

# Determined DHS Despots

## State Government Department Despots Dip into DSPs

The following information, dated 4 August 2013, was sent to the administrators of all residents residing in DHS managed group homes throughout Victoria.

The arrogant tone of the letter sent to Administrators clearly illustrates this government department's standard power over the very people it is intended to serve.

This is a totally undemocratic, third-world country, government supported demand for a totally unjustified slice of disability support pensions.

*In May 2013 administrators were advised of a change to how the residential charges in disability residential services managed by the Department of Human Services would be structured, to be effective from 1 December 2013.*

*Administrators are now provided with some additional information [see links below] about the new board and lodging fee which is a residential charge under the Disability Act 2006. The information may assist in preparing for the implementation of the new fee from 1 December 2013.*

*Over the coming weeks house supervisors will continue to make contact with administrators to gather information that will assist in reviewing each resident's financial plan.*

This is despite house supervisors, house staff and their union (HACSU) totally disagree with this arrogant and totally unjustified cost hike.

As the Director, Service Outcomes, DHS Lonsdale Street is responsible for these despotic procedures, any questions should be addressed to this area of the Department of Human Services.

With this cost hike matter currently before VCAT, the matter should not be considered by Administrators as viable, democratic or right.

Given this unjustified cost hike is being directly opposed by the staff union and all house staff, families need have no fear they or their family member will be disadvantaged if they decide not to pay the cost hike, but continue to pay the current justified CERS charges as they have done for years.

Should all avenues of redress fail, those who consider paying the unjustified and outrageous cost hike should be aware, (a) attempting to claim hardship subjects the person on the DSP to a means test, (b) the potential to have real residential tenancy rights is lost forever, (c) a fixed-fee residential charge means the group home is a

hostel not a home (aged-care style) and, (d) the DHS fixed-fee residential charge and cost hike sets a precedent for NDIS not to fully fund group homes for support services (staff wages and associated overheads).

It is interesting to note the group homes which are owned by such as ‘Singleton Equity’, yet managed by the DHS with department direct care staff, are not subjected to the cost hike. The only difference in operation being to whom the residents pay their rent.

[Board & Lodgings Fact Sheet](#)  
[B&L Planning Tool Cover Sheet](#)  
[B&L Budget Fee Planning \(over 21\) Tool](#)  
[B&L Budget Fee Planning \(under 21\) Tool](#)  
[B&L Fee: Rent and Service Components](#)  
[Financial Hardship Information Sheet](#)  
[Financial Hardship Application Forms](#)

The staff union, HACSU, in its recent Newsletter, has joined the campaign to stop the state government’s intention to take 75% of the Disability Support Pension from residents of DHS group homes throughout Victoria.

The union calls on all its members and all DHS staff to support the campaign against this cruel increase which it says will force people with a disability further into poverty and rob them of the capacity to pay for daily living, recreation and social inclusion.

All union members and staff are urged to get involved and spread the word that their members have the support of Villamanta, Valid and families.

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Families clearly have the support of group home staff, Villamanta and Valid not to pay or be involved in the totally unjustified cost increase, but to just continue paying the regular CERS fees which is the actual daily cost.

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**NOTE: We are always interested in feedback and information; general, specific, good or bad.**

**If you wish anonymously: Our mail address is, 73 Nepean Street, Watsonia, 3087**