



**A year of celebration,  
engagement, innovation,  
influencing & strengthening**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15**

## **Carers Australia**

Unit 1, 16 Napier Close  
DEAKIN ACT 2600

T (02) 6122 9900

F (02) 6122 9999

E [caa@carersaustralia.com.au](mailto:caa@carersaustralia.com.au)

[www.carersaustralia.com.au](http://www.carersaustralia.com.au)

 @CarersAustralia

 [facebook.com/carersaus](https://facebook.com/carersaus)

ABN 12 231 938 308

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# ABOUT CARERS AUSTRALIA

Carers Australia is the peak national body representing Australia's carers. We take a leadership role and respond to carers' needs and those of the people they care for, being mindful of their financial challenges and in many cases, lack of social inclusion. Carers Australia advocates on behalf of Australia's carers to influence policies and services at a national level. We work collaboratively with partners and our member organisations, the state and territory carers associations, to deliver a range of essential national carer services.

## OUR VISION

An Australia that values and supports carers.

## PURPOSE

We work to:

- Improve the health, wellbeing, resilience and financial security of carers.
- Ensure that caring is a shared responsibility of family, community and Government.

## OUR PATRON

Governor-General  
His Excellency General the Honourable  
Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)

# ABOUT AUSTRALIA'S CARERS

Carers are people who provide unpaid care and support to family members and friends who have a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, terminal illness, an alcohol or other drug issue or who are frail aged.

## THE FACTS



**52%** OF CARERS ARE **EMPLOYED** IN ADDITION TO THEIR UNPAID CARING ROLE



**1 IN 8** AUSTRALIANS HAVE AN **UNPAID** CARING ROLE



CARERS ARE **TWICE AS LIKELY** TO BE ON **INCOME SUPPORT** AS NON-CARERS



**34%** OF PRIMARY CARERS HAVE BEEN CARING BETWEEN **10-25+ YEARS**



**58%** OF PRIMARY CARERS PROVIDE BETWEEN **20 AND 40+ HOURS** OF CARE PER WEEK



**38%** OF CARERS RECEIVE **ASSISTANCE FROM ORGANISED SERVICES**

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# CARER ENGAGEMENT

## NATIONAL CARERS CONFERENCE

Carers Australia hosted a National Carers Conference, held 16-18 November on the Gold Coast. The conference was opened by Assistant Minister for Social Services, Mitch Fifield, and brought together carers and delegates from across Australia, the UK, New Zealand the Pacific. The theme of the conference Keeping Carers Connected explored the diverse needs of carers and the capacity of service providers to meet those needs. A total of 231 people attended the conference, including carers, service providers, government and education bodies.

Keynote speakers were Madeleine Starr, Director of Business Development and Innovation, Carers UK and Bruce Bonyhady, Chair, National Disability Insurance Agency. Among a range of prominent

speakers were Dr Cassandra Goldie, CEO of ACOSS, Dr Tim Moore, Senior Research Fellow, Australian Catholic University, Patrick McClure, Chair of the Review of the Social Security System and Prof Sue Yeandle Professor of Sociology, University of Leeds, UK.

There were nine panel discussions and four special presentations, with a total of 26 speakers.

In addition there were 13 abstract presentations involving 21 speakers.

Feedback from those attending was extremely positive with comments such as:

"Keep up the good work - brilliant 3 days"

"Thank you for the opportunity to attend, learn and grow. Inspired to continue doing what I do.."

"This without a doubt is the best conference I have attended ever"



## CARERS WEEK 2014

The Carers Week theme for 2014 was *Take a Break for Carers*. The innovative Careoke activation was embraced at the community level with many people attending and hosting events, engaging in social media, leaving messages of support for carers or singing the specially created Carers song. Many school bands, individuals and groups took up the activation.

The Carers Week campaign resulted in a very significant increase in social media engagement, with people viewing our Facebook posts increasing by 450% when compared to last year.

