

Fraudulent Intentions of DHS Victoria

This government department is using stand-over tactics to get money for their slush-fund from very vulnerable people

Families were forced to endure the flack of the department's heavy legal artillery at a directions hearing, in a bid to convince VCAT they had rights to hear the department's intention to rip-off the residents of their group homes throughout Victoria.

When many of the institutions were closed in Victoria, most residents were moved into group homes - regular houses in the community with staff support.

The overall intention was that living should be as close as possible to that of the general community. The houses should be the person's 'home', not a mini-institution or hostel.

Finance management was carefully planned to ensure maximum accountability and reasonable compatibility with that of the general community. This was achieved through the use of the *Client Expenditure Recording System (CERS)*.

The accountability and transparency of CERS is complemented by the resident having an administrator independent of the department and a funding path through State Trustees.

The resident's administrator pays, from the resident's disability support pension (DSP), the sum agreed in the resident's financial plan for 'rent', 'housekeeping' and 'personal expenditure' into the resident's trust fund within State Trustees. State Trustees then send these components to the group home card accounts.

Give the varying levels of ability, residents are consequently living as close as possible to members of the community, in as much as they are paying their way with their actual daily living costs.

Now, many years later, driven by government and treasury to save money, the department is attempting to take pension money from the residents of their group homes for no reason which is of benefit to the residents. Taking money this way is fraud!

The department's grab cash – a 50% unjustified increase by attempting to change CERS to a B&L (Board & Lodging) aged-care style block funding charge with no breakdown. Naturally, the department can't itemise the B&L, as the residents are currently paying their way.

This B&L will not only drive young and mid-aged adults with lifelong disabilities towards aged-care living, a lifestyle little more than looking at four walls every day, but they will be treated differently from regular pensioners in the community, who's pensions cannot be raided by government bureaucrats, or they be expected to account for their use of their pension by making them pay more than the actual cost of their daily living. Then expect them to beg for hardship to have a lifestyle much above basic-care.

The level of, and eligibility for the DSP is the role of Federal Government. It should not be the role of the state government of Victoria to assess a person's level of need for their DSP, and demand they pay into the department's slush-fund.

This was never the Federal Government's intention when setting the level of the DSP. The intention of the DSP is to provide a person with a disability with a reasonable quality of life in comparison with the general population.

The only role of the state government is to fully fund quality care and support costs (support staff wages and overheads), as the NDIS will eventually do to ensure residents live a meaningful quality of life as close as possible to that of the general community with proper residential rights where they live, like other members of the community having proper residential tenancy rights.

Whereas, since DHS group homes were opened, residents have been denied, under section 23 of the *Residential Tenancies Act*, rights which allow them to determine who enters their home – no say if they do not like the support staff.

Yet, people in the general community have a right to say who comes into their home. If they use HACC services from the local council, they can tell the coordinator not to send this or that staff person.

With the proposed B&L, residents will have most of their DSP taken to provide them with few real rights.

Extra 1: [Management of DHS group home finances](#)

Extra 2: [What the NDIS does not fix!](#)

Extra 3: Day services in Victoria are being questioned by the DHS over their fees. Responses are due by 19 July 2013

LIFESTYLE IN SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION (LISA) INC.

Tel: 03-9434-3810: Email: info@lisainc.com.au or vk3qq@optusnet.com.au

Web: www.lisainc.com.au : www.lisa-aus.blogspot.com

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