

MEDIA RELEASE



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Women carers to be better supported in the workplace under a new program

In a win for women carers looking to combine work and care, Carers Australia has been announced as a grant recipient of the Federal Government's *Women's Leadership and Development Program*.

The *Women's Leadership and Development Program* is part of the Women@Work measure which aims to improve outcomes for Australian women across five key areas: job creation, economic security, workplace participation, leadership and safety.

"Approximately 60 per cent of Australia's 2.65 million unpaid carers identify as a woman, and our research tells us that these carers experience increased stress and financial hardship, and are more likely to be unemployed compared to their male counterparts," said Carers Australia CEO, Liz Callaghan.

Under the *Women's Leadership and Development Program* grant, Carers Australia will receive funding to deliver a program targeted at improving employment opportunities for women carers.

The Women Who Care Toolkit project will focus on supporting women carers to reconnect with new or emerging workforce opportunities whilst being able to maintain their caring role.

"We want women carers to be aware of, and be able to access, services, supports, training and meaningful employment opportunities to improve their economic security and workforce participation," said Ms Callaghan.

The Toolkit will also develop resources to encourage workplaces to provide greater flexibility in working arrangements to accommodate caring responsibilities and employment preferences.

"This is a valuable opportunity to not only support the objectives of the *Women's Leadership and Development Program*, but also to improve outcomes for Australian women. It will facilitate Carers Australia to continue our work to improve the health, wellbeing, resilience and financial security of carers, and ensure that caring is a responsibility that is shared by family, community and government," said Ms Callaghan.

It is hoped that the foundations of this Toolkit can be extended in the future to include male carers who also experience reduced opportunities for employment as a result of their caring role.



Carers Australia stands ready to continue working with the Federal Government on this program and will be working with the National Carer Network to develop the Toolkit.

About Carers Australia and the National Carer Network

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing Australia's carers, advocating to influence policies and services at a national level. The National Carer Network, which consists of Carers NSW, Carers ACT, Carers Victoria, Carers Tasmania, Carers SA, Carers WA, Carers NT, and Carers Queensland, deliver a range of essential carer services across states and territories.

About carers

An informal, unpaid carer is a family member or friend that cares for someone that has a disability, chronic or life-limiting illness, is frail aged, has a mental health illness, alcohol or other drug related issue. Informal carers are distinct from paid support workers who are colloquially also called carers but are fully employed and remunerated with all the benefits of employment. Conversely, family carers perform their caring duties without remuneration

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