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

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# Submission No 6

**Name** Withheld

**Submission made by**

x Older Australian in work

# Submission regarding Older Australians

### **Your experience**

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

*Discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than another person in a similar situation because of a characteristic they have, such as their age, or disability.*

*It is also discrimination when there is a rule or policy that is the same for everyone but has an unfair effect on people who are older or people with a particular disability.*

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 was working with a manager who was verbally and mentally bullying me. I am a nurse and felt that I was pretty strong, but did not know how to deal with this lady.

The counsellor that I worked with suggested that I diarise everything that was going on. I kept the diary in a shelf under my desk. The diary went missing.

The next two nurses that have been in this position after I left have also left.

My husband has been applying for work for nearly a year now. He has the most experience in different fields of anyone that I know.

He cannot get to interview stage. His age can be his only barrier.

**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?)**

xYes

☐No

**Please tell us more**

As above, I used to cry going to work, etc.

I left and moved to the Gold Coast from rural NSW for work. My husband stayed behind until our house sold. He is now with me.

I had to move to the city as there are few jobs available in rural Australia. This has financially disadvantaged us, but we want to work. We are both skilled and take pride in being able to help other people and want to be independent.

### **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?**

My husband has applied for so many positions that he has the skills for and cannot get to interview stage. The only thing can be that he has to put his date of birth on the applications.

He will do any sort of work and any hours, and would remain with a company that employed him and not move after a few months. He just wants a job.

**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**

Youth is valued. Everything seems to be about aesthetics. Neither my husband or myself are physically challenged but we are aged over fifty years.

EEO states that people are employed on their experience and what they can bring to a position. This is incorrect in our experience.

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

**Incentives:**

Wanting to be independent and have self worth

Bringing skills and strong work ethics to a workplace

**Disincentives:**

Youth orientated society

No value on work experience- prefer cheaper youth that have just completed no training

### **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.**

These would be employing people who wish to work and have a good work background. Valuing people for their skills and experience and what they can brong to the company.

### **Solutions**

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

I am not sure. I think that most HR people seem to be really young. They seem to promote younger people for a position.

That is understandable, but older employees bring a calmness and less competitive feel to an organisation.

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

Encourage employers to give a worker an opportunity to show their skills and be part of a work team.

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

The best outcome for my family would be that my husband can get employment in any field and that I can retain my work position .