

"We are easy meat for the bureaucrats!"

Parents/families with a child or adult family member with an intellectual or multiple disability who is currently using, needing or eventually needing to access support services are easy meat for the captive market bureaucrats who have no reason for customers or the provision of customer service.

Australian governments directly and indirectly assertively control almost all services for people with a disability. The vast majority of people with a disability and their families have little or no choice of service provider. Government departments directly and indirectly control almost all supported accommodation group homes in Australia.

In Victoria, the DHS has total control over placements in almost all group homes throughout the state, through their despotic DSR (Disability Support Register) ("the waiting list") which says that a publications will have priority status if the individual's circumstances meet one of the following. This really means, you will only be **considered** if you meet one of the following criteria:-

- **The person is a child in facility based care.**
- **The person's current living situation puts them at serious risk of harm.**
- **The person's current living situation puts them at serious risk of harming others.**
- **The support will maintain the person in their home (or family with a child or young person) where the only and immediate alternative is a facility based setting; for example, in the situation of the serious illness or death of primary carer.**
- **The person is in a custodial placement or residential treatment facility following the completion of their order.**
- **The person wishes to move out of disability supported accommodation or a residential institution.**
- **The person has a degenerative condition and is experiencing rapid deterioration.**
- **The person is a younger person living in, or at risk of entering, Residential Aged Care**
- **DCS Manager's discretion (this is used to include extreme situations or circumstances).**

So parents/families must go through hell-fire to get a group home for their adult family member. Those so desperate, resort to abandoning their adult family member at a respite facility. That is of course when they can get respite, as it's so scarce.

Respite is scarce per se, but also as places are used as permanent accommodation. Those families accepting in-home support, can therefore expect little respite!

Having gone through hell-fire, and be so lucky to get a supported accommodation group home, caring parents/families now face an on-going battle with the associated support services to get quality of life care, in contrast to basic minder care, for their family member.

If at this point you feel an urge to complain about the level and quality of care your family member is receiving - the complaint processes are totally controlled by government and pseudo government departments. There is little independent evaluation and consideration. It's mainly public servants checking on public or pseudo ("Independent Statutory Body") public servants.

The bureaucrats will issue-avoid and manoeuvre every-which-way to negate your complaint, and make you feel like a totally ungrateful person for complaining about the wonderful hand-outs you are getting.

The ODSC (Office of the Disability Service Commissioner) will tell you, "It is your right to complain, and you should" - if you are unhappy with any aspect of the care your family member is receiving.

In practice, you will find the ODSC has no teeth. The DHS made sure the ODSC was born with no teeth. The best the ODSC can do is "Conciliation" with equal opportunity given to both sides on a totally uneven playing field - "A lone parent v A government department!"

The DHS can thumb its nose at the ODSC, as it did with the IDRP. The only person able to direct the DHS, is the Minister. And the Minister is unlikely to do this, except for major breaches of policy. So this government department is a captive market law unto itself - able to do what ever it likes.

Much of the money which should be spent on providing real and meaningful quality of life care within well defined and accepted care policies standards and values is chewed up by bureaucrats playing their **power over people** games with fragmented parents/families, and buying not managing their way.

The bureaucrat's worst enemy is parents/families who stick together to present a united front. Bureaucrats, therefore, do everything possible to promote and encourage fragmentation.

Certainly, NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) will help to break these bureaucratic barriers to quality of life care, through rights/entitlement funding rather than the present "begging-bowl" funding. But as most service delivery problems are "attitude not funding" based, there remains a strong need for a well and independently resourced "**National Parent/Family Support Group**".

Workers have Unions, NGOs have NDS, but Parents/Families have no independent, united and well resourced support base to provide an effective challenge to the very complex power over people bureaucratic processes they continually face in seeking and maintaining support for their family member.

Extra 1: [Housing Choices Australia](#) [Brochure](#)

Extra 2: [Disability Connections Victoria](#)

Extra 3: [More Supported Accommodation \(?\)](#)

Extra 4: [NDIS - The BIG Questions.](#)

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