

Submission by Ildiko Auer to discuss issues with the Commissioner.

My daughter, Melanie (aged 25), has moderate intellectual disability, her physical ability is exceptional, she rides a bike, swims, goes horse-riding, plays tennis and participate in bushwalking activities.

Melanie has completed 5 years studying in the Canberra college special unit where she was part of the (700) student's community.

I have taken Melanie bushwalking with a walking group (Walking for pleasure) and she became a financial member of the club. My aim was to see if Melanie is capable of participating within a large group of walkers with various abilities.

Melanie has attended 23 walks, until she was turned away by the group coordinator and was not allowed to participate in the walk.

I have tried to speak up against the discrimination, I have attended the clubs general meeting, and we have written letters to the paper and have lodged a submission to the Discrimination Tribunal. None of this process had any outcome.

Discrimination against people with intellectual disability is very much alive and happens all the time.

- Our society will never accept people who differ, not even those who carry no sign of physical disabilities.

I feel that we need to outline in the legislation, that there are consequences of any unlawful discrimination against people with disabilities. We need to introduce an efficient and quick solution when discrimination occurs.

- It isn't enough protecting people with disabilities in a written form of legislation; it should be practiced in reality.

Ildiko Auer