

7 July 2010

Ms Patricia Scott
Commissioner, Productivity Commission
Level 2, 15 Moore Street
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms Scott

Supplementary submission to inquiry into National Disability Long-term Care and Support Scheme

My submission of 20/4/10 noted the uneven expenditure on aids and equipment by the states. It is heartening that the Community and Disability Services Ministers agreed on 4/6/10 to establish, by December 2010, a nationally consistent list of core equipment that all people with similar disabilities should be able to access.

Similarly, national standards could be agreed for access to all disability services, and statistics published on the extent to which the standards were being achieved in each state. This would reduce the risks of eventually moving to full entitlement.

My submission suggested that FaHCSIA executives should accept responsibility for the slow, rude and inaccurate service received by many carers. Centrelink's quarterly customer service surveys appear to be based on very small samples, and should be improved.

Our national disability system should meet the need of all persons with disabilities, to the extent considered appropriate by Australians. There needs to be much greater transparency about the determination of eligibility criteria for support and services.

Multi-party acceptance is essential. It is unfortunate that the government has so far implemented only 2 out of the 14 Senate recommendations on disability trusts, and has only accepted, in whole or part, 28 out of the 50 House of Representatives recommendations on carers.

Leadership by the Commonwealth is needed to develop common standards and data systems, and most of any new funding will have to come from the Commonwealth.

As noted in my submission of 20/4/10, improvements to the present system may be more equitable, cost-effective and politically acceptable than the long-term care and support scheme in the inquiry's terms of reference.

I look forward to appearing before you on July 12.

Yours sincerely

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