

From: [Community Affairs, Committee \(SEN\)](#)
To: [Community Affairs, Committee \(SEN\)](#)
Subject: Senate Enquiry Submission_Violence against people
Date: Thursday, 19 March 2015 10:47:37 PM
Attachments:

Violence, abuse and neglect against people with disability in institutional and residential settings, including the gender and age related dimensions, and the particular situation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with disability, and culturally and linguistically diverse people with disability

Dear Sir

I have been trying to make a submission to the committee relating to the above, but keep getting an 'Error' message. I have reported this to your IT folk.

I am a private guardian for a young man with an intellectual disability. He was made a State Ward at the age of 7 months and was medicated (psychotropic) at the age of 20 months, which may have delayed his brain development.

He was placed in the care of the notorious Brush Farm institution where he was mentally & physically abused.

Up until I became his guardian, the NSW Government group homes he was placed in used chemical restraint without approval from any independent body or higher authority.

Chemical restraint in group homes seems to be the norm, where they are short staffed or have staff not trained to deal with people with challenging behaviours. The government group homes seem to have a very 'cosy' connection with their 'friendly' psychiatrist, who simply goes on the words coming from the mouths of the staff and then medicates accordingly, as requested by the group home staff.

The problem also seems to be that in a lot of cases ...including the man I am now guardian for ... there are no good behaviour management plans and in some cases no plans at all.

I have attached a document and if you require any further information, please let me know.

Please be advised that this is sensitive material and as he is still in the care of ADHC, I would not like to see any retaliation.

Please can you treat this document as confidential.

Thank you
Kindest regards
Bill Kinnaird

I am a private guardian for a young man 'Ted' with a moderate intellectual disability.

Ted was born on 19th January 1972

In 2002 I started out as his advocate but had to resort to obtaining guardianship because of the actions of DADHC (now ADHC).

Ted's parents separated at the time of Ted's birth. His father was British and his mother was part Aboriginal.

Ted was committed to the care of the Minister of the Department of Youth & Community Services to be dealt with as a Ward admitted to State control at Griffith Children's Court on 6th September 1972 on a complaint of Neglect under the Child Welfare Act of 1939 as amended. The statement by an officer of the Child Welfare Department, which was presented to court, stated, "the baby is very small and undernourished for its age". The statement also said that the mother was homeless and destitute. Documents show that his mother wanted to take Ted back once she had sorted herself out, but the authorities would not allow this to happen.

When he was about 20 months old, he was given psychotropic medication because he couldn't sleep and was not eating. According to the drug manufacturers, this was far too young for such medication. There is a question as to whether this actually contributed to his lack of brain development and subsequent intellectual disability.

Ted has resided in numerous Departmental establishments since that time. Ted has reportedly experienced loss and abandonment throughout his early life due to the lack of opportunity to establish an attachment with his mother and other primary care-givers.

Ted spent most of his childhood days at the notorious Brush Farm, where he was abused. I am unsure if this abuse was also sexual in nature, but it was definitely physical and mental. He has been in institutions and group homes for all of his life and he has been abused physically, mentally and chemically.

Ted was expelled from any school he attended for inappropriate behaviour and as a result he lost social contact with many of his peers and spend a lot of time at home watching videos. He had no formal recreational, educational or vocational activities. DoCS did not assist in having Ted learn any 'living skills' and to this day he has very few.

As Ted was a NSW State Ward, he did not have an independent person checking on his service providers and medications.

DoCS / DADHC / ADHC used medication on Ted for chemical restraint for many years. I have witnessed how psychotropic medication was being administered to Ted, without consent by a person responsible. See medication below.

I became Ted's advocate in 2002 and as his advocate I found it very difficult for the then DADHC to listen to reason about Ted's medication. He was so heavily drugged that he couldn't function properly and would become abusive and threatening. Every time he got angry and aggressive, the ADHC psychologist would take Ted to the ADHC-friendly psychiatrist and have him medicated further. I tried to challenge ADHC about all this medication, but to no avail. My only option was to apply to the Guardianship Tribunal and become Ted's private guardian, which was granted. I am sure that if I had not done this they would have still be medicating him to control him and his health would be very poor.

After a number of years, I have managed to now have Ted on zero psychotropic medication. I was also interesting to note that the number of incidents since he has been off medication have reduced considerably from maybe one every 3 days to now maybe one every two months ...if that. His memory and health has also improved considerably.

I am more than happy to participate in any enquiry.