

Disability Care and Support Inquiry

Productivity Commission

19/4/10

This is my submission of my views of how to improve the current long term disability care and support scheme.

My name is Cate Perry and I have an 18year old son named Alexander Perry who has a unique chromosomal abnormality which has resulted in profound intellectual disability, several physical impairments and uncontrollable epilepsy.

Alexander will leave school at the end of this year, then out to day programs (as is what usually happens with a disabled child his age).

NO day program will ever be the same as school where the students are constantly monitored with reports sent home, communication book and assistance whenever it is needed. Specialists such as Physios, speech therapists and Occupational therapists.

Next year unless I pay for these services privately Alexander will not have access to them.

These is a respite house here in Wodonga called Waratah Way which is DHS run and funded.

It is ideal for people like Alexander who need a secure and assisted environment.

The problem is the limited amount of time he can spend there due to the size of the house in comparison to the size of the disability community who rely on it's services.

There is insufficient staff to provide a fulfilling stay at Waratah Way and the individual's needs are often not met.

I am a single parent of two sons, the other a 19 year independent man now. Alexander is 18 now and needs to discover some of this world without me and I need respite from the continuous care hours I spend with him.

This state falls extremely short on the amount of respite hours it provides in the type of environment my son requires for his health and safety.

More respite hours in an appropriately staffed and funded ,secure ,Respite House would great improve our lives and of course in the long term, place less of a burden on the community.

Yours sincerely

Cate Perry