

Annual Report 2021-22



**Carers
Australia**



About this annual report

This report highlights Carers Australia's progress and achievements throughout 2021-22. This report, the Carers Australia financial statements and previous years' reports for are available online at www.carersaustralia.com.au.

We welcome your feedback on this report and any of the activity reported:

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Carers Australia acknowledges Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities as the traditional custodians of the land we work on and pays respect to elders past, present and emerging. As an inclusive organisation we also celebrate people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.

CONTENTS

CARERS AUSTRALIA.....	4
FROM THE CHAIR	5
CEO MESSAGE	6
POLICY AND ADVOCACY.....	7
NATIONAL CARERS WEEK 2021.....	11
NEWS & MEDIA	12
PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS	13
ABOUT US	16

CARERS AUSTRALIA

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing the diversity of the 2.65 million Australians who provide unpaid care and support to family members and friends with a disability, chronic condition, mental illness or disorder, alcohol or other drug related condition, terminal illness, or who are frail aged.

In collaboration with our members, the peak carer organisations in each state and territory, we collectively form the National Carer Network and are an established infrastructure that represents the views of carers at the national level.

Our vision is an Australia that values and supports all carers, where all carers should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as other Australians to enjoy optimum health, social and economic wellbeing and participate in family, social and community life, employment and education.

This includes carers:

- Who have their own care needs
- Who are in multiple care relationships
- Who have employment and/or education commitments
- Aged under 25 years (young carers)
- Aged over 65 years, including 'grandparent carers'
- From culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- Who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex (LGBTIQ+)
- Who are living in rural and remote Australia; and
- Who are no longer in a caring role (former carers).

Our **purpose** is to influence national policy, community and government's understanding and support of carer issues.

Our **vision** is an Australia that values and supports all carers.

Our **Patron** is His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia.

FROM THE CHAIR

Steve Sant

I commenced as Chair in November 2021, taking on the role from Sonia Rutnam. For most of the 2021/22 year the organisation focussed on continuing work with the Federal Government to improve the lives of Australia's 2.65 million carers, whose health and mental wellbeing is so often impacted through the work they do to support the people they love.

Toward the end of the year was a Federal election and change of Government. In a pre-election survey the incoming Labor Government undertook, among other things, to review the *Carer Recognition Act* 2010 and introduce a National Carer Strategy in its first term in office. These are two fundamental steps to introducing much-needed reform and give Australia's carers a great reason to be optimistic – it is an opportunity, in our view, to highlight areas requiring attention and to plan and implement policies that will make a significant difference in carers' lives.

This year we commissioned with our members economic modelling that resulted in the *Caring Costs Us* report, showing that Australia's carers are significantly disadvantaged at retirement

age in terms of their superannuation savings and their lifetime earnings. We are discussing this report with the Government and proposing a number of corrective measures that would make a significant difference to the financial and economic security of carers.

The Board has continued to work well together during the year, and we welcomed new members from Tasmania, South Australia and Victoria. One of the main tasks this year was to accept the resignation of an outgoing CEO and to recruit a replacement. There was a period of five months when Melanie Cantwell, Director of Governance and Company Secretary, acted as CEO before the arrival of Alison Brook in May. The Board has expressed its deep appreciation to the Carers Australia team for its care, skill and diligence in continuing to be highly productive during a year of change.

We look forward in the coming year to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Carers Australia in 2023 and to our continued advocacy for Australia's carers.



CEO MESSAGE

Alison Brook

The Carers Australia team has done a magnificent job over the past year in our ongoing work to advocate for the interests of Australia's unpaid carers.

The Programs team continue to work with young carers through the Young Carer Network and administer the Young Carer Bursary Program, a \$3,000 contribution for the academic year to support young carers to stay in education and training. For the 2022 academic year a record 1,848 bursaries were provided, funded by the Australian Department of Social Services.

Other programs focused on barriers to employment for carers who identify as female, resources to assist carers to engage with digital health systems and raise awareness of medicine safety, and support for parents and carers of children under the age of 7 years living with disability.

We also launched *Secret Life of Carers* Podcast, initially focused on carers of people living with mental illness and/or psychosocial disability to connect with other carers, assess and monitor their own wellbeing, and engage with online resources which promote self-care.

The policy team set an unrelenting pace, responding to many inquiries, stakeholders, Royal Commissions, the Productivity Commission, Senate and Joint Parliamentary Committees, representing the views and interests of Australia's carers. They also facilitate a National Policy Forum with key stakeholders and manage the annual Carer Wellbeing Survey.

The organisation continued work during several months of tumult, through COVID lockdown and as one CEO departed several months before the arrival of the new CEO – and the subsequent job of settling me into my new role.

