

**Submission
No 233**

INQUIRY INTO NSW WORKERS COMPENSATION SCHEME

Name: Ms Karen Hurley

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Joint Select Committee on the NSW Workers Compensation Scheme
Parliament House
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Dear Mr O'Farrell,

I would like to talk to you about workers compensation and the laws you plan on changing.

I would like to tell you my story, so please read on.

Why should I be penalised even more?????

Fact: I am on Workers Compensation due to no fault of my own.

Fact: I am in Pain 24/7.

Fact: The pain effects EVERYTHING I DO.

Fact: I would rather be happy, healthy and pain free, than be stuck with the injury.

Fact: My Life, my family and my friends have suffered due to this injury.

Fact: Workers compensation is not fun.

My Name is Karen Hurley.

I have been on Workers Compensation since 12th July 2007; I was working as a registered nurse, for Blacktown-Mt Druitt Hospital.

On the 12th July 2007, I attended my normal shift, life was good, I had just met the man of my dreams and I had a beautiful 4 year old who loved her mummy and her mummy cuddles.

During the shift, whilst transferring a patient with a wards man. The Patient slipped and I took all his weight. This caused C5/6/7 bulging discs, foremenal impingement, optical headaches, and later to be diagnosed thoracic outlet syndrome. Yes one slipping patient caused all this.

This accident has changed my life and not for the better, It has left me with seemly permanent damage in my Neck, Back and Arms, it's now been nearly five years of constant pain, my pain never goes away. I don't sleep most nights due to the pain and spasms. I get severe headaches that feel like my head has been hit by a hammer over and over; these can and do last from a few hours to weeks on end, with no relief.

Most night, I move and wiggle around the bed in pain and tears, whilst my family just have to sit there watching, wanting to help but they can't, no one to the day has been able to control my pain.

My arms go blue; I lose the pulse in my right arm, yet also have so much nerve pain in my arms that I have wanted them amputated many times.

If and when anyone touches them, they hurt more and more. Even to shake someone's hand causes my pain to increase.

How am I meant to cuddle my beautiful daughter or my husband?

The last time I was able to pick up and cuddle my beautiful was when she was FOUR OLDS. Tara my daughter also suffers so much from my injuries, it has mentally affected her, and that is unfair. Every Child deserves mummy cuddles. My pain actually affects all my family and friends; I have lost many friends as they can't deal with the pain I am in.

My pain levels sit at 5/10 or higher all the time, yet I still go to work on reduced hours and duties however I don't get to do my preferred career as a registered nurse, which I have been for 21 years this October which upsets me. But I am grateful, that the hospital has found other duties for me that meet my strict restrictions. I am also very scared that you will take this away from me.

I also want you to know, I personally have not been able to brush my own hair properly in a year, I simply can't hold my arms up for that long, so degrading as it is, either my Mother or my Daughter have to do it. I am no longer able to clean, vacuum or do much around the house, I sometimes manage to do a light shop, but a lot of the time Tara my daughter has to help especially if anything is heavy over 3-4kgs. If I manage do the light shopping my pain levels increase and I end up in bed/taking more pain killers.

All the medications I take for the pain are causing other major problems in my body, believe me it is scary; I am only 38 years old.

During my time on workers comp, the treatment I have received from some doctors is unbelievable, it is depressing and yes to the point of suicidal thoughts, I have paid for counselling myself to get me though as Insurer refused to pay for the going treatment.

I hope that you or your family will never have to go through a tenth of what I have/going through it is hell.

I beg you to sit down and think of every one of 28,000 people on workers comp. I am sure each and every one of us has a story.

But the one thing I want you to know is I don't want to be in pain at all, the accident was not my fault in anyway, yet I suffer physically, mentally and financially. It feels like you want to punish us even more.

And quite frankly the plans you have to change the workers compensation laws are just plain wrong, it will increase the suffering and pain of every one on workers comp and they families.

Thank you for reading my story, please reconsider your new laws.

And Please not make us suffer any more than we already do.

Thank you

Karen Hurley

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