

Keith Hemburrow

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The Commission
Veterans Compensation and Rehabilitation Inquiry

Commissioner, I would like to bring your attention to a single aspect of Rehabilitation and Compensation that I fear is and always has been overlooked. It is the importance of support of all types provided by the partners of returned veterans.

I am a Vietnam veteran but was unlucky enough to have contracted Encephalitis whilst serving in Vietnam, returning home via medivac. As well as this problem, I have the usual issues of PTSD, Breast cancer and Prostate cancer. This has caused severe issues over the years. I have been lucky to receive ongoing support from the Dept of Veterans Affairs in the form of a TPI card providing the ongoing medical care required.

The issue that causes me to write to you, is to highlight the importance of support provided by “the spouse” in situations like mine. My spouse has supported me mentally, physically and provided reasons to continue day by day. Whilst I get help from the Government, it is an embarrassment and truly an obnoxious weight upon me that I cannot provide for her the benefit of “private health insurance” due to the cost of such services. I know this is a dilemma for other veterans and their spouses.

I am asking that the “service and support” she renders in providing me and therefore saving the Government, untold amounts of money should be recognised. This can be done simply by providing her with the same “Health Care Services” that are available for a veteran with a “Gold Card”.

Please consider assisting our partners and in the process, veterans by acknowledging and recommending as part of this review that “Medical Support” be provided to our supporting spouses.

Thanking you

Keith Hemburrow