

**Submission
No 1**

FIRST REVIEW OF THE DUST DISEASES SCHEME

Organisation: Carers Australia NSW

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The Director
Standing Committee on Law and Justice
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First reviews of the Lifetime Care and Support and Dust Diseases schemes

Carers NSW would like to thank the Standing Committee on Law and Justice for the opportunity to make a submission to the first reviews of the Lifetime Care and Support and Dust Diseases schemes.

Carers NSW is the peak non-government organisation for individuals in NSW who provide informal care and support to a family member or friend who has a disability, mental illness, drug or alcohol dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail aged. We have provided feedback to the reviews of the Lifetime Care and Support Scheme (Lifetime Care) for a number of years and are pleased to now be partnering with icare to support families of people who have been catastrophically injured.

We commend icare for engaging with Carers NSW to expand family support within Lifetime Care and look forward to progressing the project, 'we care – caring for icare families'. Carers NSW is also supportive of other ongoing projects supporting families within icare, including the Strength 2 Strength program and challenging behaviour workshops available to families where there is a high risk of harm.

Over time Carers NSW has observed increasing awareness of, and interest in, carer issues within Lifetime Care, and we are pleased to note that many staff are well informed and enthusiastic to learn how to better support families within the scheme. The potential interest indicated by the Dust Diseases scheme in our family support work is also encouraging, suggesting that our proposed model of family support may have a greater application within icare and beyond Lifetime Care.

Carers NSW wishes to note that further development is required in order for icare's organisational culture to be carer inclusive. For example, we have observed that the term 'carer' is still generally used by icare staff and in icare materials with reference to paid care workers, which is not consistent with the legislative definition of 'carer' established by the NSW *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*. Carers NSW encourages the Committee to urge both schemes under review to bring their language into line with this definition.

While a number of icare frontline staff have now received an introduction to carer awareness from Carers NSW to inform their work with families, Carers NSW believes this training should be expanded across the organisation, in order to ensure that carers – whether they be clients or staff members – are better recognised, included and supported by the agency.

Due consideration should also be given to supporting and recruiting icare staff with a lived experience of caring, both to support carers with the challenges of the caring role, and to inform the work of icare. Carers NSW urges the Committee to refer icare to the obligations on public service agencies under the NSW *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* with regard to human resources.

Carers NSW is excited to be working in conjunction with icare to improve support to families, and we hope this work will result in best practice examples that can be implemented statewide and inform the ongoing development of the National Injury Insurance Scheme. Carers NSW has frequently argued that the related National Disability Insurance Scheme leaves much to be desired with regard to carer inclusion and support; icare has the potential to lead the way in carer inclusion and support and positively influence both of these national systems as they roll out.

Thank you for accepting our submission. For further information regarding this submission, please contact

CEO
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