



"SA State Budget" will deliver increased despair??

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SA Premier Jay Weatherill next Thursday will deliver his first SA budget.

Disability is expected to feature very prominently given that the Social Inclusion Board "STRONG VOICES" report was tabled in cowardly fashion by outgoing Premier Rann on his last day in office.

Rann never had the decency to debate publicly the disability crisis that enveloped SA during his reign. The Strong Voices report demanded additional funding be injected immediately into the sector with funding increases of \$80- \$100 million dollars per annum being commonly quoted as critical

Weatherill as a former SA Disability Minister is held in high regard by the disability sector.

He clearly understood the depth of injustice in the SA disability sector better than most other politicians His reputation will be on the line Thursday

The new Disability Minister will also be under intense scrutiny next week where he must deliver the support that is long overdue.

Strong rumours are sweeping the sector that the Government will not step up to the mark as they should do. The rumour mill is rife that they will wimp it!

The attached extract from a local special school newsletter this week paints a distressing picture of how this budget may well deliver increased despair. (one can sense the frustration and anger in the words)

The problematic nature of this negative proposed service reshuffle is apparent except maybe to the Minister.

1. take some of the worst off in the disability sector, those who are not capable of working full time, and force them to decide on either full time employment or attending a skills developing day options program full time
2. ensure by setting up a system that will force a decision and may leave them stuck at home their quality of life will drop
3. guarantee that families will not give up work to stay home and care for their children so
4. clients will apply for 5 days of day option services and state government costs will go up and waiting lists will increase (because they are incapable of working full time)
5. confirm that everyone loses, clients are worse off, families suffer, government service demand rises and costs increase
6. almost certainly reduce the chances of these young people with a disability ever making it too full time employment.

If this is the way the SA Budget next week is structured next week let's hope that the Premier remembers Day Options and the lack of services thereof was the catalyst that created D4D and the ongoing public and political discontent that has harmed the ALP in SA for the last 8 years

We look forward to next week's budget with decreasing expectations, let's hope we are wrong?

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