

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## Caring for carers

Thirteen years on from release of the 2009 [Who Cares...?: Report on the inquiry into Better Support for Carers](#), the 1 in 10 Australians who are carers are still not adequately recognised as a priority group. Carers are often hidden in our community despite delivering an average of 35.2 hours of unpaid care per week, [saving the government \\$77.9 billion](#) in 2020. These savings to the country come at a high personal cost – [recent research](#) has found Australian carers, on average, forego \$392,500 in lost wages to age 67 and miss out on a further \$175,000 in superannuation over their lifetimes.

[Carers Australia](#), the national peak body for unpaid carers, welcomes the appointment of the Albanese Government’s ministry. CEO Alison Brook said, “we look forward to working with the Ministers for Social Services, Health and Aged Care, the National Disability Insurance Scheme, Employment and Workplace Relations, Housing, Homelessness, Women, and Youth in order that carers may be recognised and truly supported to live full and healthy lives.”

Ahead of the May 2022 election, Carers Australia [surveyed](#) major parties to understand the level of financial commitment and other support each party will provide to unpaid family and friend carers in the new term of government. The Labor Party [made the following commitments](#), to:

- develop a new National Carers Strategy, in consultation with carers, peak bodies and service providers (during its first term of government),
- review the operation of the Carer Recognition Act,
- consolidate coordination of carer policy across government, and
- consult with carers, their representative peak bodies and service providers to identify and overcome impediments, including inflexible working arrangements, and to provide financial and practical support for carers in our community.

“We look forward to working with the Government to realise these commitments as a matter of priority. We will also continue to advocate for other issues facing carers, such as financial security, health and wellbeing supports, access to appropriate respite, and system navigation.”

“As the 47th Parliament begins to form, Carers Australia looks forward to working with the Government, opposition, and crossbench members to continue advancing the rights and recognition of carers, and for the support services they need to continue their critical role in our community.”

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### **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 caring 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.

**For media enquiries please contact Felicity Wilkins on 0428 948 415.**