

Submission
No 150

INQUIRY INTO POST SCHOOL DISABILITY PROGRAMS

Organisation: Carers NSW
Name: Mr Tim Marchant
Position:
Telephone: 9280 4744
Date Received: 11/05/2005

Subject:

Summary

Received 11/5/05

9 May 2005

The Hon. Patricia Forsythe
Chairperson
General Purpose Standing Committee No.2
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear The Hon. Patricia Forsythe

The Carers Coalition is a community umbrella organisation and is comprised of approximately 50 NGOs, including statewide peaks and smaller disability organisations. The Coalition's commitment is to support, recognise and value carers.

A number of organisations who are members of the Coalition have made individual submissions to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Post School Disability Programs.

The Coalition wishes, however, to underscore our shared concerns in relation to the changes that have been made.

We remain concerned at the:

- shift in model away from individualised funding for consumers and carers to service providers
- reduced funding levels per person in the Community Participation and Transition to Work programs
- stress and anxiety as consumers, carers and families are forced to deal with the impact of change on their lives
- lack of clear information from the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care to consumers, carers and families
- technical operation of the programs including but not limited to eligibility criteria, exit and re-entry procedures and funding time limits.

While members of the Coalition have long acknowledged problems with the PSO/ATLAS programs, and have supported the need for reform, these programs have provided for meaningful activity for those accessing the programs and an absolute break for carers. As a result, these programs have allowed carers respite, and in a significant number of cases, the ability to work. These historical benefits have now been jeopardised putting increased stress on all concerned.

The Coalition calls for increased funding and support to post school disability programs. We remain committed to individualised funding and to ensuring meaningful activity for the consumer and respite for the carer.

These matters raised are of a serious nature and require an urgent response.

We thank you for consideration of these issues.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Marchant". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small dot at the end of the first name.

Tim Marchant
(Secretariat, Carers Coalition)

cc: The Hon. John Della Bosca, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services
cc: Brendan O'Reilly, Director General Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care