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

# Submission No 46

**Name** Martin Wren

**Submission made by**

☒ Other
 Please describe: CEO - disability employment service

# Organisation or Government Agency Submission

### **About you**

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

[x]  Manager

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

I have approximately 27 years experience providing pre-employment training, placement and post placement support to people with disability across the age spectrum

### **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**

The greatest barriers are created and defended by the policy creators and administrators that supposedly care for the employment aspiration of people with disability - not only is the Commonwealth slow to embrace workers with disability itself, systemic errors in program design compound mediocrity in service delivery

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

[x] While working in a job

[x] While looking for work

[x] While dealing with recruitment companies

**Please tell us more**

The greatest barriers are created and defended by the policy creators and administrators that supposedly care for the employment aspiration of people with disability - not only is the Commonwealth slow to embrace workers with disability itself, systemic errors in program design compound mediocrity in service delivery

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

Very little for people with disability although may discourage recipients to try again and hence they are off my radar

**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

### **Good practice**

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

[x] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] Not sure

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

Program providers need to set rewards and recognition structures at aspirational rather than contractual level - numbers show my program achieve far better than average levels of participation because that's what is rewarded - commonwealth employment programs do NOT recognise hours worked beyond minimum, encourage gaming and prevent economic independence

### **Solutions**

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

**[Redacted]** employment contract creators and administrators.

Failing this (and I recognise it may pose some ethical issues) I have attached a paper written recently that sets out means of improving Australian Disability Employment programs in a cost effective manner.

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

As above plus reward what is expected - no present goal for disability employment service program

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

As above and restating service delivery objectives in terms of aspirational outcomes for people with disability.