Carers Week was launched by the Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove, at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney on 14 October. Assistant Minister Mitch Fifield also attended the event and used the opportunity to launch the Young Carer Bursary Programme.

On 18 October, as part of Carers Week celebrations, the Prime Minister hosted an event for 50 carers at Kirribilli House. CEO Ara Cresswell attended, along with several Carers Australia staff, Elena Katrakis, CEO of Carers NSW and Assistant Minister Mitch Fifield. All attendees wore the Carers Week T-shirt and photos were placed on our social media.

Engagement events throughout the week were coupled with a strong social media campaign, a television commercial and many radio interviews with carers, carer ambassadors and the CEO. Some 4,250 media reports were generated with a potential audience of 12 million - a 50% increase on the previous year.



## POLLIE PEDAL 2014

The third Pollie Pedal event for which Carers Australia has been the primary beneficiary was run from 10 to 17 August, covering 1,000 Kms and taking in NSW towns in New England and the Blue Mountains through to Penrith. The event was again a successful platform for raising awareness and engaging with carers and the general public. Politicians involved included the Prime Minister, the Hon Tony Abbott, Minister Kevin Andrews, Assistant Minister Mitch Fifield, Minister Barnaby Joyce, Mark Coulton MP, Louise Markus MP, Angus Taylor MP, David Gillespie MP and Luke Hartsukyer MP.

Australia Post was the principal sponsor and actively engaged with the community and carers. Other sponsors included AMGEN Australia, Glencore, Servcorp, Macquarie Group Foundation, Johnson & Johnson, Visy, Pfizer, Medibank Private, Santos, Shimano, Kraft Foods, Roche, the Church of Jesus Christ Of Latter Day Saints, Grant Samuel, Alphapharm, DHL Australia and Medicines Australia.

Carers Australia supported the running of the event with the valuable collaboration of the CEO and staff of Carers NSW.



## POLLIE PEDAL 2015

Pollie Pedal 2015 was successfully run from 27 to 30 March, covering 465 kms through northern Tasmania, finishing in Launceston where riders were greeted by a large crowd and a Carers Fete. With over 50 riders, including the Prime Minister, the Hon Tony Abbott, the ride provided numerous opportunities to engage with carers, local school children and the community.

The official closing included a performance by the Choir of High Hopes and speeches by the Prime Minister, Assistant Minister Mitch Fifield, local members, Ara Cresswell and Tegan Heggblum; a member of the Australian National Young Carers Action Team (ANYCAT).

Carers Australia's Senior Policy Officer, Anna Morison celebrated her third successful ride with Pollie Pedal. Ara Cresswell and three Carers Australia staff again supported the running of the event with excellent collaboration with Carers Tasmania's Chair and CEO and staff.

Australia Post was again the principal sponsor.

## ANYCAT

Members of the Australian National Young Carers Action Team (ANYCAT) met in Canberra 16-17 June. The two days combined training in interacting with the media and discussions with Ministers and members of parliament at Parliament House, as well as a visit to Question Time. The media training included an intensive workshop to develop skills and confidence around public speaking, relationship building and appropriate engagement with stakeholders, including politicians. The second day included visits to a number of MPs and Assistant Minister Mitch Fifield where they were able to articulate their concerns as young carers. Feedback from the young carers was that they felt they had successfully engaged with the politicians, having benefited from the skills learned the day before. In addition, MPs increased their awareness of young carers directly and gained insights into the difficulties young carers face.



## NATIONAL CARER AWARDS

Carers Australia and Families Australia collaborated with Life Without Barriers to stage the inaugural National Carer Awards during the year. Together with the state and territory associations we promoted the awards at both state and national level to recognise and celebrate carers across the country. There were four categories: carer of a person who is frail due to age, carer of a person with a disability, foster or kinship carer and young carer. Finalists in each of these categories were named in each state and territory in ceremonies during October and November. The national awards were staged during the National Carer Conference at a gala dinner on 16 November. ANYCAT member and Carers Australia Young Carer Ambassador, Ellen Holmes, received the national award in the young carer category and later received wide media attention across a number of platforms. Preparation is underway for the 2015 National Carer Awards, with all state and territory winners to progress to a national event early in 2016.



