

VALID MEDIA RELEASE

NDIS: The Neglect and Abuse Continues

VALID shares the outrage of Jake Castledine's mother, Janice, who has branded her son's experience with NDIS as: *"Outrageous, unfair and short-sighted."*

"I am dedicated to building a proper life for my son," says Janice. "But now I feel betrayed and utterly let down by the NDIS."

Jake is a 25-year-old man who has intellectual disability, autism, bipolar disorder, epilepsy, PTSD after abuse in care, and has 'behaviours of concern'. As a result of his anxiety, he self-mutilates and absconds, and requires the support of well-trained staff and an expert therapy team. Janice, who is deaf due to brain cancer and has chronic vertigo, climbs up and down stairs sometimes six times each night to support Jake. She has had three major heart operations and also suffers from congestive heart failure disease.

Jake's initial plan fell well short of funding the supports necessary to address his needs. A review of his plan rejected the need for multi-disciplinary therapy to assist in building Jake's skills for independence, and denied adequate funding to give Janice a regular break.

The outcome is: "I get an average three hours sleep a night. I get virtually no time to rest and recuperate so that I actually have any energy to help him through a seizure, clean him up, change and wash sheets at 4am soiled with urine and faeces when he loses bodily function due to uncontrolled seizure activity.

"The NDIA seems hell bent on sending families to the wall. I am tired of listening to their representatives preaching they know best how to support us, ignoring the advice of expert therapists. I have had conversations with families who are suicidal and say to me 'I wish I were dead then this would be over for me.' They are tired, worn out, can't fight any more."

VALID CEO, Kevin Stone, says, "When proper supports are in place, the evidence is that Jake is capable of being a very sociable and productive young man. Research also shows that when a person with behaviours of concern is provided proper care and support, the need for intensive resourcing diminishes over time. It is unfair to deny Jake access to such support, and it's cruel to allow the good will of dedicated families to be abused in this way. Some parents have simply given all they are capable of giving, and the needs of their adult children have been for too long neglected."

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