

Dear Paul,

Your review paperwork was sent to me by a friend.

My submission is that I believe the most essential basic human right is the right of choice.

I am the sister and advocate for a person with an intellectual disability. She has, and never has had, the right of choice.

She has been manipulated by successive governments to fit in with whatever they wish or determine to be right for her.

Her family are not consulted.

Further the department who provides the services including housing, staff, day programs, costs in the house, transport, in fact every area of her life, set the terms she must adhere to.

She has no right of choice.

I am her plenary guardian but this is rare because parents and relatives are NOT appointed as plenary guardians and de facto guardians from the department daily make choices for people like my sister because they don't have guardians and because she can't speak and object.

EXAMPLE: She does not like male staff members. The department force her to have male staff members because they have an equal opportunity policy! But there are plenty of men to care for!

It is restrictive for them NOT to have a guardian. A guardian gives them a voice which may oppose the dictators at the department. This voice advocates for the person with the intellectual disability, purely and solely.

I feel the disability discrimination Act as it stands is excellent. The right of choice is not included however except where it comes to neuro typical choice. But neuro typical people do have choice so to compare this group to neuro typical people is NOT good enough. We must do better.

However I would also comment on the fact it has been impossible to get the terms of this Act adhered to. The Equal Opportunity Commission will NOT do anything to enforce the current act.

Therefore I believe it is a waste of time reviewing the Act when in it's current form it is NOT enforced.

Further I would comment that there should be a disability ombudsman to ensure people like my sister have the right to have their family advocate for them.

The guardianship board in my opinion have "lost the plot." Rather than protect disabled people they spend their time harassing the relatives and the person with the intellectual disability by reviewing their finances and guardianship all the time. 23 times in 8 years!!~!!!

Thank you for the opportunity to have my say. I hope I am given the right to have this posted.

Yours sincerely

Stephanie Mortimer
Vic