

A Challenging Response to the Shut Out Report

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by **Max Jackson**

(former CEO of Kew Cottages in Victoria and author of "*Fixing the Broken Disability System*")

Fixing the Broken Disability System challenges the recently released report of the National Disability Strategy Consultation, *Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia*.

This response paper argues that even though *Shut Out* presents a picture of a broken disability service system, it fails to promote the essential core actions necessary to fix the system.

The author of *Fixing the Broken Disability System*, Max Jackson, a former CEO of Kew Cottages in Victoria and long term professional in the disability field, describes *Shut Out* as an emotionally charged report that presents the same deficits that have been known and articulated for years.

Fixing the Broken Disability System casts a critical eye over the new catchwords *community and social inclusion*, arguing they are overstated and ignore the realities that underpin those who have high level hands-on care and support needs.

Although *Shut Out* purports to be a major plank in developing a National Disability Strategy, Jackson says, The four strategic priorities identified in the report lack hard edged detail and simply present as a set of more-of-the-same type statements.

Fixing the Broken Disability System challenges the priorities and by contrast details seven must do actions commencing with an entitlement to service. If these actions are ignored or are papered-over, he says, the disability system will remain broken. Blaming the community for people with a disability being forgotten, neglected, hidden, rejected, excluded, discriminated, abandoned, isolated will not fix the system.

Max Jackson challenges governments, policy makers and the usual band of power brokers by suggesting, A failure to fix the system will constitute the failure of the National Disability Strategy to address the complexity of needs of people with disabilities and their families.

For further information contact Max Jackson (03) 9682 1981 or 0413 040 654

1 October 2009

LISA Comment: "Well said, Max!"

Tony & Heather Tregale

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Tel: 03-9434-3810.