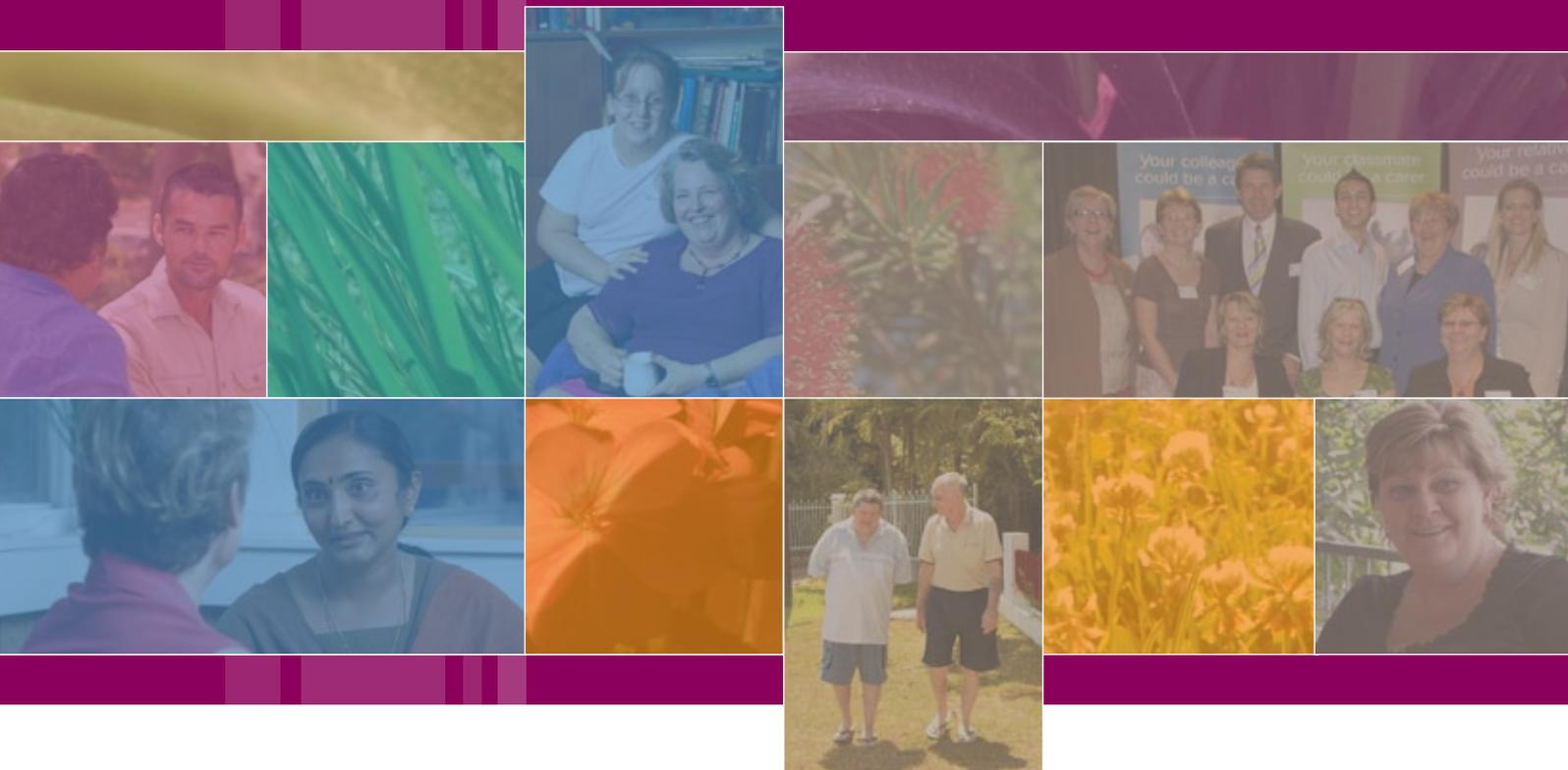
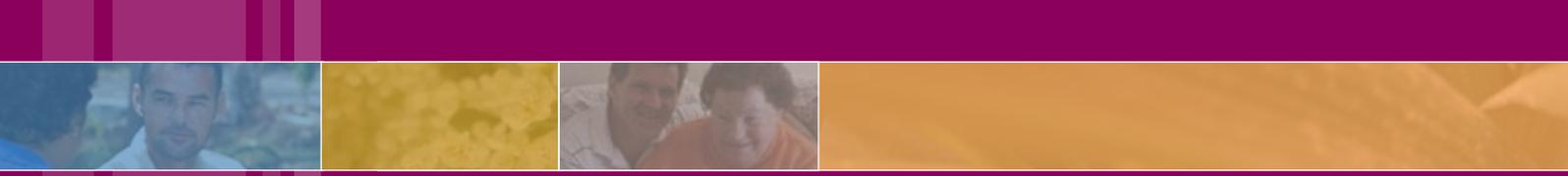


Carers Australia STRATEGIC PLAN 2009–2012





INTRODUCTION

Carers Australia's strategic plan for 2009-2012 is the outcome of a planning process over many months and engagement with stakeholders.

