

A.O.C. 16/6/08

**From:** Frank  
**Sent:** Thursday, 12 June 2008 12:18 PM  
**To:** Committee, FCHY (REPS)  
**Subject:** Inquiry into better support for carers.

Committee secretary  
Standing Committee on Family, community, Housing & Youth  
House of Reps  
PARLIAMENT HOUSE  
CANBERRA ACT.

Dear Secretary,

I wish to make a submission to the house of representatives Standing Committee on Family Community, Housing and Youth's enquiry into better Support for Carers.

Although looking after an aged and frail family member IS a personal matter and deals almost EXCLUSIVELY with that family member AND SEEMS TO BE OF NO BENEFIT TO ANYBODY ELSE, I do feel that I measurably lessen the cost burden on our society by tending to these necessary matters.

While a willing participant in this role (Not a martyr!) I know the restrictions that apply to my situation.;  
My social life, such as it is, is restricted and can only become more so as my family member gradually deteriorates.

The stress of being with and dealing with diminishing mental and physical capacity on, virtually, 24/7 basis can be most draining from time to time.  
Breaks are essential even if only a day here or there.

Financially we cope because we live frugally and, at this time, the age pension and my investment income and the Carers allowance suffice. This may not last.  
I would prefer to have a 3-4 day part time job to maintain my capital for my own old age, but that's not practical, Just casual bits here & there.

Federal and state services ARE available and to those aware of their availability, providing good help to those that can negotiate the paths to them.  
Bureaucracy and Pain we are stuck with, there is possibly no cure for either but "Panadol" relieves one, can your committee suggest a way to relieve the other?

Having said the above, which relate to my circumstances only,

I BELIEVE THE GOVERNMENT CAN HELP BY;

- COMMUNICATING DIRECTLY with receivers of the carers pension/allowance IN PLAIN SPEAK as to their RESPONSABILITIES & ENTITLEMENTS as recipients and not relying on sub agencies of federal, state or local government instrumentalities.
- PROVIDING ACCESS TO a one-stop information/help location eliminating the need to trawl through the various agencies, paid or voluntary, for assistance.
- FINANCIALLY ASSISTING community centers specifically to provide facilities for Carers and the cared for .

(I NOTE that the local St George Migrant Services, which assists non English speaking carers and the elderly, have most of their budget eaten away by overheads and transport that leaves little enough time & resources to use for their charges in practical terms.

A SMALL EXAMPLE.

Speakers come to give those we care for a talk on nutrition and the importance it holds for the frail & elderly. LUNCH is provided, that MUST be within the budget, and, as a consequence, contravenes every principal that the dietician had just espoused. They DO get a feed, I suppose that's enough.

I hope to have helped in some way.

I wish you well in your work

Frank