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

# Submission No 149

**Name** Withheld

**Submission made by**

[x]  Older Australian in work

[x]  Australian with disability in work

# Submission regarding Older Australians / Australians with Disability / Both

### **Your experience**

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

[x]  Yes

[ ]  No

[ ]  Not sure

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

[ ]  Yes

[x]  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.**

I have had interviews that are expected to be done over the telephone . Self advocate and not effective . Never worth the hastle to complain. Ruins your employment prospects in a regional area if you put in complaints

**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?)**

[x] Yes

[ ] No

**Please tell us more**

I have had to take less qualified employment because of my disability. This has been my choice but employment was made hard because of my hearing loss and my employer didn't offer assistance or alternative duties

### **Barriers**

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

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

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

attitudes that you cant do the work. attitudes that you are going to be difficult to work with , or demand alterations that may 'put them out' either by being bothersome or financially demanding

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

[x] 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

[x] Not sure

**Please tell us more**

lots of practices such as in my yearly appraisal saying I should concentrate on enjoying grandchildren growing up rather than look at specific work training or masters degrees.

these are informal, not documented.

I have a hearing loss that makes video conferencing almost impossible to participate in or hear information. Due to financial constraints my employee doesn't let me travel for these meetings, job access cant provide anything really that will over come it , as the technology is not good enough. Therefore i don't attend, don't have input and don't have the opportunity to progress my knowledge and networks at a higher level and I feel I am seen as a dead weight in the groups.

sometime criteria of jobs and the roles and responsibilities are written so exactly that if you have a disability you feel that there will be no leeway given. Asking for a current drivers licence is discriminatory in many instances especially when working in a team, and other solutions available but you have no chance to argue. I had a Blind friend who had to work flexible hours in a call assist number but they wouldn't change the times to suit the buses.

there is still such a paitriotic attitude and unsaid ' you are lucky to have a job'

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

**Incentives:**

same incentives as anyone else. self worth, adding to the value of the workplace, social interaction and engagement with the economic system.

**Disincentives:**

attitudes within the workplace. that you wont keep up with technology, the pace of work, the knowledge needed. I had one principal that used to call older people, those stressed or with health issues . ' past used by date'.

inflexible workplaces. ie balance of working from home .

feeling that workplaces don't want to invest in you because you might retire soon, or get sick or your disability deteriorate.

Lack of recognition of past experience , sometimes life experiences are just as important as on job experiences.

I worked overseas from January 2014 to August 2015 but my CEO didnt want to recognise skills I may have developed in this time when it came to my appraisal last month. again have to advocate for yourself.

### **Good practice**

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

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

[x] 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.**

Im fairly jaded about employment at the moment. I know my organisation is very good and has provided a few extra things for two wheelchair employees but I tend to battle especially with meetings and get worn out daily. I constantly have to self advocate which puts the emphasis on me and that I'm the issue. not good for self confidence.

### **Solutions**

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

Far, far more workplace assistance. An independent person to advocate or do a yearly audit or survey , maybe part of accreditation that shows the areas workplaces need to improve on.

Far more money. a colleague is able eventually to get a new wheelchair but now it is too big for him to fit in his car and drive to work with so now has to come on public transport as a new vehicle is tens of $10,000s . therefore doesnt come if too hot, or too cold

If I want to retrain because of my disability I am not funded to do so. You can not get assistance to TAFE courses if it is lower than your previous qualification, therefore As a person with a grad Diploma Ineeded in my education field , where I cant work anyomore due to my disability , I have to pay for any retraining to get another job, ie Diploma of management, IT resource, welsome and community service

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

quotas, flexible working, job sharing, continuous training.

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

resources put into the area. Major funding put into cooperative or social enterprises that offer a diverse workplace