Our work is underpinned by the fundamental belief that all carers are entitled to the same rights, choices and opportunities as other Australians.

Carers expect nothing more than what is offered to the rest of the community and the role of Carers Australia is to work towards a society where they need accept nothing less.

The way we execute our core business over the next three years will be influenced by the five key goals and their supporting objectives set out in this plan.



Pam Webster
President



Joan Hughes
CEO

Moving closer towards an Australia that recognises, supports and compensates carers and provides greater choice and equality of opportunity

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SOME FACTS ABOUT AUSTRALIA'S CARERS

Carers provide unpaid care and support to family members and friends who have a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, terminal illness or who are frail.

Australia has almost 2.6 million carers and 475,000 of these are primary carers. Carers are from all walks of life and their experiences and needs are diverse. They come into the caring journey at various stages throughout their life.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has identified:

- 336,000 carers are under the age of 25, of whom 170,000 are under the age of 18
- 454,000 carers are over the age of 65
- 1.87 million carers are of workforce age (18-64 years)
- 31,500 Indigenous carers are over the age of 25
- 370,000 carers were born in other than the main English speaking countries

Over 3 million Australians live with limitations arising from disability or ageing. Of those:

- 79 per cent of people with a disability who live in households receive care from relatives and friends, mainly partners, parents or children
- 1.25 million people have a disability that results in profound or severe limitations. Of this group, 1.07 million people (85.6 per cent) live in private households
- 64 per cent of primary carers over the age of 15 caring for a person with a profound core activity limitation spend more than 40 hours per week caring

References

The source of these figures is the following Australian Bureau of Statistics publications:

Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC) 2003

Census of Population and Housing 2006

The SDAC defines 'disability' as 'any limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities'.



ABOUT CARERS AUSTRALIA

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing the diversity of carers in Australia. Our work is driven by carers' expertise. We work in partnership with the Network of state and territory carers associations, research and other relevant organisations, with the ultimate aim of improving the lives of carers.

OUR VISION

Caring is accepted as a shared community responsibility.

OUR MISSION

Leading change and action with and for carers.

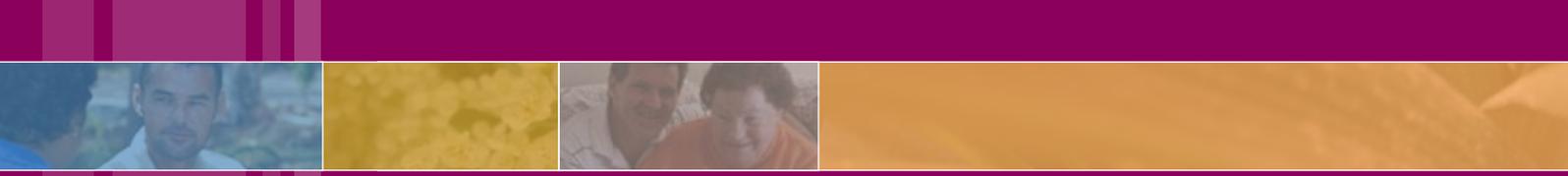
OUR WORK

Carers Australia works to raise community awareness of carers' issues and advocates to ensure that carers can participate fully in family, social and community life and in employment and education. We do this by:

- advocating for carers with government, business and community sectors
- influencing government and other stakeholder policies and programs at the national level
- managing national programs and services in collaboration with state and territory carers associations
- identifying gaps in carer support and other relevant services
- establishing and utilising strategic relationships consistent with our values
- conducting community awareness raising activities and campaigns
- working in partnerships to develop a strong evidence base
- maintaining and strengthening our position as the national voice of carers
- fostering a culture of continuous improvement at all levels of the organisation.

