

MEDIA RELEASE



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Australia's 2.65 million carers urged to weigh up their vote in light of parties' responses to commitment to Carers Australia's election survey

[Carers Australia](#) has this week [released responses](#) from the Liberal National Coalition, Labor Party and the Australian Greens to a policy survey seeking to understand the level of financial commitment and other support each party will provide to unpaid family and friend carers in the next term of government.

While all three parties recognised the contribution carers make to our community, only the Labor Party has committed to developing a new National Carers Strategy during its first term of government. This is a key infrastructure requirement on which to build any reform to benefit carers, as the most recent Strategy lapsed in 2014.

The Labor Party has committed to a range of new measures to support carers including developing a new National Carers Strategy, in consultation with carers, peak bodies and service providers, during its first term of government. They also committed to review the [Carer Recognition Act 2010](#) and coordinate carer policy across government. The Labor Party has said they will consider expanding the terms of reference for a Productivity Commission inquiry into Carers Leave.

The Australian Greens have explicitly committed to further financial support for carers by raising the rate of the Carer Payment to \$88 a day and increasing the income-free threshold to \$300 per fortnight, enabling recipients to earn more before their payment is affected. The Australian Greens have also pledged support for a Productivity Commission review of economic and financial support for carers; more funding to increase respite offerings; and \$25 million over three years to fund Carers Australia and the National Carer Network to work with government and provide independent and confidential advocacy services relating to caring.

The Liberal National Coalition pointed to its record of financial support, with \$770 million committed over four years to 2024-25 to ensure carers have access to services and support. The Liberal Party also highlighted the support provided through the [Carer Gateway](#) - a dedicated carer support program.

Carers Australia CEO Ms Alison Brook said, "We are looking forward to working closely with the new government following the May election, to examine ways in which the needs of carers, including augmented financial support, can be better met."

"The value of the voluntary contribution these 2.65 million people put into the care of others – often before their own needs – cannot be downplayed."



“Recently released [research](#) shows that for each year they provide this care, carers lose on average \$39,000 in lifetime earnings and a further \$17,700 in superannuation. That is every year of caring. We know that, in the aggregate, carers contribute almost \$78 billion *per annum* to the Australian economy in savings on paid formal care services through aged care and disability support sectors. Carers need to see these savings invested in better supports and outcomes for them.”

“Carers around Australia will consider these survey responses when they cast their vote on 21 May.”

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The summary of responses to Carers Australia’s 2022 [Federal Election Survey](#) are available [here](#). Carers Australia’s Federal Election Platform is also available [here](#).

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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