

RASAIID



LETTER TO ETHEL McALPINE

12/10/09

Dear Ethel,

The keeping of waiting lists for desperate families who need supported accommodation is not counterproductive to maintaining family and community ties. You well know that what is counterproductive is the Vacancy Management System that your department presides over. This is single-handedly responsible for breaking up communities, ensuring that no local accommodation is available, destroying any incentive that families may have to support local service providers, rendering void any "sweat-equity" that families may have earned and causing people with a disability to criss-cross the city each morning and afternoon at huge expense in hours and energy.

This is a Catch 22 scenario of unspeakable proportions:

- 1) Your department fails spectacularly to provide supported accommodation that is local and responsive.
- 2) Your department fails to keep waiting lists to declare the proportions of this failure.
- 3) Your department ensures that in the rare cases that supported accommodation is provided, it will be far from the known community and family home.
- 4) As a result of your failure to provide, you now label supported accommodation as "a highly interventionist service with significant potential to distance a person with a disability from their family and community ties".
- 5) You claim that the keeping of waiting lists for supported accommodation is counterproductive because it encourages families to believe that one day they will receive this service from your department when you have no intention of providing it. You intend, instead, to "make every effort to maintain a person's family and community ties" which is DADHC-speak for "keep them caring till they drop and coerce the siblings to take over".

I am left breathless at the hypocrisy of it all. I thought you were on our side.

Estelle Shields