OUR GOALS

1. Improved health, wellbeing and resilience for carers
2. Overall financial position is more secure for all carers
3. Increased recognition of carers
4. A comprehensive evidence base to inform policy and decision makers
5. A well respected and influential organisation



OUR VALUE STATEMENT

Carers Australia values carers and stakeholders and engages with them to guide our work. We work honestly and ethically to foster initiative and innovation in order to maintain continuous improvement. Our Board and staff value quality and integrity of outcomes through high levels of productivity and maintaining responsibility and accountability for our actions. We acknowledge success and treat all individuals with consideration and respect and value the same in return.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our goals, values and objectives within the Carers Australia 2009–12 Strategic Plan are based on a strong commitment to the following guiding principles and practices:

Carer centred practice – listening to carers, taking account of their life situation and stage of caring, respecting their choices and being guided by how they want to address their needs.

Carer participation in decisions – including carers in service delivery and policy development and building a service system in which carer participation in decision making is a given.

Family friendly and inclusive processes – understanding that the well being of carers is inextricably linked to the wellbeing of the person they support and that service delivery needs to take account of this relationship and the carer's family situation.

Access and equity – responding to all carer populations and addressing the barriers that prevent some carers getting access to information, resources and support.

Respect for Indigenous culture and heritage – respecting the culture and history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and understanding the importance of kinship and land.

Recognising cultural diversity – respecting people from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds and providing service in flexible and culturally appropriate ways.

A skilled and valued workforce – recognising that staff and volunteers are an important asset, investing in their development and providing a safe and productive workplace.

Learning and future orientation – looking to the future, being responsive to changing community needs and continually looking for ways to share good practice and improve effectiveness.

Working from an evidence base – using data, research and evaluation to supply the evidence to inform the development of services and policy and provide the platform for advocacy to government and the wider community.

Collaboration and partnership – working with other organisations and groups to achieve positive outcomes for carers and develop a more comprehensive and responsive service system.

Openness and Accountability – being open to scrutiny, accountable for funds and willing to demonstrate results to carers and the wider community.

ACHIEVING OUR GOALS

1 Goal one Improved health, wellbeing and resilience for carers

We will achieve this goal by:

- 1.1 managing in collaboration with the state and territory carers associations the national delivery of services and programs that are responsive to the needs and choices of carers
- 1.2 promoting a wellness approach to carers' health
- 1.3 encouraging health professionals to identify carers and support them in maintaining their own health
- 1.4 assisting carers with their caring responsibilities through appropriate, ongoing education and training
- 1.5 assisting carers with specific needs to access timely and appropriate support services

2 Goal two Overall financial position is more secure for all carers

We will achieve this goal by:

- 2.1 supporting and facilitating more flexible employment conditions and increased job protection for carers in the workforce
- 2.2 promoting choice for carers in terms of their participation in employment and education
- 2.3 supporting carers returning to the workforce
- 2.4 influencing decisions makers to adequately compensate carers for the cost of caring
- 2.5 advocating for adequate financial support to carers reliant on government benefits
- 2.6 advocating for improved carer access to adequate superannuation and retirement planning
- 2.7 influencing and engaging education stakeholders to ensure that policies and programs assist carers throughout their education



3 Goal three Increased recognition of carers

We will achieve this goal by:

- 3.1 promoting recognition of carers through a national carer framework, that includes national legislation, a strategy and an action plan
- 3.2 advocating to ensure the voice of carers is represented at the policy table and on key national advisory committees
- 3.3 promoting the recognition of carers as collaborative partners in care
- 3.4 recognising and promoting a whole of life approach for carers and the people they support
- 3.5 promoting choice in care options

4 Goal four A comprehensive evidence base to inform policy and decision makers

We will achieve this goal by:

- 4.1 contributing to the development of a national carer research framework
- 4.2 building partnerships with universities and other research institutes
- 4.3 developing a national clearing house for carer research
- 4.4 encouraging direct input from carers into policy development and research

5 Goal five

A well respected and influential organisation

We will achieve this goal by:

- 5.1 maintaining a good governance framework
- 5.2 managing our finances prudently
- 5.3 securing adequate funding for our work
- 5.4 working strategically and cooperatively with the Network of Carers Associations
- 5.5 providing effective leadership on national issues within the Network of Carers Associations
- 5.6 establishing and utilising strategic relationships consistent with our values
- 5.7 developing and maintaining effective marketing and communications strategies and practices





CONTACTS

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Carers Australia works continually to build awareness of carers needs and represent their interests through our research, policy submissions, publications and advocacy. We work actively to identify and research emerging issues, gather data to support our arguments aimed at promoting the long-term interests of carers across Australia. We seek opportunities to represent carers in meetings with politicians and policy makers, and through a variety of committees and other avenues.