# CARER SERVICES

## NEW SERVICES

### YOUNG CARER BURSARIES

A significant addition to the range of our carer services, which are funded by the Department of Social Services, is the Young Carer Bursary Programme. In a very short time frame Carers Australia was selected to run this program, we designed a promotional campaign in conjunction with the Network of Carers Associations, developed a web-based application process and set up a national help line in time for applications to open on 13 October. At the end of the round over 800 applications had been received and after a careful selection process involving an independent panel, 150 young carers were chosen to receive a bursary for the 2015 education year. For the first round of bursaries, the government had specified that there would be three levels available: \$10,000, \$6,000 and \$4,000. The demand for these bursaries was such that in April, the government released more funds for another 150 bursaries to be awarded for a single amount of \$3000 each. Successful bursary winners come from all states and territories and across all ages ranging from age 12 to 24. Plans are well underway to commence the next round of bursaries for 2016. Young carers who have received a bursary have had this to say about how their lives have changed:

*"It's taken the stress away. My grades have improved dramatically"*

*"I'm able to help Mum more and study more. It also helps with me being in a positive space to be able to help my brother with autism."*

*"I feel like I fit in at school because I am included in all the trips run in my classes."*

## PALLIATIVE CARE TRAINING FOR CARER COUNSELLORS & HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

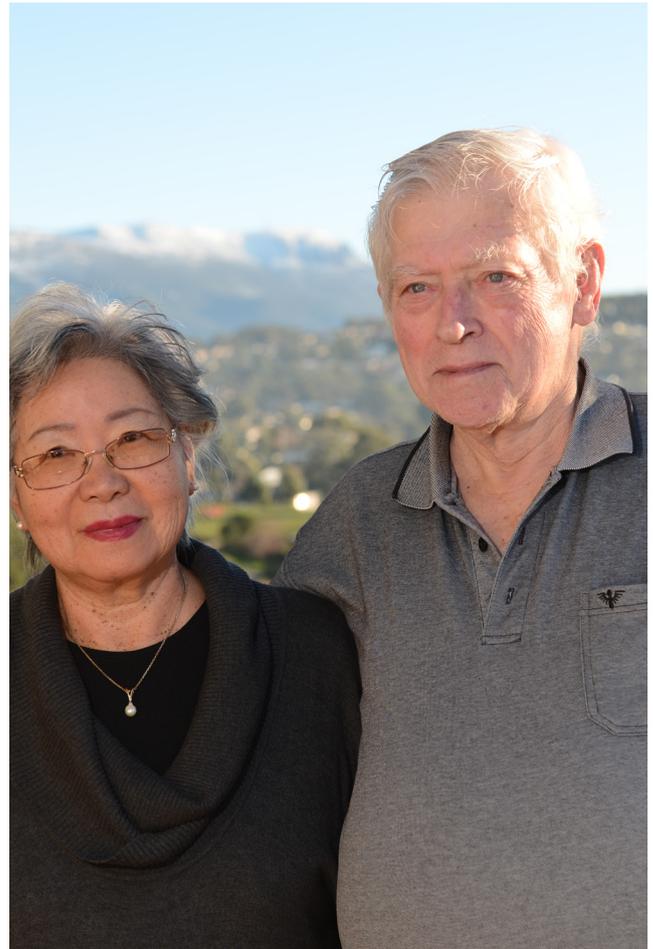
We successfully tendered for funding from the Department of Health to run palliative care training for carer counsellors and health professionals during the year. Workshops are being delivered around the country with support from Palliative Care Australia. By the end of June, we had run 8 workshops with 67 participants in Perth, Darwin, Alice Springs and Canberra.

