

Carers in Regional and Remote areas do it Tough

Research Summary for South Australia

New research released by Carers Australia in partnership with Commonwealth Financial Planning entitled *The Tyranny of Distance? Carers in regional and remote areas of Australia* provides insights into carers in regional and remote Australia. In Australia 2.4 million people live outside the major cities and inner regional areas. Of the 2.4 million Australians in these areas 363,000 provide unpaid care to family or friends with a disability, long-term illness or who are frail.

The evidence suggests that carers in outer regional and remote Australia face greater challenges than those living in major cities and inner regional areas.

South Australia has the highest average proportion of carers in its population (at 12.1%) compared to the national average of Carers (of 11.2%)

Whilst Queensland, Western Australia and the Northern Territory have the largest total number of carers by state and territory and region.

Key research findings include:

- carers in outer regional and remote areas experienced higher rates of disability or a long-term health condition themselves and lower rates of employment than non-carers living in the same areas and carers in major cities
- Carers living in all areas of Australia were more likely to be living in a jobless household and to experience more financial hardship
- Carers in outer regional and remote face greater financial hardship than carers living in major cities and inner regional areas. And carers face greater financial hardship than non-carers.
- Carers face difficulty in accessing appropriate services in outer regional and remote areas because of distance, inadequate services or lack of services.
- Almost 40% of carers in outer regional or remote areas reported distance to be a difficulty as compared to seventeen per cent of carers in major cities.
- A higher percentage of carers living in outer regional and remote areas reported affordability of services to be a difficulty. In outer regional and remote areas, one in three carers reported being understood by service providers was commonly cited as a reason for having difficulty accessing services, compared to 27.3% of those without caring responsibilities.
- 14.3% of carers in major cities have a profound, severe or moderate disability or long-term health condition compared to 20% of carers in outer regional and remote areas

This is important new research that highlights the need for family carers in rural and remote areas of Australia to have better access to appropriate support and services. We need to ensure that their health and wellbeing is a consideration at all policy and program levels.

Link to the Report: http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/uploads/Carers%20Australia/CA%20Research/CarersAustReport_20091007.pdf

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