They are a superb group of professional women who are passionate about the wellbeing of carers, with many having a lived-experience of being a carer themselves. I look forward to working with them over coming years.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-23

OUR GOALS



Goal 1 Advocacy for Carers

Carers Australia has a national leadership role focussed on carer issues both current and emerging



Goal 2 Engagement with Community

There is strong community awareness and recognition of the diversity in carer roles and carers in diverse communities



Goal 3 Strengthen evidence base to shape national policy and dialogue on national carer issues

A research agenda that creates impact and change through identifying carer needs nationally



Goal 4 Sustainability of Carers Australia

Carers Australia is an effective, efficient and sustainable organisation

POLICY AND ADVOCACY

Carers Australia continued to advocate for better recognition of carers. We highlight there is a need to increase knowledge and the evidence-base about carers and the caring role, across sectors, settings and services to inform policy and practice development, and actively collaborate on **research** and data-focused activities in partnership with many organisations.

With the ongoing impact of **COVID-19**, we have continued to advocate on the impact on carers. This has included decreased services during public health measures, the specific information needs of carers, the inclusion of carers as a priority group within the vaccine and booster rollout, access to testing and antivirals and issues related to the immunisation history statement. We also provided up-to-date Government advice to carers via our communication channels weekly

Carers Australia remains active in the ongoing reform of **aged care** following release of our analysis of the Australia Government response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Final Report. We continued as a Sponsor member of the National Aged Care Alliance, and worked with stakeholders, including in development and subsequent reviews as a co-signatory to the Industry Code for Visiting Residential Aged Care during COVID-19.

Disability sector reform remained a key focus area with release of the Australian Disability Strategy, many consultations processes by the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), the Parliament of Australia Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme, and the continued work of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. We worked with stakeholders across the disability sector, particularly the Disability Representative Organisations.

We continue to highlight that carers need support for their own **mental health**, where mental health services often focus on the needs of the consumer without considering that the person providing care may also require support, and in fact may also be a consumer of mental health services.

Carers Australia also continued as a member of the International Alliance of Carer Organisations (IACO) and was involved in promoting the Global Carer Well-Being Index; in 2021 this was 'Who Cares for Carers? Perspectives on COVID-19 Pressures and Lack of Support.'

Along with Carers NSW and two carers, we were fortunate to be represented at a Garden Party at Government House in Sydney with Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, The Princess Royal in April. The invitation for carer representation to the event is based on HRH's work as President of the UK Carers Trust, and after starting the Princess Royal Respite Fund for Carers in 2021 to mark her 70th birthday.

NATIONAL POLICY ADVISORY GROUP

The Carers Australia National Policy Advisory Group (NPAG) consists of representatives from each Member organisation, with the purpose to provide an efficient and transparent mechanism for collaboration across the National Carer Network on carer issues, policy, and accompanying advocacy.

In 2021-22 NPAG met 5 times in addition to ongoing engagement in submission development, sharing of information and other processes between meetings.

A major focus in 2021-22 was on the **economic and financial security** of carers. Carers Australia and the National Carer Network commissioned and released the *Caring Costs Us Report: The economic impact on lifetime income and retirement savings of informal carers* to highlight the economic impact of unpaid care, specifically, lost income during working life and the longer-term reduction in accruing superannuation which affects retirement savings.

Removing barriers and supporting Australia's 2.65 million carers to participate in flexible and appropriate paid work is pivotal to enabling their social, community and economic participation. We also commenced work with the Productivity Commission on the Carers Leave Inquiry after it was announced in February and will continue to engage in this important process into 2022-23, noting we want to see the valuable social and economic contribution of all carers recognised through Carers Leave, not only those caring for someone over the age of 65 years.

WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT

In preparation for the May 2022 **Federal Election** we released a Federal Election Platform and surveyed and received responses from the major parties, 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.

We continue to advocate for a **National Carers Strategy** and will work with government as a priority in 2022-23 after the Labour government committed to this within their first term in the Pre-Election Survey.

A 2022-23 pre-budget Submission was provided to Treasury in January 2022 and following the Budget in March we released the *Federal Budget 2022-23 – What it means for carers* report.

In addition to numerous submissions, Carers Australia in 2021-22 were represented on 24 formal government committees and participated in over 30 additional co-design, engagement or evaluation activities through roundtables, forums and workshops across government.

On average, by age 67
**PRIMARY CARERS
WILL LOSE**

\$175,000

IN SUPERANNUATION

\$392,500

IN LIFETIME EARNINGS



SOURCE: CARING COSTS US: THE ECONOMIC IMPACT ON LIFETIME INCOME AND RETIREMENT SAVINGS OF INFORMAL CARERS - A REPORT FOR CARERS AUSTRALIA

SUBMISSIONS

Select Committee on Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Inquiry and appeared before the Committee.

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee Inquiry into the Social Services Legislation Amendment (Consistent Waiting Periods for New Migrants) Bill 2021 and appeared before Committee.

Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee Inquiry into the Purpose, intent and adequacy of the Disability Support Pension and appeared before the Committee.

Senate Community Affairs Reference Committee Inquiry into the provision of GP and related primary health services to outer metropolitan, rural, and regional Australians.

