to the Senate Committee
I live in Melbourne and have had limited contact with indigenous peoples through work at the Dental Hospital of Melbourne and travel but as a concerned Australian, I would like to express the view that many aspects of the intervention were not well thought through and require change. Particularly I am disturbed that communities which were operating with some success were treated the same way as those with difficulties.
The policy of creating hub towns bringing people from many groups together seems unwise when there is little work and housing. The need to travel far to spend on the card for basic items is manipulative as either folk move in, closer to sources of alcohol and ennui, or spend significant sums on travel. This would take a lot of organising for any of us. No shop at home on the internet. Maybe orders could be delivered? The loss of local stores, schools, health and police services also makes life difficult.
The CDEP sounded great to me when it was introduced. I am sure it takes a lot of administration when places are remote but the value of the paid work for fellow human beings should be a primary consideration.
I am inclined to think that education with both trained teachers and trained teacher's assistants who can speak the local language could be helpful as I guess it is impossible in most situations to have teachers fluent in the local language. Education in both the english speaking culture they live in and in their family's culture seems essential to me.
thank you for this chance to add to the voices calling for re-evaluation
Judith A Lewis