

Dear Sir/Madam

I would like to bring the following matters to the attention and consideration by the Productivity Commission in its current review of disability and care support.

I have been an amputee for almost 38 years and have seen many changes both good and bad over the years. Although my comments are made mainly from the point of view of an amputee, I am sure that many of my concerns and suggestions will mirror those of people living with other types of disabilities.

Firstly, I would like to say that I fully support the issues raised by Melissa Noonan, Executive Officer, Limbs 4 Life Incorporated in her submission to your review.

I have also read the Commission's Draft Report released on 28 February 2011 on the key features of the proposed scheme. While I do not have any objections to the proposals in principle, their success or failure will depend on how well the final details are worked out and how well the schemes are administered. Listed below are some of the features that I think the review should consider:-

- Simplify the rules and improve accessibility to information and services. That is, minimal paperwork, clearly defined entitlements, easy access to service providers, greater reliance on recommendations of local doctors or other service providers without patients having to wait for appointments at specialist clinics or for approvals from central agencies.
- Set up a "one stop shop" so that a patient or carer does not have to make numerous calls to different organisations to find out what help is available to them or what they should be doing next. In some instances medical and allied practitioners do this really well and in others not at all.
- Provide an appeal mechanism for a person with a disability to appeal against, for example, a service provider or the level/type of service available/provided. The appeals process needs to be transparent, impartial and quick.
- Improve funding for services required by people with disabilities to enable them to access latest technology or medication according to the needs of the individual.
- Consider expanding training or follow up training of service providers to ensure that their skills are up to date.
- Look at ways to provide greater employment opportunities for people living with disabilities, including training or retraining, if applicable.
- Improve support for carers. This could be in the form of developing better employment opportunities on either a full or part time basis, improving access to respite care for their disabled family member, better accommodation for them and their families, where appropriate.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed review.