

South East Neighbourhood Centre

Shop 68 Eastlakes Shopping Centre
Evans Avenue Eastlakes NSW 2018
Tel: 8338 8506 Fax: 8338 8502
Email: senc@senc.org.au

Wednesday, July 28th, 2010

Disability Care and Support Scheme Productivity Commission Submission

The South East Neighbourhood Centre (SENC) is a non-profit community based organisation founded in 1987.

SENC services include Advocacy, Advice, Casework, Childcare, Counselling, Classes, Support Groups, Family Support, Food Deliveries, Information, Multicultural Support, Referrals, Social Support, In Home Respite Care, Volunteers and Individual and Community Transport.

The Mission of the South East Neighbourhood Centre is to assist people in our community.

Whilst SENC is not a specialised disability service provider, our work has brought us into contact with, and raised awareness of the experiences and needs of, people with disability, their families and carers. SENC is aware of, and totally supports, the need for appropriately funded services and programs to meet the needs of people with disability, their families and carers to enable them to live in the community as active citizens to participate in society.

This submission is reflective of the concerns that have been expressed to us:

- Evidence of confusion over how and where services and programs can be accessed and frustration over the amount of paperwork required to be completed for every organisation they are seeking services from.
- Unclear and inconsistent eligibility criteria for services and programs have meant many people with disability, their families and/or their carers have been denied access to the range of services and programs they require to retain their independence.
- Requests for a centralised agency that undertakes needs assessments and coordinates care packages in partnership with the service user, carers and service provider.
- Language and cultural barriers preventing CALD (culturally and linguistically diverse) people from receiving information and accessing services.

PROGRAMS

South East Neighbourhood Centre Program, South East Multicultural Program, South East Social Support Program, South East Community Transport Program, South East Day Care Program, South East Administrative Support Program, South East Out Of Hours Respite Care Program, South East Food Distribution Network Program, South East Volunteer Development Program, Safe Multicultural Out Of School Hours Program, South East Families and Children Programs & South East Adult Education Program.

- Difficulties when service providers subcontract to other organisations resulting in inconsistent care, which costs more resulting in less funds being spent on direct service provision and reduced accountability.
- Ageing carers expressing concern over who will advocate and care for their child with disability once they have passed away.
- Insufficient numbers of qualified staff to provide respite for carers of children with physical disabilities and challenging behaviours, especially at the onset of teenage years.
- Not enough flexible in home respite service hours allocated to carers; many existing service and program providers are completely stretched resulting in extended waiting lists.
- Lack of age appropriate day centres and residential facilities for young people with disability.
- Community transport prioritising frail and aged thereby impacting on opportunities for social access (for young) with people their own age.
- Community assuming role of carer in social housing for people with mental health issues and frustration over lack of aftercare following discharge and barriers to seeking admission when relapsing.

Service and Program Staff
South East Neighbourhood Centre

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