Almost all participants (94%) agreed that they have significantly improved their knowledge and skills as a result of attending the workshops.

94%

# NATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

The National Performance Framework for national programs which was developed by Carers Australia and which was adopted by the Network in 2013-14 was a major focus of our work during the year. The introduction of new reporting arrangements to the Department of Social Services, the Data Exchange (DEX), required some re-design of the Framework's implementation. Elements that have progressed well are the Carer Advisory Service (CAS) Satisfaction Survey and identification of Carers National Data Sets. The CAS survey was trialled by Carers ACT and Carers Queensland where satisfaction with the Service has been rated by 90% of carers and other users of the service as 'good', 'very good' or 'excellent'. This trial is now currently being implemented nationally.



**90%**

## CURRENT PROGRAMS

The National Carer Counselling Program which provides short term counselling to carers and assistance with coping skills assisted close to 6,500 carers last year. Three quarters of the sessions provided were face to face while the remainder were by telephone, email or via the web. Another 1,600 were provided counselling services via the Mental Health Carers Counselling Program.

The National Carer Advisory Service which provides specialist advice, information and referrals to carers and others via a 1800 helpline and through public events had contact with over 70,000 people, including close to 50,000 carers. Around a third (30%) of carers who made contact with the service cared for a person with disability, a fifth (20%) cared for someone who is frail aged, 19% cared for someone with a mental illness and 18% cared for someone with a chronic illness. The remainder cared for someone with dementia (12%) and someone in need of palliative care (1%).

A total of 574 carers attended 128 'Early Days' workshops that were held across the country in metropolitan, regional and remote areas during the year. The purpose of these workshops is to provide parents of children with disability and particularly those who are eligible for the government's Better Start Initiative, with the necessary information and strategies to navigate the disability landscape.

More than 1,540 children were registered nationally for the Better Start Program.

**1800 242 636**

# INFLUENCING GOVERNMENT

## REFORMS

### **Reforms to aged care, disability supports and social security continued to dominate the political agenda for Carers Australia in 2014-15.**

The momentum of reforms impacting on services and financial support to carers and those they care for was unremitting throughout 2014-15 as the Government moved toward implementation of aged care and social security reform - in response to concerns about sustaining government investment in the face of the ageing of the population, the introduction of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), and projected growth in social security and health expenditure.

These developments demanded considerable political advocacy effort on our part as we interacted on a regular basis with relevant Ministers and their staff, other politicians, the public service and other peak organisations in the social services space to ensure that carers' interests were recognised and protected in the changing political and programme landscape. In August 2014 we made a submission to the Interim Report of the McClure Review of Australia's Welfare System. In addition to canvassing a range of broader issues in relation to social security, we highlighted the difficulties carers would face in meeting higher work participation requirements canvassed in the Interim Report (i.e., job-seeking and working for the dole), and explained the importance of retaining the Carer Allowance which assist carers with the additional costs of caring. We also recommended more flexible arrangements

in relation to social security guidelines which would allow carers to engage in some education and employment without losing their access to the Carer Payment.

On 25 February the Government released the Final Report of the Review, New System for Better Support and Social Outcomes. Carers were not nominated for the high level participation requirements recommended for other social security recipients, although it was suggested that they be alerted to opportunities for building capability for work and preparing for re-entering the workforce at a time appropriate for them.

On 19th December 2014 the Department of Social Services (DSS) released the final arrangements for the transition of funding from a range of Commonwealth aged care programs to the new Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP).

We put in an intensive effort throughout January to get clarification on funding for the full range of carer programs administered in the Aged Care Group of DSS.

We were later informed that:

- NCCP funding will be extended until 30 June 2017.
- CISS funding will be extended to 30 June 2016 while the DSS Integrated Carer Support model is being designed.

