



## CHILD PROTECTION CARER CASE STUDY

### Case Study 1 – Carer A

Carer A has 2 children under the age of 5 in their care. Both children have complex care needs. They receive social worker support through a service contracted to the relevant child protection organisation (CPO). Whilst the Carer feels the Social Worker is supportive of the family's needs, they recognise that any requests for support are required to be presented to the CPO for approval. Carer A feels their concerns are often not recognised or supported by the CPO including:

1. The social skills of some of the staff e.g., speaking rudely, judgemental decisions and alienation based on personal opinions
2. A lack of understanding of the children's and Carers needs
3. A lack of response to emails and phone calls
4. A lack of support and resources to address children's complex care needs
5. Time it takes for the CPO to address the children's medical needs

Carer A reports spending a significant amount of time advocating for the children's support needs e.g., applying for, accessing and managing NDIS goals without support from the CPO.

Carer A would like the CPO to show greater respect to Carers and the children in their care. This can include:

1. Allowing Carers to accept responsibility for general care duties e.g., determining when a child in their care can have their hair cut.
2. Workers following the CPO code of conduct and treating Carers as partners.
3. Workers understanding the needs of children with trauma and/or developmental conditions/diagnoses.
4. Addressing the needs of children with trauma and/or developmental conditions in a timely manner.
5. Ensuring Carers receive adequate compensation for caring for children.
6. Ensuring Carers received adequate care support needs.

The personal financial costs for caring for the children are deemed considerable. Carer A advised that there was a need to resign from employment to care for the children. They further report that providing a safe and loving home for the children in their care is a matter of priority and they do not regret this decision. However, they also acknowledge they now

face financial hardship due to this decision and the payments received by the CPO are not adequate to cover the required costs of caring for the children.

Finally, the fact that there is no Australian standard protocol for child protection is an area of considered concern, as is the lack of Carer allowance consistency. Carer A believes an equitable process is required to ensure a fair child protection system.

For further information about the Child Protection Carer Project please contact Dawn Hawthorn-Jackson at: [emuconsulting111@gmail.com](mailto:emuconsulting111@gmail.com).