

Government services have lost their way!

Victoria's Chief Commissioner of Police says, "Senior Officers [Management] have lost their way!" Most people with a disability and their families would say similar of most government departments, especially the DHS.

Our last bulletin identified departmental management problems as the root cause of service point care-quality failure. Interestingly, the Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police has identified similar failures within the Police. The Chief Commissioner is reported in the Age on October 13, 2010, as developing a new management philosophy for Victoria Police.

Chief Commissioner Simon Overland has promised to cut paperwork, return police to the streets and increase saturation blitzes on Victoria's trouble spots as part of a return to traditional law enforcement.

Mr Overland admitted senior officers [management] had "lost their way" with police principles, and said he was introducing a "back-to-basics" program in Victoria. I have always believed that if you get the fundamentals right, the rest will look after itself.

With the overwhelming evidence of departmental disaster management, it is clear many areas of the Department of Human Services have lost their way in respect to the provision of quality of life care in accordance with their care policies standards and values. And they resort to punishing and intimidating those families who attempt to get service level and quality in accordance with the direction, intention and spirit of departmental care policies standards and values.

An elderly widowed mother has major concerns about the basic care of her family member living in a department group home, yet she is terrified to say anything for fear her family member will be intimidated. She says that even if she passes her concerns to DHS management, they will just pass them directly to staff, rather than use the information to help properly manage their direct care services.

Another elderly widowed mother was sent to Coventry for 12 months by staff, for daring to request information on staff work times.

Yet another mother was forced to get support from an advocacy service to help break a long standing tradition that her family member receive few social activities.

Families were forced to seek legal support, when a totally incompatible client was forced on their family members without consultation. The quality of life of their family members was being totally destroyed.

A family seeking relocation of their family member on grounds of serious reduction in quality of life care, discovered after a number of years that the DSR Panel had never been shown the relocation application.

An elderly, in ill health, and long time widowed mother seeking only care records to evaluate her family member's care, was forced to represent herself at VCAT against wall to wall government legal support.

Then there was the family who were punished for the mother daring to actively and directly question and monitor the care being provided for her family member.

DHS, consequently, lobbied the mother's plenary guardianship be taken from her. The family appealed the decision. The subsequent hearing was the longest in VCAT history, being eight days spread over two months, and heard by a County Court judge. Although the judge held the mother was suitable in every way to be guardian, the OPA was appointed Plenary Guardian because of past disputes the mother had with the DHS.

The family, again, appealed this decision. This time in the Supreme Court with a famous QC at the helm. The matter was heard by three judges. At one point, the family counted 30 lawyers in the court, all connected with their case.

The final outcome was the mother being her family member's joint plenary guardian with an employee of the OPA

Despite the massive efforts of this family, they were punished in having to share guardianship for daring to question the DHS.

Finally, [ABC TV Stateline \(Victoria\)](#), Friday 17 October 2010, exposed the story of families terrified by DHS intimidation.

Debra Allcock Tyler the CEO of the UK [Directory of Social Change](#), speaking at the recent Victorian Government's Think Innovation Summit said, NFPs/CSOs are here to push boundaries and to change the way things are done for the better. [See full report](#)

LISA Comment: Mum worries if her regular little-one at Kinder is getting, at least, reasonable minder care - expecting quality of life care. Yet the little one can tell mum and has capacity and ability for self motivation! Whereas, Mum worries much more about her 35 year old living behind the very covert doors of government group homes, has no meaningful communications and limited capacity. And, has a great need for consistent and meaningful quality of life care - active support!

Extra 1: [Workforce Gap Analysis - Victoria](#) Submissions Close **30/10/10.**

Extra 2: There are a number of issues listed on the LISA Website "Opinion" Forum. We are interested in opinion on these. To make a "reply", click

on "Opinion" and "Post a Reply" to the Topic. You will be prompted to "Log-In" or "Register" Keep your "Log-On" name very anonymous!

Extra 3: [Pathways Australia](#) - Support for NFPs/CSOs

Extra 4: "Accreditation without Consumers" - Independent accreditation is all the rage, yet we are seeing just lip service being paid to the views of people with a disability and their families! Indeed, the families of those unable to speak effectively for themselves are frequently ignored.

The DHS appears to be finally considering 'independent accreditation' of its direct care services. It is however desperately trying to clean up the mess before letting 'independents' loose on its direct care services!

Extra 5: Questions on Disability put to State (Vic) Politicians ([LINK](#)).

Extra 6: The NDS Victoria 'Doorstop for Disability' was a success on 11 October 2010. The crowd outside 1 Treasury Place in Melbourne included people with a disability, their carers, families, and service providers. The target was more funding ([see media comment](#)) for disability services - **LISA says, more funding without outcome expectations being set monitored and maintained, will be more DHS bureaucratic waste!**

Extra 7: The NDIS Team reports: *There are now almost 600 submissions on the Productivity Commission website, with more posted every day. The Productivity Commission has now received more submissions during this inquiry than during any other inquiry in the Commission's history!*

Extra 8: NSW Rally: Over 1,500 people from across NSW have already pledged their attendance at the Show Your Strength rally next Thursday the 28th of October. For the disability sector, this rally is an important opportunity to make sure our voices are heard. Alan Jones AO has confirmed his attendance as MC.

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