

**To:** [Committee, Health \(REPS\)](#)  
**Subject:** 423 - Karen Johnstone  
**Date:** Friday, 18 November 2022 10:30:06 PM

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**Name:** Karen Johnstone

**What is your experience of being a patient in Australia of long COVID and/or repeated COVID infections, particularly regarding diagnosis and treatment?:** My experience of being a patient in Australia with Long Covid has been a real battle. I got Covid in March 2020, and I've been lucky that my bloods and scans always showed something that justified how I was feeling, otherwise it would have been an uphill battle to prove my sickness. My GP listened to me and understood about Long Covid but my specialists knew nothing about Long Covid. I have never had a diagnosis because I caught it too early. I have no treatment.

**What have the health, social, educational and economic impacts been for you, in relation to long COVID or repeated infection? Has there been an impact on your family or community?:** The impacts have absolutely destroyed my life in all areas and also affected my parents. My health is longer the same, I cannot work to earn money or go out for very long. My struggle affects my elderly parents who have to help me out financially as Centrelink is not enough and they end up without money as well. I have a 15 year old daughter I have to look after; she ended up with a vaccine injury and is now not physically able to attend school. The impact of Long Covid on my family I believe has caused so much grief that I fear it will never be the same again and our quality of life is over.

**What specific actions would you like to be taken in relation to Long Covid and Repeated infection, that would positively impact the situations you have outlined above? :** Reinstate the Sickness benefit because Jobseeker is not designed and does not suit people that are sick, cannot function and are debilitated. We need more support and more money than a single unemployed capable person.

**I would like the Inquiry to contact me to discuss privacy and confidentiality options for my submission:** Yes