**Willing to Work: National Inquiry into Employment Discrimination against Older Australians and Australians with Disability**

# Submission No 153

**Name** Withheld

**Submission made by**

☐ Older Australian in work

☒ Older Australian looking for work

☒ Older Australian who would like to work

☒ Carer/family member of Australian with disability

# Submission regarding Older Australians / Australians with Disability / Both

### **Your experience**

**Have you (or the person you are submitting on behalf of) experienced employment discrimination?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**Did you take any action in relation to the employment discrimination you experienced?**

Yes

No

**Please tell us more, for example, what action you took and how effective you felt it was; or why you chose not to take any action.**

There is no action for covert discrimination, or cronyism, or nepotism, is there?

I went to the union and Tribunal but they were stacked on the side of managers (they're union members too)

**Did your experience of employment discrimination impact on your participation in the workforce? (For example, did you have to stop work, change jobs or take sick leave?)**

Yes

No

**Please tell us more**

Bullied and managed out of a job where my skills and qualifications were greater than all of those in the workplace (combined) my ability to maintain my role was obviated and I was delegated to straighten files in what they called the 'dungeon'

### **Barriers**

**Do you think older Australians/Australians with disability face barriers when they look for work or are in a job?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**If yes, or not sure, what do you think these barriers might be?**

the majority of people who work in the disability sector have never met a person with disabilities and they are making decisions that have a huge impact on people with disabilities and their families and carers. It is very difficult to get a job in the disability sector if you have left a career for sometime to care for a disabled relative, and if you are their guardian there is no Government welfare it's all volunteer so you are still expected to apply for several jobs a fortnight, it's very time consuming and energy depleting writing the same skills in a myriad of ways to fit their criteria, meeting the very short deadlines for closing dates, only to get no response, or a response that took 6 months that says 'we regret on this ocassion' there's no feedback. Finding work that is family friendly is near impossible, there is very little work on a casual/partime basis, so if the person your caring for becomes sick, or goes to hospital you lose a job and have to start looking for work all over again.

**Does employment discrimination have an impact on gaining and keeping employment for older Australians/Australians with disability?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**Are there any practices, attitudes or laws which discourage or prevent equal participation in employment of older Australians/Australians with disability?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**Please tell us more**

There appears to be an unspoken rule that gives jobs to younger people who have graduated so they can repay their HECS, or HELP fees, and in the public service they really don't put new employees on if they are over the age of 45 years, you pretty much have to have been working for a while to be over that age and take long service leave around 45yrs. The public service advertise jobs because they have to and it wastes a lot of people's time and energy and the tax payers purse because they already have someone in mind for the job, friend, family member, relative, partner. For instance, in the public service you really wouldn't know who is close friends (before the job) or related to whom and there appears to be a disproportion number of gay and lesbians compared to the percentage of the general population. (not meaning to offend anyone, I have no gender bias) just commenting on equity because it does appear to me that it's harder for an older single heterosexual to get a job, particulalrly in the public service.

**What are the incentives and disincentives for older Australians/Australians with disability to work?**

**Incentives:**

if they can get a job in their older years they may not be so isolated, not live in squalor, they could afford a phone internet combined package, and hot water, and might be able to live near services that could prevent them dying from hyperthermia and their skeleton being found 6 months after they die someone wanting to mow their lawn.

**Disincentives:**

having ageist bosses, young people with unresolved parental conflict, who don't like seeing three wrinkles above the knee, or laughter lines, who know less about people and older people not being valued for their experience and suffering the bravado of youth, or lack of experience, of younger people whose values often stem from a fast paced, disposable society.

### **Good practice**

**Are there examples of good practice and workplace policies in employing and retaining older Australians/ Australians with disability?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**Please tell us of examples of good practice in employing and retaining older Australians/ Australians with disability in work that you are aware of.**

I can't say I'm aware of any in Australia they mainly exist overseas

\*shared part time permanent jobs

\*coupling older people with child care

\*maintaining corporate knowledge

\*employing older people historical roles in museums and tourism.

\*employing people who are unemployed rather than people who have a job and are shifting sideways

### **Solutions**

**What action should be taken to address employment discrimination against older Australians/Australians with disability?**

regulations that require published outcomes of advertised positions in the private sector and Merit based regulations so that employees can appeal recruitment decisions

having a quota of people with disabilities in the disability sector and service provision light duties and retraining in IT capacity

**What should be done to enhance workforce participation of older Australians/Australians with disability?**

payroll tax incentives for employers to split full time jobs into shared jobs and the oncosts and superannuation contributions to support the creation of more permanent part time and casual jobs

recognising networks and social connections are just as much a skill as a qualification, or training, the saying 'it's who you know, not what you know' has not diminished in impact on employability since the industrial age.

**What outcomes or recommendations would you like to see from this National Inquiry?**

Unity of employment regulations state and national that include:

\*Merit based employment,

\*published employment approvals and appeal provisions

\* DISCLOSURE of relatives and friends in the workplace prior to employment

\*percentage quotas of employment for people over 50 years of age

\*proportional employment in the public service (state and Federal) that represents the general public

\*payroll tax incentives for employers to split full time jobs into share jobs AND

\*tax to include age based rates and liabilities for expected working life (tapered to meet older peoples circumstances)

\* first priority to unemployed people rather than employed people requiring a minimum time frame before they apply for a new position

\*disclosure of whether someone is in the role and will be given preference

\* not having criteria that requires internal knowledge of the role

\* not having over six general criteria and genuinely considering prior experience as equivalent to qualifications