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

# Submission No 157

**Name** Nicole McGregor

**Submission made by**

[ ]  Academic/social policy practitioner

[x]  Other
 Please describe: I'm a person who needs to fit into this category the older Australian or Mature Australian needs extending

# Organisation or Government Agency Submission

### **About you**

**What is your role within your organisation?**

[ ]  Owner

[ ]  Manager

[ ]  Human Resources Manager

[ ]  Other

**If other, please tell us your role within your organisation**

**What is your experience of providing work/services/advocacy for older Australians/Australians with disability?**

None - it's hard to get this moving there needs to be specific services set up specifically for mature aged job seekser and those with disability training needs are different to those of a younger generation.

**Do you have any case studies of the experience of older Australians/Australians with disability working or looking for work?**

**What are the impacts of employment discrimination on older Australians/Australians with disability working or looking for work?**

I think for older Australians it's a stigma you're also mainly being interviewed mainly by younger employees you have to keep up to date with the changes in the workplace and how can you do that if you are away from the workplace, there is the stigma that you cannot adapt quickly

### **Barriers**

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

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

**Please tell us more**

I think employers only ever look for younger employees I believe that once you reach around 45 the market starts to become less attractive to them. I have strong background skills and yet I am still not getting interviews or jobs.

**Is employment discrimination a barrier (please tick all that are relevant):**

[ ] While working in a job

[x] While looking for work

[x] While dealing with recruitment companies

**Please tell us more**

You cannot understand from agency if that is the case they are not going to admit to that but if you look at most job descriptions must be energetic.... if you read between the lines you get the gist of what they are asking for. Especially when you go from a person who was once getting jobs and call backs to a person who is not....

**What impact does employment discrimination have on older Australians/Australians with disability gaining and keeping employment?**

It's demoralising you become less and less attractive to an employer. And it comes back to the jobs and skills and knowledge required to complete those jobs once you loose competencies in software you start to loose your shine, employees now want every box ticked before you even complete a job application and if you cannot meet 99.9% of the requirements do not bother applying. So if you have been out of workk and not had the benefits of keeping up with the changes in technology you're not a contender.

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

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

**Please tell us more**

Employers are not supposed to discriminate but how can you prove any of that if you are just not contacted back about jobs or nothing proceeds you have no recourse and a company is not going to disclose to you as they may expose themselves to litigation so they will play this very close to their chest.

**What are the incentives and disincentives in employing older Australians/Australians with disability?**

**Incentives**

You are more dedicated, you are loyal and respond to the environment, flexible and mature.

**Disincentives**

I don't know of any - I don't imagine any thing that would be different to employing any other person. There is no guarantee with anyone.

### **Good practice**

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

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

[x] Not sure

**Please let us know about practices you are aware of.**

### **Solutions**

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

How can you police it - again no company is going to expose themselves to making the statement that it is your age or a disability unless they have arrived from another planet. Why is there not incentives, why does the government only offer to employees who take on full time employment this should also be for part time workers or casual staff. Not every person can meet full time working conditions if they are mature (older) disabled, they may have other commitments that they need to meet so working part time or casual for them may provide them with more flexibility so there should be incentives and training implemented to assist these workers to help them meet their working life and give them support in learning and development as well as incentives for employers. Just as there used to be for employing apprentices.

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

As above the government needs to provide more employers more support and encouragement to have them employ mature Australians and those with a disability. Employers need to be more flexible in working with these people, they may as above need to work flexible hours or part time or casual, but there also needs to be security. Why doesn't the government offer incentives and subsidies rather then keeping people unemployed or underemployed they offer incentives for only full time work it should for all work types not just full time. Offer training to employees to get people up to speed to learn jobs and changes in the workplace.

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

That the age variation be dropped to include 45 - you seriously need to review the age. You need to look at what employers classify as "mature" as I truly believe that once you move out your early 40's they start to look at you differently. I would like to see the government offer incentives and extend so that more flexible work places can be enjoyed and training targeted for mature workers that help keep them up to date with workplace practices and technologies.