

Committee Secretary  
Inquiry into Better Support for Carers  
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Family,  
Community, Housing and Youth  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Submission No. 606  
(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.

I am submitting to the Inquiry because...

I feel that cares are often ignored in the mental health process. Doctors continue to prescribe medication for family members without checking with carers as to how this will effect the patient. Often the patient reacts to this medication as it is not suitable and the family member become suddenly unwell, either irrational, violent, sedated, loss of appetite and often no one understand why this is happening as they are unaware the medication has been changed. Consulting carers in the treatment for mental illness is vital for their support. Families breakdown due to inconsistent treatment difficulty in having access to information about the member living at home. The children then become frightened untrusting of their faother mother or sibling and we all live in silence. WE still have to go to work to support the family carers allowance is around \$50 per week and is only available for those with TDR's that reflect the situation at its worst. Mental illness is permanent in our case will not go away yet we are continuing to have to be reviewed and reassessed for any benefits. Meidications cost over \$200 per month and when well and the member canwork they lose their health care card resulting in a huge part of the wges going on medication and doctors full paying clinics. AS the financial situation goes down the patients feels anxious again becomes depressed and then the job is in epoardy hence another full review by centrelink taking months more forms yet the diagnosis does not change it is episoti and should be given a permanent status for ongoing care and financial support by the government. cAers are always having to juggles jobs kids relationship problems due to the illness and yet are not recognized. Who takes care of us? CAT teams amount to CANT ATTEND TODAY TEAMS unless there is blood they say at the hospital and they have actually made a start of the suicide attempt we cannot get admitted no one is there in the middle of the night when one says often I just cannot do this anymore and I cannot see you be put through this pain either it is better for all that I leave this world. A COMMON COMMENT FROM A PERSON WITH MENTAL ILLNESS FEELING THERE IS NO MEDICAL COMPASSION IN THIS STATE. THUS THE CARER CONTINUES TO TRY TO BE THE PYSCIATRIC NURSE THE MEDIATOR THE COOK CLEANER PROVIDER AND KEEP THE FAMILY FORM FALLING APART.

More information is attached on a separate sheet

**1. The role and contribution of carers in society**

As a carer, I feel that my role is...To ensure that the family member is taking their medication eating well getting enough sunshine talking to professionals exercising socializing and being a support to the whole family to educate the extended family about the illness as well as

advocate for the member in all their affairs as their sure as hel aint any advocated in this area for mental health. Also TO BE THE PYSCIATRIC NURSE THE MEDIATOR THE COOK CLEANER PROVIDER AND KEEP THE FAMILY FROM FALLING APART.

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*More information is attached on a separate sheet*

**2. The barriers to social and economic participation for carers**

As a carer, I face the following problems ...Being isolated as the time it takes up supporting an ill person takes one away from social activities especially entertaining at home. If one has a partner suffering from a mental illness most people doe not understand anxiety depression that is so chronic after 30 eyars with doctors medication treatments it does not go away only in spurts. One can hardly carry on a normal marriage with the medication that sedates and takes away sexual drive yet as a wife and mother one is expected and wants to as they love the person to just say well this is the score lets move on and work with it but a every stage government bueurocracies continue to put forms assessments over and over again when clearly the past ten years the diagnosis has not changed. It makes you want to give up sell your home and not attempt to part of society.

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*More information is attached on a separate sheet*

**3. The practical measures required to better support carers**

As a carer, I need help with ...Access to medical professionals regarding treatment and prognosis. Support in hospitals to understand when one states they are suicidal spaces for patients to go, respite at this time with professionals so as the family is not stuck at home caring for a very ill person on the brink of suicide with family members watching on helplessly. It destroys families. Good accommodation for people that are unwell that is supported. Respite on a regular basis also when well, support tin the workplace for mental illness. Automatic access to carers allowance when patients has been diagnosed with bipolar major depressive disorder bipolar does not go away!! It requires daily monitoring

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More information is attached on a separate sheet

**4. Strategies to assist carers to access opportunities and choices**

I think the Government can better help carers by ...To keep my sharings private and anonymous so as one can have a family member's dignity protected. To listen to us more and hear what we say we are with these people most days and nights yet no one takes our story into consideration when the person is assessed. Consultation is vital by all family members involved in living with mental illness. To embrace our support and make things easier for us to access. Not ot be treated as lepers in centrelink private rooms for people that are anxious have mood swings and ot to be kept in a que waiting for one hour just to ask a question about the complicated forms they give people that are going through a crisis.

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More information is attached on a separate sheet

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

Print your name

Irene

Date

16/06/08

Postal Address