

Inquiry into volunteering in Queensland

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Submitter Comments:

I would like to bring to your attention the challenges of a small not for profit registered charity run by volunteers for the benefit of parents, carers and guardians of individuals on the Autism spectrum and adults on the Autism spectrum here on the Gold Coast. I am writing on behalf of our small but dedicated Management Committee, which is comprised of volunteers who have a personal connection to autism through our family members. As a community-driven organization, we are committed to providing support and services to individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. However, we face significant financial challenges in meeting the needs of our community. As a volunteer-based charity, we do not receive government funding and rely solely on fundraising to cover our operational costs. This includes the high premiums for essential insurance coverage, such as Public Liability Insurance, Building and Contents Insurance, Business Insurance, and Volunteer Insurance. This year, we have experienced a \$2,000 increase in our insurance premiums, rising from \$5,812 in 2024 to \$7,825 in 2025. Additionally, we encountered significant challenges in obtaining Flood cover for 2025, which is a requirement of our lease agreement. Our organization is responsible for the annual lease payment for our premises, which are held in trust for the State Government by the Gold Coast City Council in Cascade Gardens Parklands, Broadbeach. The costs associated with maintaining these policies, along with other operational expenses, place a considerable financial strain on our small team of volunteers. We would deeply appreciate any consideration of measures that could help reduce the insurance and annual costs for charities like ours. These reductions would allow us to allocate more resources directly toward supporting the autistic community we serve. Furthermore, with the ongoing and significant changes to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), we are increasingly concerned that many individuals with an autism diagnosis may no longer meet eligibility criteria for funding. This underscores the growing importance of parent support groups like ours, which play a vital role in providing accessible, affordable support to families in need. As the demand for these services continues to rise, any financial relief or recurrent funding we can receive would ensure that we can continue to meet the needs of our community without compromising the quality of care. We thank you for your attention to this matter and for your continued support of organizations that strive to make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals with autism and their families.