

Caring for a child with disabilities includes challenges above and beyond those of other Grandparents who have taken the role of primary caregiver for their grandchild.

Having a child with disabilities does present more challenges, including emotional strain, financial hardships, career disruption, social isolation, and worry about the child's future.

Caring for a disabled child can make daily tasks, such as feeding, toilet training and getting them to sleep, more challenging. Additionally learning disability can make it more difficult for the child to learn appropriate behaviours.

The impact on Grandcarer's lives include never being able to leave your grandchild alone or with someone else, experiencing less sleep, having physical challenges, and even being physically assaulted.

Furthermore, Grandcarers often face negative attitudes from their peers regarding their caregiving competencies, adding to their feelings of isolation. Then there are the difficulties in accessing services and the frustration with the time-consuming appointments, not to mention the increasingly large number of forms to fill out, often requiring the same information over and over again.

A constant worry is concern about maintaining caregiving as we age, given that the average age of Grandcarers of disabled children is 65 to 75 years old. Age related health is a major concern

However, the unique concerns of Grandcarer caring for grandchildren with disabilities have rarely been considered in the discussions regarding welfare reform.

Raising a disabled child can bring love and delight to a family. But having a disabled child in the family can also have a huge impact on family life.

What can you do to help?

1. Reduce the ridiculous amount of duplicated forms. Why should Carers of a child with a permanent disability have to continually fill out multiple forms for Govt Depts proving the Condition still exists? E.g. Carers Payment has a 32 page TDR (Treating Doctors Report) required every 4 years.
2. Re-examine the Privacy Act to exclude child medical records. Allowing Grandcarers to access their children's previous medical records, including immunisation records.

We are reduced to trying to provide a stable environment for children who have been through hell on an age pension.

If I didn't have this child, he would be in foster care, receiving all the benefits that only foster parents receive.

Please, Please let Grandcarers receive the equivalent payment given to foster parents.