

Productivity Commission Inquiry into the increased application of competition, contestability and informed user choice to human services

I've worked in the Community Services sector in a variety of roles over the past 20 years in both small and large not for profit organisations. At present I work in community development in the St Marys area which is rated high on the SEIFA index for disadvantage. We are a local grass roots organisation and we work closely with our community because they know and trust us to deliver.

The unique role and relationship that we have with our community will be undermined if we are replaced with for profit business that has no connection to our community. Quality service and positive outcomes for our most disadvantaged will be no more with big business - cost cutting and savings in the interim no doubt, but will eventually cost the government a fortune in reversing poor decisions to fund big business over locally based grass roots services.

We are expected to work in partnership with other organisations, yet the concept of competitive tender and having to constantly fight for funding against your partners is devastating to the very relationships we have worked hard to establish over decades of work in the sector.

Its about time the government saw our sector as infrastructure and treated us as such! We need longer term funding, better job security and respect for the hard work and effort that goes into supporting our most disadvantaged communities!