



INNER WEST COMMUNITY TRANSPORT INC. ABN 246 92 995 601

2a Eurella Street, Burwood

☎ Phone: 9745-5800

▲ Fax: 9745-5066

✉ P.O. Box 2233, Burwood North 2134

✉ Email: admin@iwct.ngo.org.au

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To: The Allen Consulting Group
dstransport@allenconsult.com.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

This submission is in regard to the review of the DISABILITY STANDARDS FOR ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT 2002, currently conducted by your Group.

My role of Transport Development Co-ordinator at Inner West Community Transport focuses on the transport needs of people with a disability and includes community development, advocacy, and providing information and referral.

The Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport Guidelines 2004 (No 3) states the following:

1.24 Carers, assistants and service animals

Some passengers may need to be accompanied by a carer, assistant or service animal. A service animal is an animal trained by a recognised individual or agency and is not subject to a fare.

A carer or assistant should be prepared to pay a fare.

People living with a disability often travel with a carer as a result of their level of disability and their need of assistance to access public transport systems. Currently, carers pay a concession fare only if they are entitled to a carer's payment or if they are on a pension. Many carers though do not fall within either of these situations and therefore are forced to pay the full transport fare when in the role of a carer.

I believe that this situation places extra financial stress on carers who often forgo paid employment to assist a family member or close friend with a disability. The current situation may also result in people living with a disability being unable to participate fully in their community if their carer is unable to meet the transport costs required of them.

I urge your review panel to consider recommending that all carers be given the right to travel on public transport for free when caring for a person with a disability. I know that Community Transport groups recognise the valuable work provided by carers and allow them to travel for free on their services.

Such an initiative would also have a positive impact on, not just the carers concerned but the whole family of the person with a disability and it would outweigh the costs involved.

My ultimate vision is for carers to receive a carer's card which would allow them to be recognised as a carer when caring for a person with a disability. Carer's cards already operate in Victoria while in NSW the idea is still in the development stage. A Carer's Card does not mean that the carer has another entitlement (pension, payment) but it acknowledges his/her important role in assisting a disabled person to maintain their independence and fully participate in their community.

Regards,

Silvana Moncelsi
Transport Development Co-ordinator.
Email: mobility@iwct.ngo.org.au