



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING  
Mr Johnathan Davis MLA (Chair), Mr James Milligan MLA (Deputy Chair),  
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA

## Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into Carers Recognition Bill 2021

**Submission Number:** 04 - Dr Jennifer Thomson AM

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23 July 2021

The Chairperson  
Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing  
ACT Legislative Assembly

To whom it may concern,

I would like to congratulate Ms Orr on her presentation of the Carers Recognition Bill to the ACT Legislative Assembly and thank the Standing Committee for the opportunity to make some comments on the Bill.

By way of context, I am a retired general practitioner who has been a carer for my adult daughter who has a severe chronic illness with resultant disabilities. I have also been a carer for my elderly parents in the past.

1. Clause 5(e) of the Act refers to care and care support agencies being required to uphold and report on compliance with care relationship principles. I am concerned that the definition of “care and care support agencies” is not clear. The explanations provided for these terms in Clause 7 and further clarifications in the Definition section of the Act do not make it clear that organisations such as public hospitals or community health services are included in these definitions.  
I am presuming that ACT Health organisations are indeed considered to be “care and care support agencies” and if so, I would suggest that by way of clarification, some examples of care and care support organisations could be given (e.g. public hospital, community health service) within either Clause 7 or the Definitions Section of the Act.
2. It appears that the Act only applies to public agencies or organisations funded by public funds. This limits the effectiveness of this Act. Many of the care and support agencies providing health, aged care, disability and mental health services are private organisations and privately funded. Consideration must be given to ensuring that care relationship principles are upheld in these organisations as well, otherwise this Act will only have limited benefit.
3. I am pleased to see that the Act provides for some accountability and reporting measures for care and care support agencies. I would suggest that carers and organisations representing carers be included in any process of monitoring compliance with this Act and in any review process of this Act.

Thank you for giving consideration to my comments. I am happy to be contacted for further discussion if required.

Yours sincerely

Dr Jennifer Thomson AM  
MBBS MBA FRACGP