

17 Connemara Court  
Portland  
Victoria 3305  
Friday 26th. September 2008

The Executive Officer  
Family and Community Development  
Parliament House  
Spring Street  
East Melbourne  
Vic. 3002



Re:— *Inquiries into supported accommodation for those with disability and mental illness.*

*Dear Sir or Madam,*

*My husband and I are the parents of a 38 year old son, Phillip Anthony Brown. Phillip has Cerebral Palsy (Athetoid Quadraplegia) We have cared for Phillip all of his life ,and also raised three older children*

*In earlier years we had little or no respite and no financial help.*

*We always had to take Phillip away with us if we went on holidays, together with our other children-These could not be classed as holidays but just a change of scenery. Because of Phillip's disability, we were unable to use a caravan or tent and had to rent a unit. This being costly, any holidays taken were of necessity very short.*

*My husband and I have rarely been able to take a holiday together, as one has usually got to stay at home to care for Phillip. In 1998 we went to China to work in an orphanage for disabled children for two weeks . To enable us to do this , we had to ask friends to come into our home and care for Phillip. This turned out to be a disaster as the first couple who were supposed to look after him for a week only lasted for three days because not being used to the situation they were unable to cope.*

*Phillip has a mild intellectual disability , and a moderate to severe physical disability and is wheel chair bound.*

*We are now in our seventy's, and are finding it increasingly difficult to care for him. We have been retired for eight years and because of all the lifting over the years, both of us suffer from back problems, together with tiredness and declining health.*

*Both of us have worked hard all of our lives, both in work situations and in the community, and now feel it is time in life when we should be able to have some rest and enjoyment for the remaining few years of our life.*

*We should not have to worry about what happens to Phillip when one of us has to care for the other, or one or both of us die.*

*There is an accute shortage of supported accommodation in Victoria and although we are continually told that Phillip is on the top priority list for supported accommodation but that's as far as he seems to get. With all the promises made by Governments prior to election to build more homes for the disabled nothing ever seems to eventuate that is of actual benefit to us.*

*We are very much aware that many aging parents of disabled people are in the same situation as we are . We hope that those of you sitting on this Inquiry will understand our desperate situation and be sympathetic to our needs and make appropriate recommendations to Government to act on immediately.*

*Thanking you in anticipation*

*Lois D. Brown*