

MEDIA RELEASE

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Support for families of disabled people

A peak lawyers' organisation has supported moves by the New South Wales Government to end discrimination against injured carers of dependent children, such as mothers.

The Australian Lawyers Alliance says the State Government wishes to remove restrictions on compensating injured mothers and other carers of dependent children when they become so disabled they can no longer care for their children.

Currently, a mother who is disabled as a result of injury cannot recover compensation if she wishes to have another family member care for her children. However, the commercial costs of such services are recoverable at law.

The Lawyers Alliance NSW president Richard Royle says it has long been a policy to do everything possible to ensure families are kept together when one family member is disabled as a result of injury.

"Changes to the law brought about by a recent High Court decision make it difficult for families to take on the care of children and are particularly discriminatory against women, who normally bear most of the responsibility of caring for children or other dependent members of the family."

"The Government is to be commended for proposing the re-instatement of compensation in respect of family members who take over the care of dependent children."

"However a significant injustice remains with the government leaving in place thresholds on the compensation available for free care of other disabled people by family and friends."

"These thresholds should be abolished," Mr Royle said.

The NSW Government is reviewing submissions on the changes in the Exposure Draft Civil Liability Amendment Bill, 2006.

Note: To view the Lawyers Alliance submission go to the Public Affairs and Policy section of our web site www.lawyersalliance.com.au

Contact: Kyrn Stevens, Lawyers Alliance Communications Manager: 0408-974127