

15th September, 2010

\

Senate Community Affairs Committee

Amendment/additional information facts presented by myself to the Committee
Melbourne, November, 2010-12-15

With reference to the discussion on possible long term transition to Residential care for intellectually disabled adults: I spoke of the transition period being extremely short – as little as one week in two cases – and then parents told to stay away from their child for a period following.

I spoke from knowledge of experiences of other parents who had gone through the short transition period as described. However, in the past week I have been discussing the situation with my DHS case manager to find that there is, in fact, a lengthy transition period. I explained to her the cases I knew of, and the generally held theory by parents that transition has to be short.

I would appear that the length of the transition period into any house is largely dependent on the House Supervisor. Unless parents are aware that there can be a lengthy entry time, they feel they must obey the rules as laid down by the House Supervisor. I am advised, that where there are behaviour management problems a short introduction period can be encouraged, followed by a period of non contact time by the parents. However, parents can insist on taking time if they wish.

I can only state that I was unaware of this right as are the parents in my peer group. In general, older parents do not know the procedure for entering residential care, and many I have spoken to believe that should they die suddenly their child will go immediately to a permanent house. As there is a chronic shortage of housing, this is not generally the case and they can face months of moving from house to house until a permanent vacancy is found.

Information to older carers is essential in regard to residential care, length of wait, procedures and their right.

I apologise for any misconception I may have given. The information I presented came from parents who have moved their children to residential care.

Yours sincerely,

Lesley J. Baker
Parent representative
Carers Victoria