

Beware the Wolf in Sheep's Clothing!

“Wolves are sneaky: They watch their prey, and plan their attack”

The Minister initially made a direct grab for unjustified DSP cash. and lost. As a direct result, she has become even more determined to get her way. This time she is more sneaky and determined to, by stealth, achieve a similar cost hike eventually. This is to make the residents of DHS group homes pay the totally unjustified high fees CSO group home residents are forced to pay.

The initial grab was both format and cash... This time it is just the format towards the original intention of getting 75% of the DSP. This is 50% more than most DHS residents are currently paying, yet they are paying their way for daily living. This minister is clearly determined all residents will pay towards their support service costs.

The proposed board and lodging fee is the present separate rent and housekeeping combined, with the potential to include a contribution to the support service fee. This hostel/aged care style covert residential charge will deny residents ever having real residential tenancy rights like the general community.

The real intention of the NDIS process for residents of group homes is/was to replace the current block support service funding (staff wages and associated overheads) with each resident having similar funding as an ISP.

With each resident having their support service cost as an ISP in their pocket, and full residential tenancy rights like the general community, they have rights and financial ability in their home, not the restrictive practices of a hostel or aged-care residential.

Residents with such rights and finances would have the ability to, (a) freely move to different service providers or different service situations, (b) remove staff they don't like, (c) have services provided the way they want them and, (d) replace the service provider, and have the service contract determine the way they want services provided.

The Minister suggests it is wrong that charges for food, electricity and other services vary from house to house and month to month. Yet this is how the general community lives. Families have different needs. The current CERS is focused on residents living like the general community. The bureaucratic B&L will move them towards hostels and aged-care.

One of the Minister's selling points for B&L, is access to Commonwealth Rent Assistance (CRA). We and many others with a family member in a DHS group home already get CRA! Currently, administrators keep the CRA. Under B&L, administrators will be expected to pay this federal allowance to the state government

as a contribution towards support service costs – a factor no person with a disability should be expected to contribute toward.

The bottom line of the whole move, is to get residents to contribute towards their support service costs. The first grab, is the CRA. Although the Minister has put the grab for 75% of the DSP on the back burner, it is not forgotten.

With the B&L packaged format, in contrast to the current payment of “actuals”, where residents live like the general community, this format is set to gradually move costs towards the regulated 75% of DSP, and compatibility with the residents of CSOs who see no breakdown of charges, as these include a contribution towards their support service fee, because the DHS refuses to fully fund CSO support service costs, as they currently, and quite rightly do their own direct care services.

The Minister claims so-called advantages of B&L over CERS for residents, yet these claims are little more than smoke and mirrors, as we have been administering a CERS account since its inception in the early 90s, including CRA, and it has been first class. There is, therefore, little reason why all residents are not similar to this.

Successive ministers have protected their department (DHS) from consumer and public scrutiny, and have not questioned the department’s shocking, disaster and wasteful management who buy their way rather than efficiently manage the business of ensuring services are consistently within the direction, intention and spirit of the department’s extensive and comprehensive care policies, standards and values.

Rather than clean-up the department’s management mess, which would save heaps of money, this minister is taking the easy way out – grab from our most vulnerable and disadvantaged citizens - those with intellectual and multiple disabilities.

[Disability Amendment Bill 2013](#)

[Second Reading Speech](#)

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