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The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee
Suite S1 59
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

**SENATE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS REFERENCES COMMITTEE INQUIRY
INTO AGED CARE**

Please find attached the Disability Services Commission's submission to the Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee Inquiry into Aged Care.

The submission addresses the first part of the third term of reference of the Inquiry—(c) the appropriateness of young people with disabilities being accommodated in residential aged care facilities.

For further information please contact Judith Chernysh, Principal Policy and Program Officer on (08) 9426 9225.

Yours sincerely

Dr Ruth Shean
DIRECTOR GENERAL
DISABILITY SERVICES COMMISSION

29 July 2004

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Reference Committee Inquiry into Aged Care jchernysh.doc

Att

SENATE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS REFERENCE COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO AGED CARE

(c) The appropriateness of young people with disabilities being accommodated in residential aged care facilities and the extent to which residents with special needs such as dementia, mental illness or specific conditions are met under current funding arrangements.

Defining 'young'

Under the third Commonwealth State/Territory Disability Agreement (CSTDA), people with disabilities means "people with disabilities attributable to intellectual, psychiatric, sensory, physical or neurological impairment or acquired brain injury (or some combination of these) which is likely to be permanent and results in substantially reduced capacity in at least one of the following:

- self care management
- mobility
- communication

requiring significant ongoing and/or long-term episodic support and which manifests itself before the age of 65".

A particular focus for most States and Territories, in considering their response to young people in nursing homes seeking disability support services and funding are those people aged 50 years and under.

There remains a lack of adequate information on the needs and profile of young people in nursing homes. On the basis of available information, it is important to note that not all young people in nursing homes fall within the CSTDA target group. Some of these people may be chronically ill, recovering from an illness or accident, require palliative care, or have aged care needs due to premature ageing.

Bilateral agreements under the CSTDA

Under the CSTDA all jurisdictions have entered into bilateral agreements with the Australian Government which include a commitment to work together to reduce the inappropriate placement of young people with disabilities in aged care nursing homes. This includes examining more flexible funding approaches, the consideration of alternative support models for young people in nursing homes and exploration of the capacity to transfer younger people who may have been inappropriately placed in nursing homes to more appropriate accommodation.

National Disability Administrators (NDA)

As part of the work plan for the NDA, Disability Ministers have approved national research to be undertaken with the aim of providing advice in respect to appropriate, best practice service and funding models for the range of services needed to meet the specific needs of this group

It is anticipated that the research will provide a demographic profile of current young people in nursing homes, their support needs, and service pathways; review service models and approaches to support younger people with high clinical needs; and will consider the interface with health and aged care services.

Disability Services Commission Young People in Nursing Homes Program

In 1995, the Disability Services Commission took over responsibility for support for 95 young people with disabilities who were resident at the time in State funded aged nursing homes.

Under the program, Commonwealth aged care funding, along with funding from the State Department of Health, was transferred to the Commission for the development of more appropriate accommodation support options for 95 people. The total cost of the program is just over \$8 million per annum.

The profile of people included those with an acquired brain injury, and degenerative neurological disorders such as Multiple Sclerosis and Huntington's disease.

Individual planning was undertaken with each of the 95 young people, resulting in a range of more community-based support options.

Further expansion of this initiative requires a commitment from the Australian Government to additional recurrent growth funding under the CSTDA for the development of more community-based accommodation support.

DISABILITY SERVICES COMMISSION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

29 July 2004

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