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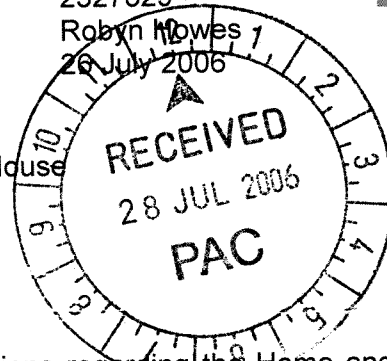
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The Committee Manager  
Public Accounts Committee, Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Dear Ms Ohlin

In response to your request for submissions regarding the Home and Community Care Program Inquiry, after feedback from Home & Community Care Service Providers on the Central Coast, the following comments are offered.

1. Efficiency and Effectiveness of joint arrangements by the Commonwealth and New South Wales State Government - the signing off of the New South Wales State Plan has historically been too late in the financial year to allow appropriate planning by service providers in order to provide services to clients. The grants themselves come through in late June and need to be discharged by the end of the financial year. A consequence can be that money is sent back to funding departments after the acquittal process due to the business rules in their contracts.
2. The Home Care Service of New South Wales, since incorporation into the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care, whilst providing an excellent quality service to clients, has become a "closed shop" when it comes to collaboration with other service providers.

This gives the appearance of not stepping back to look comprehensively at the needs of a client and refer to other services if that may be more appropriate. For example, on the Central Coast, there are dedicated Case Management services like Community Options, which never receive a referral from Home Care.

Planning for service provision throughout the year on a reasonably even basis does not appear to be evident, when Home Care are able towards the end of a financial year provide increased capacity for service, and then later in the year announce that there is no capacity at all.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to the inquiry which, as stated earlier have come about from consultation with Central Coast service providers.

Yours sincerely



Robyn Howes  
**Team Leader, Aged & Disability**