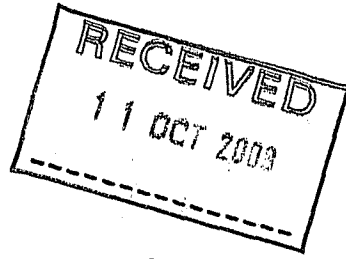


23 Naples Road
Melbore.
Vic. 3194
8th October, 2008



Mr. Jude Perera MLA
Chairman

Family & Community Development Committee
Parliament House, Spring Street
East Melbourne Vic 3002

Dear Sir,

I wish to make some comments regarding accommodation for people with a mental illness.

On Friday, 5th September 2008 my son Thomas Frank Shilton, who is aged 41, assaulted me. I called the police who took him to the Monash Medical Centre Psychiatric Ward, where he is still an involuntary in-patient. He is responding to treatment and it is hoped that his medication will be finalised and he can leave the hospital very soon.

Tom is very eager to return home. However, friends and staff members at the hospital have advised me that it is not wise for me to have him living in the house. Tom has assaulted me before and was an involuntary patient at the Monash Medical Centre in 2001. After treatment in 2001 he seemed much better, but recently his behaviour has been inappropriate and the situation came to a head on 5th September.

The Social Worker at the Monash Medical Centre has suggested that Tom should live in a Special Accommodation dwelling which caters for people of all ages, and both sexes. I am concerned about the facilities for a man aged 41 in such a dwelling. Is there any occupational therapy? What recreational facilities are there? At the Monash Medical Centre there is a table tennis table and a pool table and basketball facilities. Are patients locked

Tom has previously lived by himself in a small flat and can cook meals for himself. A supported unit, possibly shared with one or two more people, would be ideal, rather than a special accommodation dwelling where meals are cooked for residents. The shopping for food and cooking are important therapies that help to give life a purpose.

2.

I see in the Discussion Paper that "Current Government Policy is directed towards placing people with a disability & / or mental illness into supported accommodation services in communities or providing packages of in-home support."

I have never received any in-home support when Tom has been living with me. I know of no case manager handling Tom's affairs, I feel I have been left without help.

A friend said to me, "Tom has slipped between the cracks." and no one was in a position to give support to me. This has led to the present situation.

I want Tom to be well and be a useful member of the community. I am happy to answer any questions that the committee may wish to ask me.

Thank you all for taking part in this enquiry.

Yours faithfully,

M. M. J. Shilton

MARY MARGARET JEANETTE SHILTON.