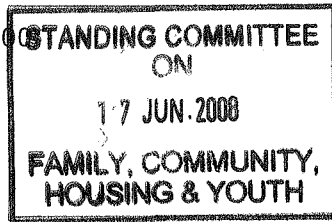


Committee Secretary  
Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth  
PO Box 6021  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
AUSTRALIA

A.O.C. 27/6/08  
Submission No. 199  
(Inq into better support for carers)



Dear Secretary

I wish to make a submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family, Community, Housing and Youth's Inquiry into Better Support for Carers.

As a Carer, I feel that my role is ....

OO A WHOLE PRETTY GOOD. I HAVE BEEN  
BOUGHT UP "WHAT YOU GIVE IN LIFE YOU  
GET BACK"

I face the following problems ...

GETTING SOMEONE TO HELP PRUNE  
FRUIT TREES

I need help with ...

RAILINGS IN BATHROOM & TOILET.  
SAFETY RAIL ON FRONT VERANDA  
AEROD CARD FOR PARKING - HUSBAND FEEL  
TO WALK TOO FAR

I think the Government can better help Carers by ...

INCLUDE THOSE WE CARE FOR, TO BE  
INVOLVED IN SOME OF THE OUTINGS  
THAT OTHERS ORGANISE FOR US

Thank you for taking my views into consideration as part of the Committee's Inquiry. I look forward to reviewing any recommendations you make to improve life for Carers in Australia.

Yours sincerely  
[Sign your name here]

[Type or clearly print your name here]

**Inquiry into Better Support for Carers**

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family,  
Community, Housing and Youth

MARGARET

14.6.2008

Margaret

Committee Secretary,  
Canberra.

Basil and I have been married just on 55 years. 2 years into marriage, Bas had his first seizure. Revelant Doctors through the years, have tried different medications only successful to a certain degree. Like diabetics, you have to change medication as you build up an immunity.

When married, we agreed, my place was at home to look after the family and house. Even though Bas was highly qualified, he only earnt a low wage, (a blue collar worker) For the 1st ten years, we didnt have holidays, took the money and Bas kept working. I never looked for work till 1982, and worked with the Census bureau, then for the State and Federal elections. By now the family had grown up, all getting a good education.

They grow up with home made clothes and jumpers and simple food. No money for luxuries.

I had a mastectomy in 1983, and restricted on food, as it all contains food additives and chemicals. I purchase 3 pr bras, each 2 years, approx \$70.00 pair, the Cancer council kindly pay for one pr bras, as I am on a pension. The prothesis \$320.00, the Cancer council also put in to help me pay for it. There are no refunds through Hospital Benefits, even though I have tried.

TEETH. Bas should have had his bottom teeth out years ago, but the dentist resist, and say they must be filled, or cleaned. Our Doctor told the dentist he had to take one out. Took 2 visits before it came out. 3 hours later, and a bill of \$310.00 Evidntly some dentist have an agreement with Hosp. N'fits, they charge a lower amount and we get a bigger refund. Unfortunately the one here in Mundaring, will not sign the agreement. The one in M;dland Junction cleaned bas teeth ( 10m) and charged \$162.00

Once my husband turned 75, our G.P. told him, he could do no more for his seizures. Then we were referred to a Neurologist. 1st visit 30.10.06 for an hour, she charge \$210, subsequent visits, every 3 months \$110.00, far over the recommended fee by Medicare. Then there was EEG 127.85, MRI \$60.00, this was charged because we were on a pension. Up todate, she hasnt done much better then the G.P. Admitidly she is trying, changing medications on a regular basis.

One year whilst at the Dowerin Field day, came upon the Carers stand. Got talking to staff, and was told to contact Centrelink about getting the carers allce for Bas. It all boils down, we are still living from week to week, paying our way, the Shire over 6 months, Water rates, Electricity and phone paid on due date, we look nobody in the eye knowing we owe them money. Our food is simple, we have never drunk alcohol or smoked. I am always on the look out for reasonable priced entertainment. Being an epileptic, cannot watch a lot of T.V. or go to the theatre to watch a film. We rarely buy clothes, when the family dont want them any more, they come to us, if we can wear them we keep the clothes, or hand them into the local church to help otheRS in more need than us.

We have three children, with grand children and great grandchildren, they are too busy with their own lives to help us.

Bas has a seasonal vege patch and we have cross budded fruit trees, grown without chemicals.

The last 30 years Bas has been assessed to see if he is capable of staying in our own home. This year is the first time we have asked for help. A rail on the front verandah, coming up the steps, a rail in shower and toilet. I also asked for the ACROD card, as Bas is getting quite frail, and unable to walk the length of the car parks in the shopping centres. Also asked for occasional help in the garden. Some of the trees are far too high for Bas to prune. Otherwise we are coping, and staying independent, I know there are others far worse off than us, but would still like a little help. We don't have the money to pay a full price gardener. One chap quoted \$500, to prune the cape lilac tree, I made a lot of phone calls, but cannot find any insurance Co. that will cover him on our property, didn't have the \$500.00 either.

The latest saga in our life, when Bas has a seizure at night, he loses control of his bladder, so now have to incontinent underwear for men. He is very upset when this happens, but I only console him, remake the bed. Next day off to the laundramat to wash and dry them. When we married we promised to look after each other, so am determined to keep my wedding vows.

I feel the Federal Govt. could do a lot more to help those in need. Was told not feasible to put photos on pension cards, to enable us to have the G.S.T. taken off our food bill.

It has got to the stage I now have to look at the cheaper brands of food. Cheaper cuts of meat. We never have take away. Finding Australian made is getting very hard to find. I purchased a piece of red schnapper yesterday for Bas as a treat. 33.99 per kilo, one piece cost 10.91. All other seafood was imported and didn't look at least advertising. This was the first REAL fish we had had for months. Sorry to burble on for so long, have waited for years to get it all off my chest. On a whole, I think the pensioners and Carers get a pretty raw deal. When Bas was at work, there was no Super, and I didn't go to work, so have no nest egg behind us, we own our home, can look all and sundry in the face, knowing we owe nobody anything.

Yours truly

Margaret & Basil  
14/6/08