

# Government Captive Market Services

*A captive market is a group of consumers who have limited choice in terms of the products or services available to them - they have little or no choice. This restrictive practice is imposed on the majority of people with a disability and their families in Australia.*

## Classic Captive Market Direct Service Providers:

- Telecom was (Telstra is not).
- Government Departments.

## The Negative Effect of a Captive Market:

- Captive Market service providers have no reason to consider customers or customer service.
- Captive Market service providers are introvert - Seeking to provide only what they consider is appropriate, not what the consumer needs, wants or is entitled.
- Captive Market service providers bureaucratically negate consumer requests to maintain their power over those who attempt to make service requests and/or set expectations.

## Captive Market Classics

- These are actions by captive market service providers which defy logic and good management practice in order to maintain their bureaucratic power over people - those they are intended to serve.

## Examples of Captive Market Classics:

- The management of the Victoria Police Radio & Electronics Division refused to accept for two years that an incorrect and very cheap component in their vehicle communication equipment caused the equipment to fail in hot weather. The cost in labour, vehicle wear and fuel for vehicles to travel from police stations all over Melbourne to a central workshop to have the component replaced was astronomical.
- The Department of Human Services, Victoria, in response to residents of group homes who have **no meaningful communications** should have their personal clothing discretely identified said, *"The department does not consider it appropriate to require all residents to put their names on every item of clothing if they choose not to!"*

Since when did those with such limited capacity and having no meaningful communications (no "intentional communications"), have the ability to make such meaningful judgement, or understand such consequences?

## Captive Market v Customer Satisfaction

A recent business survey showed **the top five reasons someone buys a product**, are:-

1. Confidence that your products and services will meet their needs
2. Quality of the product and service
3. The level of service that is provided

4. Selection or range of offers

5. Cost

**NOTE: Cost is number 5! Confidence is number one!**

The top reason is that they believe that you can deliver a solution that it will take away whatever the pain is that they are currently feeling, and produce the pleasure they are seeking.

The pleasure caring families with a member living in a supported accommodation group home are seeking, to feel they do not need to live for ever, are numbers 1, 2, 3 and 4!

This is just what departmental care policies, standards and values offer, but not what the regions deliver!

With a captive market, the department/regions have little reason to consider leaders in customer experience say that working with customers is a privilege, not an entitlement! They recognise their competitors also offer great products and services, and that to retain and attract customers, they will need to delight them every day at every organisational touch point.

**The Disability Act 2006, Victoria, Policy & Information Manual says:**

At the centre of any support strategy are people with a disability, their families and carers, guiding the way that support is provided in their homes and communities. Rights and accountability outlines how to support high quality services, better accountability and make practice more transparent.

Services for people with an intellectual disability should be designed and provided in a manner that ensures that a particular disability service provider cannot exercise control over all or most aspects of the life of a person with an intellectual disability.

**All staff providing disability services need to:**

- Consider and respect the role of families and other people who are significant in the life of the person with a disability.
- Acknowledge the important role families have in supporting people with a disability.
- Acknowledge the important role families have in assisting their family member to realize their individual physical, social, emotional and intellectual capacities.
- Where possible strengthen and build the capacity of families who are supporting people with a disability.
- Have regard for the needs of children with a disability and preserve and promote relationships between the child, their family and other people who are significant in the life of the child with a disability.

**Independent monitoring may:**

Assure compliance of disability service providers with the Standards.

Involve people with a disability who receive services, their families and carers.

## **NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme/Medicare Service):**

We hope NDIS will be the vehicle to open the market to service providers who need and value people with a disability and their families. In most fields of service provision, consumers are able to purchase from those providers who are offering high quality service. Whereas, at present, group home residents are unable to change their service provider or move to another group home service provider without DHS involvement and approval.

## **Protection of consumers rights and interests:**

The processes and activities of service providers must be open to scrutiny by key stakeholders, particularly consumers and their representatives.

**Note 1:** [A familys challenge to bureaucratic madness](#)

**Note 2** [Kingsdene School](#) Stays Open - Well done the NSW fighters!

**Note 3:** [NDIS](#) - The BIG Questions.

**Note 4:** [National Take-Over](#) of Disability Cared Accommodation and immediate implementation of a National Care and Support Scheme forward as a Federal Election Policy - "The States have failed, give the Feds a go!"

**Note 5:** [Parent suing in the Federal Court](#) on behalf of son!

**LISA Comment:** The Department of Human Services, Disability Services, Victoria, is a funding provider, a regulator, a direct service provider and a landlord - Has direct and indirect control of almost all services for people with a disability throughout the State of Victoria. And their Minister is responsible for both service provision and the monitoring of that by Community Visitors - A very captive market and conflict of interest not conducive to being open to scrutiny or the provision of real and meaningful quality of life care.

Yet, DHS HO Publication: Quality Framework, Consumer Assessment 5.2, says, People with a disability and their family members and carers should be empowered to have a say in the services we provide. By listening to and acting upon concerns, ideas and suggestions of support users, we can use their knowledge, expertise and experience to make improvements to the quality of service delivery and outcomes for people with a disability.

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