

Condemed to "Whats best" !!

I am an older person, but, at by far from old. I have some considerable life experencks and junions re the fate of senior Australians to share.

Firstly, I have lived with many sick elderly and/or incapacitated persons for long periods throughout my life. That's how older folk were cared for in the past!! Some were loved ones, some friends some members of my community. All entitled to respect and hope. It wasn't always easy but made me a better person.

Secondly. (I am a teacher by profession) however, for a change I spent 3 years working as a domestic in an aged care hostel/nursing facility. The saddest experience of my life.

Thirdly, I have clocked up thousands of hours visiting and taking elderly on outings (loved ones, colleagues and community members) when they were confined to aged care. These experiences, without question, were so sad. No matter, how modern, good for you, caring or compassionate these places are. They aren't a patch on HOME no matter how humble.

To me there is an urgent need to reconsider the whole "aged care" issue, eg,
1. Removing peoples' independance, hope and freedom by taking their driver's licence A.S.A.P as they age. Not to mention the regular cruel assessment threat bearing down on them in their senior

years. People drove all their lives in the past no problem." Before some know it all changed the system on an ego boost. Older folk may drive slower - So What? For my part I'd rather risk going out with my licence freedom and independance. Even if an impatient do gooder ran over me. You often hear an older person say "Don't feel up to driving today" they know what and when they can do. They have earned the right to decide what's best for them.

How about we show some compassion and commonsense and invent "Elderly driver be patient signs?"

Loss of licence affects the senior person. It also stops people visiting those condemned to "care". In most cases it is older people who take the time to visit peers and loved ones. Therefore, the system removes freedom and hope all in the name of "its best".

Now, the modern cancer or plague of aged care centres. The poor unfortunates are no longer a useful part of their community or family. How many times do I need an elderly member of my community's words of wisdom, time/hands to help out, fund raising contributions or expertise craft/cooking during my lifetime of volunteering etc. These people even if not mobile whilst ever at home have hope and can "give where they live"!!

I have known many who didn't sign

agreements in haste and under pressure, "to go to care, its best, safe whatever!" They reconsidered, came back home, regained hope, independance, needed much less medication, and 15 or 20 years ^{on} are OLDER, but free, hopeful, interested and happy. ALWAYS against family and experts advice.

During my lifetime I have ~~not~~ watched with disgust as the SYSTEM pushed to take elderly out of their homes and/or community and destroy all independance and hope.

Further I have never seen recognition that as we age we always did get slower and maybe a bit ~~more~~ dependant, but, certainly NOT useless or deserving of being considered creatures that convenient decisions are made for, no questions asked and no compassion or thanks for - in most cases - a lifetime of giving!!

Its high time a few steps back were taken to a better happier future for our aging persons.

Yours Hopefully.