



Inquiry Into Abuse In Disability Services

[REDACTED] to: fcdc

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History: This message has been forwarded.

I have been employed in the disability "service" provision "industry" for 20years. I have had exposure to it for 35years.

Abuse includes direct physical abuse, mental abuse, neglect (left unattended) and financial abuse Abuse is covered up via the inbuilt mechanisms that have been within the culture of disability "service" provision since the time of Charles Dickens.

Charles Dickens was not a novelist but a social commentator. Stories with happy endings made money for Dickens and soothed the social conscience of the day. Such is the "disability service culture" of today. It is dark, and it is dirty.

The first "mechanism" or barrier in the systemic abuse culture is present in every service provider : The only people who report abuse are "frontline" staff. It may be the house supervisor/Unit manager/Activities Manager or the direct care worker. Each of those levels will develop and understanding between them as to what is reported and what will cause them to be scrutinised and what is likely to be acted upon by "middle management" or government body.

The next level of systemic abuse denial is:

When management doesn't understand or care about what happens at "house level" unless it is a danger to them, and the possible damage to "the brand". If you complain or report an "issue" to management above House Supervisor/Unit Manager level you are re-directed back to the House Supervisor/Unit Manager, to be "hoisted by your own petard"- otherwise known as "follow line management". This will involve you being isolated and ridiculed by your peers - bullied.

The next level of abuse denial is:

If you take the issue to the media you are subjected to discipline because of the policy, where if you expose the service provider to public media attention you will be sacked (resident/participant care comes after everybody else's needs - if at all).

The next level of systemic abuse denial is equally the worst, as it has the power to change culture but chooses to ask for more funding, more legislation, more

The culture of reporting (advocate) bodies, including politicians (on either side of the fence), non-government advocates (which are mostly funded by the government therefore only partially representative of people with a disability) and government service providers/funding organisations who are outside of the actual service provision (DHHS is both) are able to "cherry pick" which issues they will respond to in order to justify their existence. Across service provision, all issues are treated singularly and often referred to as "spot fires" - all the different types of abuse are in all areas of service provision.

Another form of systemic abuse is, when ever I have reported issues I have provoked the ire of both managers and staff because as a parent working in the disability sector, I have the increased burden of resentment - which is always present when a "parent" complains (a number of people outside the service sector, have understood this, including politicians). Parents are denied information about their family member on the grounds of privacy. Issues of abuse and neglect are not reported to families, before they have been "sanitised" or they are not given the information at all. Privacy is used to hide abuse and neglect.

If you make a habit of reporting issues and "run the full gamut" of what I have described, you will have an idea of what it is to be someone with a disability and/or a parent. You will be bullied, you will be marginalised, you will be defamed, you will be targeted and you will be hated.

How do I KNOW this?

I have worked at a day placement service provider, supervised 11 SSA's, been an operations manager, I am at present a direct care worker and I am a family member of someone with an intellectual disability. I can relate actual instances where complaints have been ignored, "painted over" and simply denied and then been allowed to continue. You are more likely to be receive unwarranted scrutiny if you are a known complainer, than if you are a known abuser.

The culture can only be changed by accountability at all levels and across all service provision. Respect people with disabilities, respect their families and take action to stop the abuse - at all levels.

There needs to be a Royal Commission to investigate "abuse in disability services", across the whole of Australia,

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