When he was first diagnosed and entered 'the system' I did not expect any extra care or support from mental health. I wanted him treated like everyone else who is assessed and treated.

Unfortunately for my son and my family he was treated like everyone else with difficulty accessing the service, a non co-ordinated discharge process, lack of community follow-up and no adequate facilities for medium to long term care. I will refrain from expanding on the litany of errors and neglect that we experienced.

Community resources are non existent for young people with a mental illness to get them back into the workforce and become part of a social system.

The lack of carer/family consultation was breathtaking with things only improving when I wrote a letter of complaint to my local state member Noreen Hay.

I was fortunate because I knew what should be happening and I knew the complaint process.

The Commonwealth is currently spending millions of dollars funding projects such as The Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classification Network (AMHOCN) working out of The New South Wales Institute of Psychiatry with the motto "Sharing Information to Improve Outcomes". What sharing has happened and how has this improved the system for clinicians who are dutifully completing outcome measures or my son? I know the theory behind this project but the reality is very different.

Sincerely