

**Submission
No 70**

INQUIRY INTO POST SCHOOL DISABILITY PROGRAMS

Organisation: Crowle Employment Services

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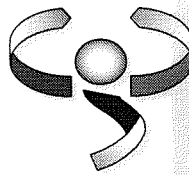
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Subject:

Summary

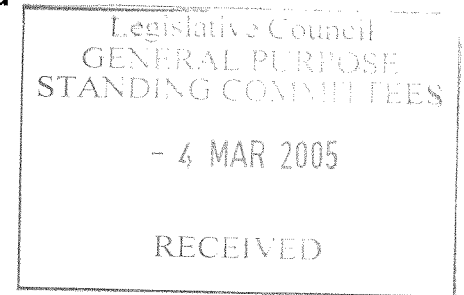


Crowle Employment Services

F l e x i b l e r e c r u i t m e n t a n d t r a i n i n g s o l u t i o n s

**Input to the General Purpose Standing Committee
Parliamentary Inquiry – Post School Disability Programs
The Crowle Foundation Limited**

March 2005



Submission

1. Structure and policy

1.1 Eligibility criteria of services poorly sourced/assessed

1.1.1. Based on specifications that can not effectively correlate with service delivery given funding levels. Essentially, blackmailing services into agreeing to financial deficits to obtain ongoing funding. There is the usual conforming to standards expectations but without matching funding.

1.2. Eligibility criteria of individuals poorly framed

1.2.1. Doesn't seem to be based on realistic skill sets of individuals. Excludes consideration of factors such as secondary disabilities eg people with psychiatric disabilities. Access to programs does not appear to seek individuals doing Life Skills curriculum HSC in non state schools. These people are effectively excluding by neglect.

2. Inadequacy of funding

2.1. There is no set up funding for services. It has basically been left to services to fund any set up, including equipment and other resources. The dept is essentially doing it cheap. The level of funding is said to cover

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a three day service for individuals which in itself will preclude them from being eligible for respite services. Without set up funding a service with minimal intake can not actually operate in a financially viable manner and those that will suffer will be service users. The level of funding will not cover one to one training as \$15,699 will not fund a staff member. It would take three transition people to fund one staff member full time. The level of funding is becoming less for an industry that already is extremely under funded. The level of funding going into disabilities has made the job undesirable and tends to attract people with little experience and little qualifications and yet they are expected to perform activities that require high level of experience and qualifications. They are teachers but are paid as miscellaneous workers.

2.2. Poor funding levels that do not cater to individual needs. A large part of gaining employment is to obtain a work trial and be trained into a position. This involves one to one training and marketing and then setting up employment. This is not catered to or considered in funding requirements. The reluctance of DADHC in distributing any financial model for operating seems proof enough that gaining a small number of new entrants through TTW would not make a service viable.

3. Role of advocates

3.1. There is little direction or support afforded to any advocates, nor is there any specific efforts outlined to encourage their use.

4. Impact on exclusion of further education. Getting into adult life successfully means following appropriate transition processes which need to include continuing studies.

4.1. Stark contrast to USA IDEAS Act 1997: there is a poor transition focus - merely sending from one institution to another. The aim seems to be to unload clients onto federal funding or provide reduced funding if staying

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with state. NSW just does not have a true transition framework for school leavers. There is absolutely no coordination of community involvement into any transition planning for individuals.

5. Assessment methodology

5.1. Poor tool and application reliability. The tool used to assess has obviously faulted given the poor outcomes: eg work experience ready individuals being placed in Community Participation and poor work ready individuals with severe behaviour problems being placed in TTW. Application of the tool must also be questioned due this occurrence. School reports often depict completely different picture to what is evidenced in adult services: particularly in relation to abilities and support needs.

5.2. Services should play a role in work experience at school and assessment as they have better idea of reality and options. The practice of just placing persons in school work experience is not the same as becoming work ready for any school student and many end up with an inaccurate expectation of the job market. The school system does not prepare people for work.

6. Adequacy of complaints system

6.1. Tendering process led to appeals due to lack of any model provided and recognition of previous and current work in the field. Appeals process meant that services which were going through appeals were labelled as not successful and led to loss of potential clientele.

6.2. Lack of recognition re previous high success rate and model used

7. Will the changes achieve outcomes?

7.1. Given the previous programs features, aims and funding, it is likely that the outcomes will be the same if not worse as in the past since money will quickly flow out of programs and clients get stranded into diversional

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therapy rather than reach achievable goals. Their other option is to gamble and link up with a Federally Funded Open employment agency and see the strong possibility of being stranded at home due to their skill levels. The fact that TTW is limited to 1-2 years is testament to the ideology of either moving people onto federal funding or inappropriately onto day services. Most of these people would be able to gain supported employment if not open employment given the time to train, learn skills and overcome barriers.

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