

■ STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-18



  
Carers  
AUSTRALIA



*In preparing this Strategic Plan, Carers Australia has been cognisant of changes in the political and policy environment which will have an important impact on the way in which we direct our advocacy and resources.*

Like most strategic plans, it is focused on high level goals and the type of activities Carers Australia will need to undertake to achieve these goals. It provides the foundation for the development of more detailed business plans.

In the past three years Carers Australia has concentrated on ensuring that carers' interests are acknowledged and supported in the national policy developments which impact on them. We have also focused on expanding the amount of government-funded support available to carers. Carers Australia will continue to do this. However, in a very tight fiscal environment we will need to put additional effort into preserving the gains made in past years in the areas of carer services and income support.

We will also need to maintain a strong focus on the major reforms in the community services sector which impact on carers. In the case of the evolution and implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the government's aged care reforms, it is important that carers, as well as those they care for, can extract the maximum benefit from these initiatives and that they do not produce any carer service gaps. In the case of the government's Review of Social Welfare, we will need to provide strong, well-informed advocacy directed to ensuring that carers are no worse off and, ideally, are better off in the new world of social security.

We are also acutely aware of advances being made in technology – particularly communication technology – which have the capacity to reduce the time and effort involved in caring and may free up time for carers to pursue their own interests and goals. Incorporating these technologies into the suite of supports available to carers is a high priority.

From the perspective of maintaining funding for the services provided by the Network of Carers Associations, we are aware that we are moving into a highly competitive environment for government funding and that we will need to demonstrate that the services we provide produce the expected outcomes for those who need them. Considerable thought, time and energy has been put into developing systems and tools to enable us to do just that.

In short, we expect the next three years to be a very dynamic time both for carers and the National Network of Carers Associations. There are threats and opportunities. We are confident that with the right planning processes in place we will be well-positioned to tackle these challenges.



## VISION

An Australia that values and supports carers.

## PURPOSE

We work to:

- (a) improve the health, wellbeing, resilience and financial security of carers.
- (b) ensure that caring is a shared responsibility of family, community and Government.

## VALUES/PRINCIPLES

We value:

- Respect and Dignity
- Equity and Diversity
- Honesty and Confidentiality
- Integrity and Accountability
- Empathy and Compassion
- Courage and Fortitude

We are forward thinking and innovative.

## THE WAY WE WORK

- Carers, the people that they care for and their families are at the centre of everything that we do; we support carers self-directing their services.
- Our work is undertaken in close collaboration with carers, our member associations and strategic partners; working towards a common goal.
- We act with integrity, ensuring accountable and ethical organisational practice.
- As a national network our work encourages personal growth and empowerment, especially of carers, the people they care for and their families.
- We celebrate diversity, recognising that carers come from all walks of life and have different needs.
- We strive for innovation, and continuous improvement. Carers Australia will achieve its mission through awareness raising, advocacy and the delivery of national carer services.

## CORE BUSINESS

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing and advocating on behalf of family and friend carers throughout Australia.

We work collaboratively with the Carers Associations (our member organisations) in each state and territory and our partners to influence the development of policies and essential services at a national level. We also manage and monitor a range of services which are delivered across the Nation.

Our core work includes:

- Representing the 'voice' of carers.
- Raising awareness of carers and caring in our communities.
- Research, policy development and effective advocacy.
- Providing quality services and programs to support the needs of carers and the people they care for.

## NATIONAL STRATEGIC GOALS

### 1 CARER SERVICES

All carers across a diverse range of Australian communities have equitable access to support services that are responsive to their needs and that relate to them as valued members of the care team.

### 2 SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Health and community sectors work collaboratively to provide support services built on a better understanding of carer needs and consumer/carer-directed processes that facilitate informed carer choice.

### 3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Broader public and community understanding of carers and caring leads to greater carer self-identification and more responsive and carer-friendly workplaces and education settings.

### 4 GOVERNMENT INFLUENCE

Government commitment to carers is evident through increased funding and enhanced government policy and program frameworks that recognise and support the work of Australia's carers.

### 5 NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

The National Network of Carers Associations is recognised as an informed, expert leader in carer issues strategically focused and aligned to achieve outcomes related to improved health, wellbeing, resilience and financial security of Australia's carers.



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## CARER SERVICES

*All carers across a diverse range of Australian communities have equitable access to support services that are responsive to their needs and that relate to them as valued members of the care team.*

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Managing and delivering services and support to carers, in collaboration with the Network of Carers Associations, that are responsive to their diverse needs and that encourage recognition of carers as valued members of the care team.
- Identifying opportunities for expanding the range and reach of programs that will improve the lives of carers, for example, using emerging technologies.
- Improving the quality of national carer services using consistent and accountable practices, driven by the National Performance and Evaluation Framework and Good Practice Standards.
- Working closely with our funding bodies with a view to high quality program design and delivery.



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## SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

*Health and community sectors work collaboratively to provide support services built on a better understanding of carer needs and consumer/carer-directed processes that facilitate informed carer choice.*

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Targeting our expertise to assist health and community sector professionals and services to better understand and respond to carers as partners in care.
- Initiating and engaging in public education and dialogue on issues affecting carers, through policy papers and conference presentations.
- Activating partnerships and collaboration with other organisations with the ultimate aim of improving the delivery of services to carers.



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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

*Broader public and community understanding of carers and caring leads to greater carer self-identification and more responsive and carer-friendly workplaces and education settings.*

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Raising awareness and building community understanding of carers, focusing on Carers Week as our high profile event.
- Strengthening our engagement with the community through social media and Ambassador media and engagement activities.
- Driving employer support for carers wishing to combine work and care.
- Building on our strong public presence through a wide range of media.



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## GOVERNMENT INFLUENCE

*Government commitment to carers is evident through increased funding and enhanced government policy and program frameworks that recognise and support the work of Australia's carers.*

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Protecting and enhancing the diverse interests of carers through influencing the outcomes of policy, regulation and program deliberation.
- Amplifying our advocacy through strategic alliances with other influential organisations operating in the social welfare and health sectors to ensure that carers are included in their agendas.
- Being the lead public voice for carers on matters of public policy through our advocacy to government.
- Activating our positive relationships with the federal government and members of parliament to ensure carer issues maintain a high profile.



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## NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

*The National Network of Carers Associations is recognised as an informed, expert leader in carer issues strategically focused and aligned to achieve outcomes related to improved health, wellbeing, resilience and financial security of Australia's carers.*

### WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Working in close collaboration with the Network of Carers Associations to expand our evidence base and to champion the cause of carers and the people that they care for.
- Consolidating the Network brand with a view to achieving greater recognition and confidence in our advocacy and service delivery.
- Continuing with the current Governance review with a view to achieving economies of scale, transparent information sharing and consistent goal setting across the Network.
- Promoting standards of good corporate health of the organisation in relation to financial strength, employer of choice, compliance with legislation, good governance, standards of conduct and ethics, and external accountability in reporting to funders and corporate regulators.