

**Submission
No 205**

INQUIRY INTO NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME

Name: Ms Jennifer Clarke

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Submission into the Inquiry on the Workers Compensation Scheme

My name is Jennifer Clarke. I am a 53 year old Registered Nurse. I was on an evening shift in August of 2007 when six seconds of that shift changed my life for good – I was injured.

Upon hearing of the changes that the NSW Government are wishing to make to the Workers Compensation Act my first thought was that the only two groups that would be happy with the proposed changes was the Insurance Companies and the present NSW government.

I honestly do not know what the answer is to the blow out in the Workers Compensation funding but what I do know is that the answer should not be at the expense of the injured worker - especially those with serious long term injuries. We are suffering enough!

It has been nearly five years since I have been injured. It was through no fault of my own. It was to do with old equipment that should not have still been in use. My injury should not have happened but it did. It has affected the whole of my life both financially and physically. I have been in continuous pain and I will never be able to work as a nurse again. It has affected my dreams for my future.

I have not only had to struggle with the pain and my attempts to do meaningful work but I have had to struggle to get the treatment that I need. My life is not my own any more – I have to justify everything that I do. Sometimes it is not worth the battle – I pay for some treatments out of my much reduced wages.

I am a dedicated nurse who can no longer nurse who has to struggle to get through the day and now the government wants to reduce even more the pitiful wage that I now earn. They want to restrict my ability to claim common law damages – the only avenue that I have to claim some of what I've lost in the last five years and what I will lose before I am 65 years of age.

Is this what I get for being a dedicated nurse – a kick in the guts just to add to the physical pain and mental anguish? I implore the government to rethink this callous strategy to save money. I do not deserve any more angst to add to my already heavy burden.

Jennifer Clarke