

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## Support for carers to access respite through the NDIS needs to be transparent

Carers Australia has today [released a Position Paper in relation to access to services under the NDIS which will allow carers to take a break from caring.](#)

“The affordability of the NDIS depends on the capacity and willingness of family and friend carers to continue to provide substantial unpaid care,” said Ara Cresswell, CEO of Carers Australia.

“These carers, even those who care for someone getting a package of supports under the NDIS, often get tired, stressed and sick.

“When carers burn out, or fear they will burn out, they need a rest to recharge their batteries,” said Ms Cresswell.

“However, respite for carers is not a named service under the NDIS, despite the fact carers often lose their access to other sources of respite support when the person they care for enters into the NDIS.

“Savvy carers who understand NDIS language and processes can, with some effort, get the opportunity to take a break by identifying services in the participants’ package which would have this effect.

“Less well informed carers who do not understand NDIS language are likely to use the word ‘respite’, only to be told by NDIS planners that this is not available. They don’t understand why. It is the term they are familiar with.”

Recent discussions with the NDIA indicate that they understand the continuing need to support carers and will put in train measures to ensure they are not deprived of the support they need on the basis of the language they use.

“As part of the NDIS, we understand the importance of providing carers with the opportunity like all families to take a break from time to time - to sustain their capacity to provide informal supports to NDIS participants. Supports funded in NDIS plans include Short Term Accommodation (STA), in-home supports, community access and personal care – all of which are designed to support participants and reduce the demands on carers,” said Rob de Luca, CEO of the NDIA.

“The NDIS is a world-first that has no template. The NDIA acknowledges the need to continuously improve the way we do things - including providing clearer language and processes to better support carers to navigate this significant once-in-a-generation reform. New improvements to the participant pathway, being progressively rolled out from October 2018, will provide greater opportunities to inform and support carers in the NDIS planning process and also better support carers to implement plans and access supports,” said Mr de Luca.

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