

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Community Affairs
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia
community.affairs.sen@aph.gov.au

Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012.

Please consider this email a formal submission by me to the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs Inquiry into the National Disability Insurance Scheme Bill 2012.

I request to appear before the Committee in Perth, WA on 18th February 2013.

This submission is a family effort. My husband and I care for our son who has mental health issues. We have been eligible to apply for carer respite support via the Mental Health Carers Respite Program managed by the Commonwealth Respite and Carer Centres. It is not often that we require respite – may be once or twice a year – but that respite has been invaluable to us as a family.

As I understand the draft legislation, there is no assessment or support for carers. Carers are vital to the person they care for, their family and friends and the whole community. The unpaid hours of care and support they provide saves billions of dollars each year.

As I understand the draft legislation, to qualify as an NDIS participant under the disability criteria (most people) must show that their impairment/s results in “substantially reduced functional capacity” – Clause 24(1)(c). Mental health issues are not linear, they are cyclical in nature.

As I understand the draft legislation, “the impairment or impairments are, or are likely to be, permanent;” – Clause 21 (1) (b). Our firm belief in recovery, which is the current best practise, does not align with this is notion. If people and families who are living with mental illness do not have the hope of recovery and actively work to support recovery, we are severely impacting on a person’s recovery journey and the quality of life for all.

I agree for my submission to be made public

Regards,

Kristine and Rob McConnell