

MEDIA RELEASE



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A little support makes a big difference this Dementia Action Week

Carers Australia is calling for greater support for people living with dementia and their carers during this year's Dementia Action Week.

Carers Australia CEO, Liz Callaghan said, "We applaud Dementia Australia for their tireless support of people living with dementia, and for using this important week to recognise and celebrate the incredible work of the family and friend carers providing care to their loved ones."

Caring for a person living dementia can have a significant impact on the carer, including their physical and mental health and sense of wellbeing. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has further worsened this impact by increasing the social isolation experienced by carers and reducing the number of support services available to them.

"These carers have a high need for respite, but [our research](#) has found it is very difficult for dementia carers to access respite which does not distress the person they are caring for or lead to a deterioration in their condition," said Ms Callaghan.

While Carers Australia has welcomed the Federal Budget measures which supported the Aged Care Royal Commission recommendations around improving in-home respite and carer education at the time of a dementia diagnosis, it is clear more must be done for carer-inclusive practices.

"We are strong advocates for carer inclusion in services delivered to those they care for, whether that be primary health or support services. This is at the heart of the concept of 'partners in care' which is a central principle of the *Carer Recognition Act 2010* (Commonwealth)," said Ms Callaghan.

It is also crucial during Dementia Action Week that action is taken to address the discrimination experienced by people living with dementia and their carers.

Twelve months on from the release of the [Joint Position Statement](#) from Carers Australia and Dementia Australia, reports are still emerging of discrimination and stigma towards these key groups.

"People diagnosed with dementia want to live in their own homes and communities as long as they can, just like other people, and this can only be accomplished with the support of their loved ones," said Ms Callaghan.



“For the sake of people with dementia, those who care for them and, indeed, the very large number of people who will be diagnosed with dementia in the future, we must cultivate dementia-friendly communities where people with dementia are treated with understanding and are valued and supported.”

With National Carers Week just a few weeks away, there will be more opportunity to celebrate carers for the invaluable care they provide to their loved ones. Running from 10 – 16 October, [National Carers Week](#) will be asking Australians to join the Millions of Reasons to Care and lend their support to the carers in their lives.

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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