## WORKING WITH OTHER PEAK ASSOCIATIONS

Our engagement with other peak bodies to develop joint positions on important issues included:

- Membership of the National Aged Care Alliance (NACA) where we were involved in a number of joint Department of Social Services/NACA advisory groups on different aspects of changes to aged care;
- Membership of the National Disability and Carer Alliance (NDCA) to monitor and promote the roll-out of the NDIS in a way that best meets the needs and interests of people with disability and their carers
- Membership of the National Complex Needs Alliance which advocates for people with complex health and socio-economic disadvantages and who need support through a comprehensive and coordinated service system
- Active involvement with ACOSS and disability peaks around the Review of the Social Welfare System and announcements in the 2014-15 Budget (and subsequent legislative initiatives) to rein in social security expenditure through proposed changes to social security recipients' access to income support;
- Working with Mental Health Australia to advocate for clarity and inclusion of people with disabling mental health conditions and their carers to access NDIS packages;
- Working with Alzheimer's Australia to better fund and improve services to people with dementia and their carers;
- Working with Palliative Care Australia to promote recognition of and support for carers of those with a terminal illness;
- Working with National Disability Services (NDS) through a range of funding and design issues impacting on access to disability services as the NDIS is implemented
- Working with the National Respite Association to clarify the source of continuing funding for respite and to identify innovative models for the provision of respite.

## MINISTERIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- The CEO, Ara Cresswell, continued as a member of the Aged Care Sector Committee
- Ara was appointed co-Chair of the Carer Gateway Advisory Group
- Ara attended the Ministerial Dementia Forum (which replaced the Ministerial Dementia Advisory Group) September 2014

In August 2014 Carers Australia commenced an NDIS Capacity Building Project commissioned by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA). The aims of the project are to:

- Increase understanding of the operation of the NDIS and the principles which underpin it amongst people with a disability and their families.
- Increase the capacity of people with disability and their families to exercise choice and control in engaging with the NDIS and in purchasing supports in an open market in order to realise their aspirations.
- Encourage and enable people with disability, families and carers to move towards greater independence, self-management and community inclusion.
- Provide strategic advice to the NDIA on operational issue.

In the first stage of the project these aims were pursued through conducting focus groups with the carers of people who were engaged with the NDIA in trial sites across Australia and discussions with service providers. A survey to supplement the findings of the focus group was also distributed in July 2015.

In addition, Carers Australia was subcontracted by Mental Health Australia to develop resources for their NDIS Mental Health Capacity Building Project.

## COMMONWEALTH HOME SUPPORT PROGRAM

A major area of policy reform in the aged care sector in 2014-15 was the design of the new Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) to provide low care need services to consumers and carers. We influenced the outcomes of this programme through our membership of the National Aged Care Alliance (NACA) and the DSS/NACA Commonwealth Home Support Advisory Group.

Submissions were made in relation to:

- Key Directions for the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) Discussion Paper
- The draft CHSP Programme Manual
- CHSP National Fees Policy
- The Good Practice Guide for Restorative Care Approaches

As a result, carer inclusiveness, both in terms of the recognition of carers as partners in care and service access entitlements, have been built into the CHSP.

## PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDS OF CARERS

On 24 November the CEO, Ara Cresswell presented the Work and Care initiative, including two reports for employers and employees, at the meeting of the Parliamentary Friends of Carers Group at Parliament House. The co-convenors of the Group, Dr Andrew Southcott MP and Sharon Claydon MP both addressed the audience of 50 people including

Assistant Minister Mitch Fifield, Andrew Leigh MP, political staffers, CEO Carers NSW, Elena Katrakis, and peak body representatives. Madeleine Starr, Director of Business Development and Innovation, Carers UK, presented the UK experience with developing and promoting workplace support for carers and the UK *Employers for Carers* initiative.

