

**INQUIRY INTO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL
DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME AND THE PROVISION
OF DISABILITY SERVICES IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Name: Name suppressed
Date Received: 28 June 2018

Partially
Confidential

I have just started making enquiries into NDIS and other departments and whether or not I am eligible for any services. I have been diagnosed with a functioning, invisible mental health disability that is not acute or severe. The area that I am interested in, is what supports and services there could be for vulnerable parents, particularly mothers and/or children that have been diagnosed as disabled and become separated, may or may not have also experienced family violence and are going through family court proceedings. There is a gap in this area and I have experienced a lot of stigma, bias and negativity from the family court in my situation. It seems that there is a lack in trauma informed training, there is no disability advocacy and lack of independent mental health specialists relied upon as these reports cost thousands which in turn, all this affects due process for many. The court relies on internal family court appointed consultants (usually qualified as psychologists) that have limited knowledge in this area and put all diagnosed people in the one box instead of considering the degrees of disorders - mild, moderate or acute, history and capacity. The custody is given to the parent and whose family is the most financially wealthy.. whose stability in other areas such as alcoholism and drug use is overlooked rather than on the parent (usually the mother) that is emotionally wealthy and nurturing, who has a manageable mental health issue. It is an extremely stressful time for people without health issues going through this process, so it is especially difficult for people managing their health and dealing with unexpected and stressful situations in family court. In a state of stress, anxiety and change, many do not focus on seeking support, but instead on the necessity of learning things very quickly and on what are immediate priorities in front of them, like finding a lawyer quickly, applying for legal aid, or self litigate, finding affordable and suitable housing, eating healthy and getting quality sleep and the paramount priority above all this - attending to the needs of children and maintaining their stability, safety and schooling if at that age. My submission is a request to investigate the gaps so certain people do not get lost in the system. Many of whom, do not disclose their disorder as it does not define them as individuals and because of past reactions from uneducated and/or assuming people so they miss out on appropriate support and suffer poor and unfair outcomes that can affect children's lives and safety.

Thank you for reading my submission,