

CORAL MILLER

Petition

Mr P.D. Omodei presented the following petition bearing the signature of one person -

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, bring to your attention the situation of Coral Miller and her family.

Coral is a 30 year old lady who lives in South Lake with her parents, Thelma aged 62 and Stan aged 67, and Thelma's 63 year old brother, Reggie, who has an intellectual disability.

Coral was born a healthy baby girl. When she was only three years old she was diagnosed with Arthritis. This caused her extreme pain and she spent a long time in hospital. (During this time she was chosen to be the Telethon Girl. She had her picture taken with John Farnham - which is still proudly displayed on her wall!).

When Coral was eight years old she developed Meningitis. This devastating illness left her in a coma for 28 days. When she regained consciousness she was unable to speak and started to have epileptic fits. She spent the next 6 months of her young life in Lady Lawley Cottages receiving the therapy that she required. The meningitis caused serious brain damage, leaving Coral with an intellectual disability.

At thirty, Coral is a lovely young lady. She still suffers very badly from arthritis, which is quite crippling. She needs to use a wheelchair when going any distance. She tires easily and often is in a lot of pain. She needs physiotherapy but is unable to access this. Her intellectual disability is quite severe. She needs 24 hour supervision and assistance in all areas of personal care. She has a little speech and can make her needs known if given enough time and support.

For five days a week Coral is supported by Interchange to participate in activities such as bowling, shopping, cooking or crafts, which she enjoys. If she is well enough she goes out with a group on the week-end.

Reggie, Thelma's brother, came to live with the family when her parents died, 20 years ago. Reggie has an intellectual disability. He is unable to speak and is very thin and frail. He attends a day centre run by Activ Foundation 5 days a week. He has a 'Leisure Buddy' who takes him out, which Reggie enjoys.

Thelma and Stan are finding the amount of care that both Coral and Reggie require is getting too much for them. They have no extended family to fall back on. If they are sick they have to rely on each other and carry on. The family has very little respite. If respite is available for Coral, Reggie is at home and vice versa. They can rarely have respite at the same time, so Stan and Thelma never get a break. They do receive some help with showering from Silverchain, for which they are very appreciative.

Thelma hasn't yet applied for accommodation for either Coral or Reggie. Many years ago Thelma promised her parents that she would look after Reggie. This she has done lovingly for the past twenty years. However, Stan and Thelma now find that age is catching up with them and they need to slow down. Their health is deteriorating and they feel they are nearing the stage where they will need care for themselves. They now urgently need to plan for the future for Coral and Reggie, and for themselves. They need accommodation support for both Coral and Reggie.

With the ongoing crisis in funding for accommodation support Thelma and Stan are extremely concerned that they will not be able to secure the future for their dearly loved daughter and brother before they can no longer care for them.

Now we ask that the Legislative Assembly give urgent attention to:

The provision of the accommodation support services needed by the estimated 300 people with disabilities and their families in Western Australia currently unable to access the accommodation support they need.

[See petition No 241.]