Dear Sir/Madam,

I write to draw your attention to the long term accommodation crisis for people with a disability in South West Victoria. There are no Community Residential Unit (CRU) vacancies in the Hamilton area.

Caring for someone with a disability is a 24 hour per day responsibility and on evenings and weekends when day services are not available, the constant supervision and physical assistance required can leave carers without the time or energy to develop essential family and community relationships. Most parents are full time carers and many are aged and struggling to support their sons and daughters who have high support needs. They are exhausted emotionally, physically and financially and will require permanent accommodation for their child now or in the near future.

Parents facing the desperate plight to meet the physical and emotional needs of their disabled child often have difficulty expressing their needs to governments or appropriate departments. Facing the probability that no permanent ongoing accommodation is, or will be, available is adding to the pressure of an uncertain future.

Younger parents battle to keep their families together, protect siblings from neglect and discrimination and run a normal life. With the responsibility of full time care of their disabled child so or daughter they have little time to focus on their other children or have time to themselves.

Multidisciplinary Centre, the Hamilton adult disability day program agency, has approximately 50 adults (16 years and over) registered in day placements and estimates that as many as 20 people attending the Centre require ongoing supported accommodation immediately or in the near future. We urge you to use the funding allocations in current budgets to address this issue as soon as possible to create better outcomes for people with a disability and their families.

Signed

Send your submission to
Family and Community Development Committee
Inquiry into Supported Accommodation for those with Disability and Mental Illness
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East Melbourne, VIC 3002 Australia

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