



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION
Mr Michael Pettersson MLA (Chair), Miss Laura Nuttall MLA (Deputy Chair),
Ms Nicole Lawder MLA (Member)

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation in the ACT

Submission Number: 38

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From: [REDACTED]
To: [LA Committee - ECI](#)
Subject: RE: Inquiry into loneliness and isolation in the ACT - request to lodge late submission
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To the Members

ACT Legislative Assembly Standing Committee

Education and Community Inclusion

Submission to Inquiry into Loneliness and Social Isolation

Submission by Robert Altamore OAM

I write to request approval to lodge a late submission to this inquiry.

I wish to bring to the Committee's attention the contribution of Radio 1RPH to addressing loneliness and social isolation in the ACT community.

Radio 1RPH provides the radio reading and information service to the ACT and region and also to Wagga Wagga and Junee.

For information about their service visit their face book page and website

<http://www.radio1rph.org.au>

The consequences of social isolation for people with disabilities are well recorded in the submission to this inquiry by Advocacy for Inclusion. I agree with the information and recommendations in their submission.

Radio 1RPH has been providing its service to Canberra since 1985. In 1989, an Assembly Committee inquiry into the needs of the elderly recognised Radio 1RPH and its service as making an important contribution to addressing social isolation and in particular the needs of older person who experience social isolation due to lack of access to information and to social isolation.

I submit that the conclusions of the Assembly Committee in 1989 remain valid today.

since the 1989 Committee report, social trends have increased the impact of loneliness and social isolation. Some of these trends include:

the increased mobility of labor means that family members now live in different cities. Younger people move to Canberra to work. Older people find that their children have moved interstate.

Family members are isolated and have less contact with each other. the numbers of singles, especially older singles are increasing rapidly.

A second significant factor, one which radio 1RPH directly addresses, is the effect of the digital divide. There are many people in Canberra who do not have access to mobile phones, computers or the internet due to their circumstances of social and economic disadvantage. I am aware from my work in the disability sector that less than 10% of people with severe disabilities have access to the internet.

The social trends driving community services, information and entertainment online means that these people are experiencing disadvantage and social isolation.

Many of these people, especially older persons, still have access to radio and for them radio continues to be a major means of getting information and social connection.

Radio 1RPH continues to address these needs by providing information and entertainment to the Canberra community and in particular to our target audience, people who do not have access to the printed or electronic word. Radio 1RPH does this through its range of newspaper readings, readings from books and publications of special interest and by expanding our range of information programs.

See the program guide on the radio 1RPH website.

I ask that the Committee include the following in its recommendations

“That the ACT Government recognise the contribution of radio generally, and in particular radio reading services such as Canberra’s Radio 1RPH, in addressing loneliness, social isolation and digital disadvantage and continue to see radio to disseminate community information and lessen social isolation and disadvantage.

If you require more information please phone me on [REDACTED] or contact me by email at [REDACTED]

I look forward to hearing from you.

Regards

Robert Altamore OAM
