

MEDIA RELEASE



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Carer Recognition Bill passed – a significant step forward for Australia's carers

Carers Australia welcomes the passing of the [Carer Recognition bill](#) through the Senate yesterday. The Carer Recognition Bill establishes a legislative framework to increase recognition and awareness of Australia's 2.9 million carers.

"While the bill does not establish carers' rights, it is a significant step forward in ensuring that carers have the same opportunities to enjoy optimum health and well being and social and economic participation as do other Australians" said CEO Carers Australia, Ms Hughes.

The bill outlines a Statement for Australia's Carers consisting of ten principles that reflect how carers should be treated and considered. *

The bill defines a carer as an individual who provides personal care, support and assistance to individuals who need support due to disability, a medical condition, including a terminal or chronic illness, mental illness for fragility due to age.

The bill is part of a broader National Carer Recognition Framework announced by Jenny Macklin, Minister of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, in October 2009. Under the proposed framework the government has committed to the establishment of national goals, a national carers strategy and three-year action plans with the aim of improving policy and service delivery to better support carers.

"Carers Australia looks forward to working with the government to implement the future legislation and support framework to deliver real improvements for carers across Australia," said Ms Hughes.

* Full text of Statement for Australia's Carers at Attachment A



Attachment A:

The Statement for Australia's Carers

- 1.** All carers should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as other Australians, regardless of age, race, sex, disability, sexuality, religious or political beliefs, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, cultural or linguistic differences, socioeconomic status or locality.
- 2.** Children and young people who are carers should have the same rights as all children and young people and should be supported to reach their full potential.
- 3.** The valuable social and economic contribution that carers make to society should be recognised and supported.
- 4.** Carers should be supported to enjoy optimum health and social wellbeing and to participate in family, social and community life.
- 5.** Carers should be acknowledged as individuals with their own needs within and beyond the caring role.
- 6.** The relationship between carers and the persons for whom they care should be recognised and respected.
- 7.** Carers should be considered as partners with other care providers in the provision of care, acknowledging the unique knowledge and experience of carers.
- 8.** Carers should be treated with dignity and respect.
- 9.** Carers should be supported to achieve greater economic wellbeing and sustainability and, where appropriate, should have opportunities to participate in employment and education.
- 10.** Support for carers should be timely, responsive, appropriate and accessible.