

MEDIA RELEASE



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Who cares for carers? Not this Budget

Unpaid family and friend carers saved the Australian economy [\\$77.9 billion in 2020](#). That was before COVID and the impacts on the community it brought with it. Yet these 2.65 million Australians were completely forgotten in last night's Budget, with no dedicated new funding provided for their financial support, respite, or wellbeing.

Cost of living pressures are most acute for our nation's carers, and they simply cannot continue to plug the gap in supports for someone who has a disability, chronic or life-limiting illness, is frail aged, has a mental illness, alcohol or other drug related condition without better and ongoing supports for their own health, wellbeing and financial security.

Carers Australia Acting CEO Ms Melanie Cantwell said, "While the Budget may deliver short-term relief for some carers receiving social security payments, it does not outline long-term reform for carers or prepare for the [23% growth in demand](#) for primary carers by 2030."

"We call on all parties to demonstrate their commitment to Australia's 2.65 million unpaid family and friend carers in their federal election commitments."

"Throughout the COVID pandemic carers have sheltered, supported and advocated for our most vulnerable Australians at home, often while paid care and support services were not available, or their delivery was severely impacted. This added to the number of unpaid care hours carers were already doing and further impacted on their own health and wellbeing. Carers are at breaking point, and have barely been recognised or acknowledged in this Budget."

"If not now, when will carers enter the centre of policy considerations? While the *Carer Recognition Act 2010* (Commonwealth) formally acknowledges the valuable social and economic contribution of carers in Australia, the last National Carers Strategy lapsed in 2014. Australia's 2.65 million carers are an essential part of our community and deserve a whole-of-government National Carer Strategy to deliver strategic direction and clear responsibilities across health and non-health portfolios."

"When the pandemic is over and this election is over many carers' lives will not change – they will continue to be socially isolated, financially disadvantaged and unrecognised. Carers Australia asks again: who will care for carers?" Ms Cantwell said.

The Carers Australia 2022 Federal Election Platform is available [here](#) and 2022-23 Pre-Budget Submission available [here](#).

[End]



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

Carers Australia uses the term 'carer(s)' as defined by the *Commonwealth [Carer Recognition Act 2010](#)*. The term should not be used loosely and without context to describe a paid care worker, volunteer, foster carer, or a family member or friend who is not a carer.

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

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