

A.O.C. 14/7/68

Submission No. 722
(Inq into better support for carers)

S.J.

Committee Secretary,
Standing Committee of Family Community, Housing and Youth,
P.O. Box 6021
House of Representatives,
Parliament House,
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Secretary,

I wish to make a submission to the House of Reps Standing Committee on Family, Community Housing and Youth's enquiry into better support for carers.

I feel that my role as a Carer is very important to the community as I care for my husband 24 hours a day and that means he does not have to go into a Nursing home. I face the following problems:-

Transport most Government subsidised help does not allow us to take oxygen cylinders in helpers cars so that means we have to pay taxis to go for doctors appointments or to pick up oxygen cylinders we do have Taxi vouchers but if my husband is not in the Taxi I am unable to use them so I have to pay \$50 to have the cylinders delivered to our home, we require these cylinders to take with us because my husband is on oxygen 24 hours a day, so wherever we go the oxygen cylinders go with us. It seems strange that we can take the oxygen cylinders with us in taxis, buses, trains and aeroplanes but not in Government Subsidised schemes, like Transpack, and Community Area Buses etc. So oxygen uses are at a disadvantage I think we all need help with this and it would be appreciated.

We do struggle financially because of the oxygen situation and are forever buying equipment to make things easier for my husband who I am caring for. Also for the Electricity bill every 3 Months, we do get subsidised about \$75 each 3 monthly bill, but we have to use electricity for heating, cooling, cooking, the gas lets of too many fumes and that effects my husbands breathing, so have to use electricity for everything and my bills are very high.

The things that stress me out the most about being a carer is not being able to get help we require home respite for when I go shopping and I often feel guilty whenever I ask for help apparently there is not much help for this requirement, and as I have experienced this I no longer ask just try and cope the best I can, but it's a worry so I go on one bus and come home on the next one so it does not leave me much time.

Community buses are very expensive and I would be away from home too long they usually take lots of people and return everyone to the door which is a good idea but not for me as it would take too long. I cannot drive so have to depend on public transport.

When my husband left the hospital last time we were advised to use Transpack a Government Subsidised Scheme a very good one if you are not on oxygen it charges \$50 a week and they organise help in the house, care of the patient and transport but as I said before we could not use it as we were unable to take oxygen in the helpers cars, and could not afford \$50 a week + Taxi fares and delivery of Oxygen cylinders to our home we use at least one small cylinder a week sometimes two, all depends on how often we go to Specialists dentists or Doctors. So we were unable to use this scheme which would have suited us if we could of taken the oxygen in helpers cars.

My husband uses an oxygen concentrator in the home, 24 hours a day so he is basically confined to our home because of the lack of transportation. Which in turn makes it very

difficult to attend Doctors Surgeries, and every day personal care, such as hair cuts, podiatrists, shopping. Transpack were going to help with some of these things but unable to take oxygen in helpers cars, and as I do not drive this makes it even harder.

Hoping this helps with your committee I am sure other oxygen uses have the same problems as me specially if they don't drive.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature consisting of a stylized, cursive letter 'S' followed by a period.

S.J.