

MEDIA RELEASE

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THIS WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY LET'S REMEMBER AUSTRALIA'S UNPAID CARERS

Today is World Mental Health Day with the theme of 'Awareness. Belonging. Connection' and the simple message: look after your mental health, Australia.

To mark this day, Carers Australia is highlighting new data from the [2022 Carer Wellbeing Survey](#) ahead of National Carers Week, which reveals Australia's 2.65 million carers are experiencing greater distress, loneliness and lower levels of wellbeing than Australians without caring responsibilities

Carers Australia CEO, Alison Brook said, "Carers in Australia fulfil a vital economic, social and wellbeing role, and new data further demonstrates the impact caring has and how crucial it is that we develop ways to better recognise and support them so they can maintain and thrive in their caring role."

The research of almost 6,000 carers was commissioned in collaboration with the University of Canberra, the Department of Social Services and Carers Australia, and is the second year the Carer Wellbeing Survey has been held.

Carers live with significantly higher levels of psychological distress. Whereas 25.0% of adult Australians had moderate to high levels of psychological distress at the end of 2020, 49.3% of carers were experiencing these levels of distress in 2022.

Despite undertaking a role where they are physically with the person for whom they provide care, the majority of carers faced increased loneliness in 2022 versus last year. The 25-44 age group were the most affected (rising from 35% in 2021 to 44.4% in 2022).

"Researchers, advocates, governments and the broader community need to know more about how to support the wellbeing of carers, ensuring they have a high quality of life while providing quality of life to the people they care for" said Ms Brook.

Carers are three times more likely to have lower levels of wellbeing compared to non-carers, and between 2021 and 2022, carers aged 35-44 experienced a decline in wellbeing, with the proportion reporting low wellbeing increasing to 63.2% (from 54.2% in 2021), as did First Nation respondents, where low wellbeing grew from 43.5% to 52.8%.

"We are also pleased to see the release of the Report to the Nation by Mental Health Australia that also highlights the need for greater support for carers. That report states that mental health carers were more likely than others to have, themselves, been diagnosed with a mental health condition, and also rated their own mental health lower than non-carers," said Ms Brook.

“We want to see more support and recognition for not only carers of people living with mental ill-health, but for the mental health and wellbeing of *all* carers, and I am putting out a call to action for Australia to recognise the important role of carers and participate in some way in National Carer Week.”

Running from 16 – 22 October, National Carers Week 2022 is a time to recognise Australians who provide unpaid care and support to a family member or friend with theme Millions of Reasons to Care. For more information visit [National Carers Week website](#).

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.

For enquiries please contact Alison Brook, CEO of Carers Australia, on 0412 422 891 or (02) 6122 9902.