## INTERNATIONAL

The CEO was invited to Taiwan by the Taiwan Association of Family Caregivers to speak at their first international conference in Taipei in April. Other keynote speakers were Dr Tim Moore, Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University, and Paul Coates, CEO of Carers WA. The conference focused on telephone hotlines as the primary source of carer support. We presented details of the National Carer Advisory Service and the range of services available from Carers WA which created much interest. We have much to learn from each other about how best to deliver services. Ara was also invited to give a lecture to 40 Masters students in the Department of Social Work and Social Policy at the National Chi Nan University about carers in Australia, the data, the services and future directions. A strong bond was formed as a result of Ara's visit and a proposal to develop an Asian/Pacific Carers Alliance is being explored.



# GOVERNANCE

## NEW STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan 2015-18 was developed during the year with strong input from the whole Network. The Plan focuses on 4 key areas:

- Carer Services
- Sector Development
- Community Engagement
- Government Influence
- Network Development

A copy of the Plan is at:

<http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/publications/corporate-documents/>

## GOVERNANCE REVIEW

Presidents and CEOs of each association in the Network are working together to develop a new governance structure for the Network which will strengthen the way we work collectively, with greater cohesion and consistency across the country. We have been working with consultants KPMG to develop

a range of options. Presidents, CEOs and a Board member from each association met in Sydney in May to progress the project. A Joint Steering Group was formed with the aim of presenting a preferred model for consideration by each Board towards the middle of 2016.



# FINANCIALS

## FINANCE REPORT

For year ending June 2015 our accounts show that Carers Australia's equity increased by \$666,029 from \$1,051,134 as at June 2014 to \$1,717,162 as at June 2015.

Total income for the year was \$15,499,373.

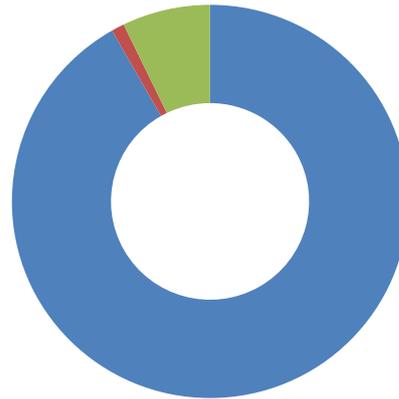
Included in this total are \$14,222,686 Grants & Subsidies (of which \$11,748,019 was paid to the States & Territories) leaving net government funding of \$2,474,667, Sponsorships & Donations of \$1,113,390 and other income of \$163,297.

Other expenditures for the year were \$3,085,325.

Staff costs continue to make up the largest portion at \$1,724,081 followed by Communications/Marketing, Travel & Meetings, Rent and Office Expenses and Consultants and Board Expenses.

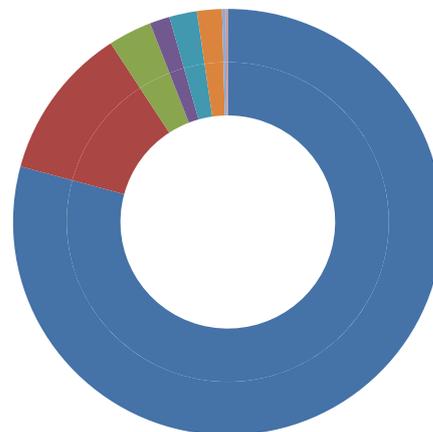
The financial statements cover Carers Australia Incorporated as a not-for-profit association incorporated in the Australian Capital Territory under the Associations Incorporation Act (ACT) 1991 and the financial report has been prepared in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (ACT) 1991.

