

Disability Care and Support Inquiry
Productivity Commission
GPO Box 1428
Canberra City
ACT 2601

By email: disability-support@pc.gov.au

Dear Sirs/Mesdames

My name is Jocelyn Culpitt and I have a daughter who suffers from severe Autistic Spectrum Disorder. She is currently 9 years old and her future causes us great worry.

She attends the Nambour Special School and is part of the Autism unit and is taught by fabulous and dedicated teachers. The School recently held a Post School options expo at which it was explained that there is severely limited funding for disabled adults when they leave school. The information I received advised me that I could expect, in the current climate, no more than 8-10 hours per week funding for Abby to attend post school programs.

This funding then highlights significant issues for me as a parent:

1. Abby's right as a member of society to receive access to services that provide her with a fulfilling life.
2. What will happen to Abby during the day while I would be working?
3. The safety issues relating to Abby being on her own.
4. The financial issues should I have to leave my job or only get very part time work to care for Abby. Although there is a carers pension there would be a significant reduction in the amount of money coming into the household should we have to rely on that.

My other very large concern regarding Abby's future is where she will live. We think it is very important for her, and ourselves, that Abby is able to look forward to being able to live in a supported living arrangement by the time she is 30years old. This would enable her to gain the independence that is her right and also ensure that her future is secure as we, her parents, grow older. I am sure that this sentiment is shared by all parents of a disabled child.

Our greatest fear is who will look after them when we are gone.

The issues we face are very real and I would ask you to put yourselves in our shoes and try to understand how important they are.

Should you have any further queries or would like any clarification on the matters raised above, please do not hesitate to contact the writer.

I can only hope that you have the courage to do what is right.

Yours sincerely

Jocelyn Culpitt

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