

Families support PSA's campaign against privatisation

By IAN KIRKWOOD Nov. 2, 2015, 10 p.m.

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Yiota Rae, is concerned about ADHC privatisation and the future for her sister, Helen. Picture: Peter Stoop

RELATIVES of people in state government group homes are backing the Public Service Association in its campaign to stop the government privatising its Ageing, Disability and Home Care service.

The service, known as ADHC, is being privatised as part of the shift to the federally operated National Disability Insurance Scheme.

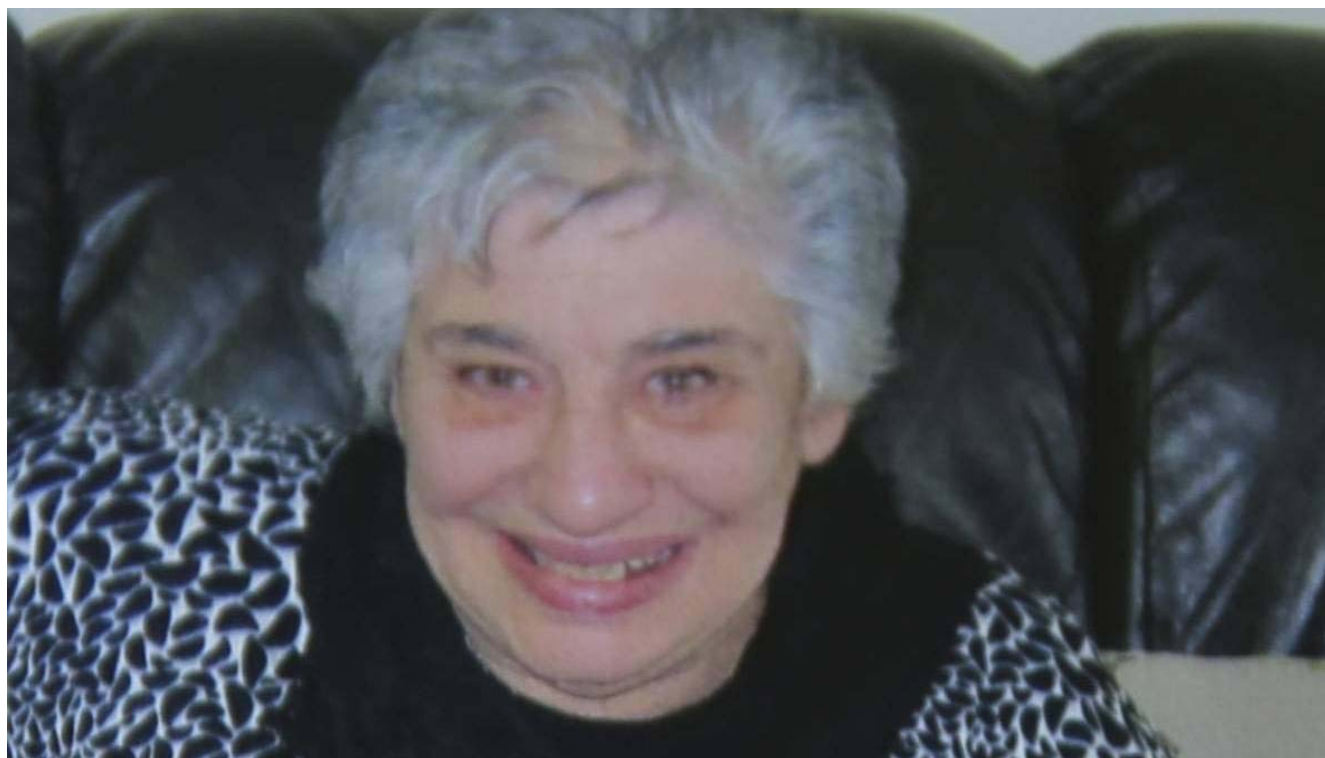
NSW Disability Services Minister John Ajaka said on Monday that the NDIS was a “once in a generation social reform” and not “a cost-saving measure”.

But Yiota Rae, of Hamilton East, and Graham Burgess, of Speers Point, are anything but reassured by the government's rhetoric.

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Mrs Rae's sister, Helen Zapandi, lives in an ADHC group home at Woodrising.

Mrs Rae said her 58-year-old sister had moved out of the Stockton Centre as a young woman and needed "regularity and sameness" in order to thrive.



Yiota's sister Helen Zapandi who is in a ADHC group home in Toronto.

She feared the privatisation would bring "instability" to her sister's home and others like it.

"The carers in both government and private sectors do a good job, but I worry that the lower pay and conditions in the non-government sector will lead to high staff turnover and instability for the people in the group homes," Mrs Rae said.

"Privatising ADHC means there is no carer of last resort."

Mr Burgess has a son, Stuart, 51, who lives in an ADHC home at Belmont.

"Having studied disability care right throughout the world, I am very much aware that ADHC offers world's best practice, developed over the past 35 years," Mr Burgess said.

"No other disability care can match ADHC and it will be an absolute tragedy if it's dismantled."

The PSA's general secretary, Anne Gardiner, said Hunter ADHC disability workers will strike for

four hours on Wednesday “for the first time ever”.


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“This privatisation is taking place under the guise of the NDIS but it has nothing to do with it,” Ms Gardiner said.

“This is part of the Baird government’s determined ideology to socially re-engineer the delivery of public services.”

Mr Ajaka said a Productivity Commission report on the NDIS “strongly endorsed” having a single layer of government in administering disability supports.

“The skills and experience of our professional and qualified ADHC workforce will be needed to support the non-government sector transition to the NDIS and deliver high quality supports for people with disability,” Mr Ajaka said.



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