

Submission to the Productivity Commissions – Caring for Older Australians and National Disability Insurance Scheme

From Barbara Lewis – a manager of a Carer Support Service with many years experience across the spectrum of caring roles. Following presentations by the Commissioners and subsequent discussion I have been requested to submit this submission.

My concern is that as per the current system there are definitions of those who are covered in the target population of these Reports. This leaves the group of people who already miss out on care in the community, which leads to increased emotional and financial pressure on the family carer.

We know that Carers mainly need assistance to help them care for their family member - that is services to provide care for the Caree.

The group of people not addressed in either report are those who are younger in age, do not have a Disability however their lives are altered as a result of their illness, in some cases we would argue that they have a Disability as a result of the impact of their illness.

55 year old Gio Blastoma

60 year old stroke,

25 year old Neuro degenerative illness

We struggle and fail to join the dots to get services, to provide adequate care and support for a longer period of time, at best we may get 2 Respite shifts (not in a week, fortnight, or month – just 2 overall).

Each Government body, Federal, State and Local Govt believe that another government agency provides funding for care, no one does. For all these groups there is the added impact of grief and loss due to their illness, it is inhumane to witness and we must ensure they are included in one or other of the funding reports, to receive appropriate services for whatever timeframe they have, 6,9, 12 months, whatever.

If the broader definition of Disability is to be used, that is all those who are not able to function and do things for themselves, as a result of their illness, we also need to ensure the system is able to fast track those who need immediate assistance, and that as that level of support required increases, so too does the funding level increase.

This is a personal submission.