

**Head Office**

615 Goodwood Road
Panorama SA 5041
PO Box 23
Melrose Park SA 5039
t (08) 8275 0211
f (08) 8277 0229

bedfordgroup.com.au

Bedford Industries Inc ABN 27 553 554 594

1 December 2010

Senators Boyce, Furner and Siewert
Senate Community Affairs References Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senators

Senate Inquiry: Planning Options and Services for People Ageing with a Disability

I thought it might be useful and pertinent to provide some additional comments to clarify points in my correspondence of November 23rd; I trust this is acceptable.

As I indicated in the above letter, there are a number of reasons why a particular service provider might receive a significant number of referrals from an agency with a planning role eg appropriateness, relevance, quality. In some settings, particularly regional, a given provider might be the only option; while there may be financial factors which contribute to such a situation.

In this regard, we are conscious of the potential need for and/or value in reducing overheads and administrative costs that might occur per various "gatekeeping" (assessment/referral) functions undertaken through the system and redirecting such moneys to enhanced service delivery - especially given the environment of tight or limited resources often found in the sector. We would hope that your Committee takes this into account in its deliberations.

As you would be aware, we have made the point that a critical issue is that the client has and is able to exercise informed choice in the decision making process and raise any concerns, feeling safe that there will be no repercussions. We acknowledge the important role that advocates (eg carers/families, peers, friends) play in this process. In our statements, I have also highlighted that increased management/control of funding by clients could well lead to improved options and services, as people with disability could choose to move between providers if they were dissatisfied with services offered by a particular provider and/or sought to most effectively use funding by choosing providers best suited to meet their needs.

In essence, with a robust and appropriate funding mechanism, market forces will help shape the availability of a range of services and ensure their integrity.

I trust you find these qualifying comments of use. Should you wish to clarify any matter in my response, please do not hesitate to contact me or our CEO, Mr Max Dyason. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to participate in this Inquiry.

Yours sincerely

PHIL FARROW
General Manager Government and Sector Relations

Cc: M Dyason