### Income: \$15,499,373



Government Grants	14,222,686	91.8%
Other Income	163,297	1.1%
Donations & Sponsorships	1,113,390	7.2%

### Expenditure: \$14,833,344



Carer Services payments to States	11,748,019	79.2%
Staff Costs	1,724,081	11.6%
Communication/Marketing	487,486	3.3%
Consultants	223,129	1.5%
Rent & Office Expenses	309,132	2.1%
National Meetings & Travel	277,415	1.9%
Board Expenses	43,204	0.3%
Other Expenses	20,878	0.1%

# NEWS & MEDIA

## SUBMISSIONS

### July 2014

- Submission to the Key Directions for the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) Discussion Paper June 2014

### August 2014

- Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Inquiry on Social Services Budget Amendment
- Submission to the Interim Report of the Welfare Review
- Comments on the Exposure Draft for Employment Services 2015 – 20

### September 2014

- Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee Inquiry into the extent of income inequality in Australia

### February 2015

- Federal Budget Submission 2015 – 16

### March 2015

- Response to Consultation on the NDIS Information, Linkages and Capacity Building Framework
- Submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Workplace Relations Framework

### April 2015

- Submission to the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) Consultation

### June 2015

- Submission to the Urbis Disability Education Standards 2015 Review

## CARERS NATIONAL NEWS:

- September 2014
- December 2014
- March 2015
- June 2015

## MEDIA RELEASES:

- 29/07/2014 – Government's new employment assistance model needs to take into account the impact of caring
- 08/08/2014 – Prime Minister to join Pollie Pedal and ride for Australia's carers
- 17/09/2014 – Flexible working conditions for carers needed to meet ageing challenges
- 10/10/2014 – Take a Break, Raise Your Voice and Support our carers!
- 13/10/2014 – Report highlights the plight of older carer parents
- 14/10/2014 – Governor-General launches Carers Week 2014
- 14/10/2014 – Young carer bursaries to help young carers in education
- 31/10/2014 – Grandparent carers of children with disability need more assistance
- 14/11/2014 – Australian National Carer Conference opens on Gold Coast
- 24/11/2014 – 'Work and Care' initiative launched at Parliament House
- 04/02/2015 – Increased support for people suffering severe behavioural and psychological symptoms of dementia will benefit carers
- 24/04/2015 – 'A place to proudly call home for people with disability' – release of the Every Australian Counts survey
- 12/05/2015 – Carers Australia encouraged by plan for integrated carer supports
- 12/05/2015 – Greater consumer choice across Consumer Aged Care Programmes welcome
- 22/06/2015 – Government provides additional Young Carer Bursaries to meet high need
- 24/06/2015 – Appointment of an Expert Advisory Group to guide the development of a National Carer Gateway

# ABOUT US

## FUNDING BODIES

Australian Government Department of Social Services

Australian Government Department of Health

## CORPORATE SPONSORS

Meyer Vandenberg Lawyers

## OUR BOARD

- Karen Cook, President
- Anne Butorac, Vice President
- Michael Empson, Treasurer
- Christine Lucas, Secretary
- Sue Peden, Director
- Teresa Pilbeam, Director
- Felicity Purdy, Director
- Brett Walker, Director
- Jan Wallent, Director
- Jauhari Wright, Director

## OUR STAFF

Ara Cresswell, CEO

- Elizabeth Johnston, Executive Assistant to the CEO

### Corporate Services Team

- Mary Reid, Business Manager
- Lorraine Calabria, Corporate Services Manager
- Paul Irvine, Human Resources and Corporate Support Officer
- Anne McGregor, Administration Officer

### National Communication and Engagement Team

- Kathleen Caller, National Communication and Engagement Manager
- Edward Allpress, National Media and Communication Coordinator
- Lisa Deas, National Communication Officer

### National Policy Team

- Sue Elderton, National Policy Manager
- Anna Morison, Senior Policy Officer
- Kim Taylor, Policy Officer
- Mathias Hammer, Research Officer
- Jade Taylor, Research Officer
- Susan Abbott, NDIS Project Manager
- Debbie Allan, NDIS Project Coordinator

### National Programs Team

- Julia Evans, National Programs Manager
- Luke Jones, National Projects Co-ordinator
- Natalie Nikro, National Programs Officer
- Judy Phillips, Young Carer Bursaries and Information Services
- Jenny Farrelly, National Projects Coordinator
- Sarah-May Bennett, National Projects Coordinator

