**Email sent from Foster Carer Molly to STL Karen Jones**

**31/10/2022**

**Subject – Johnny & Maria Little & Additional Care Allowance Application - First Attempt at Response (FAAR)**

Dear Karen,

I am emailing regarding Johnny and Maria Little who were placed in my care 3 months ago, on 1 August. Soon after they came to me, I began to notice both children have some care needs that require additional support. These care needs relate to the behaviour and development of both Johnny and Maria, however neither child at this stage meets the criteria for NDIS.

Both children have low muscle tone, impacting on their ability to chew solid foods and they both require a protein supplement drink 3 times per day as recommended by the GP while assessment occurs and then treatment which will hopefully bring some improvement in this area. This low muscle tone also impacts toileting, requiring age appropriate incontinence aids for urinary and faecal incontinence.

My agency and myself discussed this with the children’s CSO Jennie as a part of a home visit in late August. Jennie advised of the information needing to be provided to make an application for the Additional Care Allowance as the recommended protein drink and appropriate incontinence aids add a considerable cost to the family budget over and above what the fostering allowance reimburses for. I worked with my agency caseworker, Megan to calculate the costs associated and seek a GP Report that speaks to what is needed and the benefits of this for the children.

This information has been provided to Jennie on 3 occasions to date, however I have not received any acknowledgement of the application and follow up emails from by myself and Megan are not being responded to. As the carer for the children, I am committed to advocating on the behalf of Johnny and Maria to ensure they receive the support, resources and services required to ensure their best interests are met and allow them to ultimately reach their full potential.

The Statement of Commitment speaks to the support that will be provided to me as a foster carer for Johnny and Maria as follows -

* *Foster and kinship carers will receive and should expect, support that will help them provide a safe and caring environment in which the needs of children and young people are met.*
* *As members of a child or young person’s safety and support network and care team, all participants will be treated fairly and equally with courtesy, respect and personal dignity and will be recognised for their unique knowledge and contributions to safety and case planning.*

Including, Child Safety committing to the following –

* *Provide emotional, financial, therapeutic, practical and educational support for both the child or the young person placed in their care and the carers themselves.*

I also draw your attention to the agreement that the Statement of Commitment highlights as acknowledgement of the critical role carers play in the lives of children and young people in out of home care in addition to my role as a volunteer member of the care team.

This email expresses my concern regarding the service I am currently receiving as the carer for the children and am requesting that you as the STL for Johnny and Maria review the application for Additional Care Allowance and the lack of response received by me in relation to the care needs of Johnny and Maria and provide a timely response

Given my attempts to resolve this matter with the CSO have been left unanswered, I am seeking to address this matter through a First Attempt as Resolution. I am available to meet in person or via phone or Teams and look forward to bringing this matter to a resolution that meets the needs of our carer household.

Yours sincerely,

Molly Smith