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee Inquiry on the Social Security Amendment (Improved Child to Adult Transfer for Carer Payment and Carer Allowance) Bill 2022.

Senate Community Affairs Legislation Committee Inquiry on the Social Security Legislation Amendment (Workforce Incentive) Bill 2022.

Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) on the Proposed NDIS legislative improvements and the Participant Service Guarantee.

Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability - Institutional Economic Neglect of People with Disability Issues paper.

Implementing the successor plan to the National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2009-2020 Consultation paper.

Discussion Paper: Primary Health Reform Steering Committee - Recommendations to the Australian Government's Primary Health Care 10 Year Plan, and subsequent Primary Health Care 10-Year Plan Consultation Draft.

National Disability Insurance Agency - Home and Living: An ordinary life at home Consultation paper, and Support for Decision Making Consultation Paper.

Review of the Disability Support Pension (DSP) Impairment Tables.

Australian Medical Research and Innovation Strategy 2021-2026 and the related Australian Medical Research and Innovation Priorities.

National Medicines Policy Review Discussion Paper.

Serious Incident Response Scheme in Commonwealth funded In-Home Aged Care Final Consultation Paper

Care Sector Regulatory Alignment Consultation Paper, and subsequent Care and Support Sector Code of Conduct Consultation Paper.

Strengthening Aged Care Provider Governance Discussion Paper.

Review of the *Workplace Gender Equality Act*.

The next National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children and attended the National Summit on Women's Safety.

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care Draft NSQHS Standards user guide for acute and community mental health services.

Productivity Commission's Issues Paper on Indirect Employment in Aged Care.

Draft Clinical Practice Guidelines for Appropriate Use of Psychotropic Medications in People Living with Dementia and in Residential Aged Care.

National Mental Health Commission Blueprint for Mentally Health Workplaces.

Australian Cancer Plan.

CARER POLICY FORUM

The Carer Policy Forum continued and met 3 times in this period to provide an advisory function to the Australian Department of Social Services for cross-sector dialogue, to enable exploration of issues and longer-term enhancements on carer-related policy that cuts across different government portfolios.

Membership of the Carer Policy Forum is Carers Australia, Carers South Australia, Carers Queensland, Mental Health Australia, Mental Health Carers Australia, Older Persons Advocacy Network, Wellways, Palliative Care Australia, Children and Young People with Disability Australia, Disability Advocacy Network Australia, Federation of Ethnic Communities Council Australia, and Family and Relationship Services Australia.

CARER WELLBEING SURVEY

National Carers Week 2021 saw release of results from the first Carer Wellbeing Survey after achieving 5,808 responses in early 2021.

We engaged the University of Canberra in collaboration with the Australian Department of Social Services to design and develop survey that aimed to better understand how many people are providing different forms of care across Australia, the needs of carers, and if the Australian Government's Carer Gateway is appropriately reaching carers.

The 2022 survey was undertaken over February and March 2022 with results available in 2022-23.

We would like to thank all those carers who took the time to complete the survey, and our stakeholders for supporting communication through their channels.

ONLY
19%
OF CARERS CAN
EASILY **ORGANISE**
FAMILY OR FRIEND
SUPPORT



35%
OF CARERS OFTEN
OR ALWAYS **FEEL**
LONELY



CARERS ARE
2.5x
MORE LIKELY TO HAVE
LOW WELLBEING
AND MUCH HIGHER
PSYCHOLOGICAL
DISTRESS, COMPARED
TO THE AVERAGE
AUSTRALIAN



52%
OF CARERS HAVE
VERY POOR
HOUSEHOLD
FINANCIAL
WELLBEING



NATIONAL CARERS WEEK 2021

National Carers Week (NCW) is funded by the Australian Department of Social Services and was held between 10 – 16 October 2021 with the theme ‘Millions of Reasons to Care’.

Due to the ongoing uncertainty surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, activities moved to online formats.

Despite this we were pleased that across Australia there was still a significant number of events by the National Carer Network and other organisations, community groups and supporters. Many were listed on the National Carers Week website caresweek.com.au had more than 200,000 page views in the week.

The theme was showcased by individual stories from every-day carer ambassadors illustrating the diversity of caring roles and contexts. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, filming was entirely remote, and each ambassador was sent a camera pack to film themselves undertaking their caring responsibilities ‘vlog style’. Cumulatively the ambassador videos were viewed more than 534,000 times. People were also encouraged to share their own ‘Millions of Reasons to Care’ ‘by adding their stories to the website.

Our patron, the Governor General His Excellency the Honourable David Hurley provided a video message to launch the week on 10 October, and the Prime Minister, the Hon Scott Morrison distributed a written message to carers. Many other Members of Federal and State/Territory Parliament also provided media release and messages.

The results of the first Carer Wellbeing Survey were released, in addition to a number of resources including a factsheet aimed at schools to assist in the identification of young carers.



We had a strong media presence across TV, radio and print, including a segment on Channel 10’s The Project, and our ambassadors did over 40 interviews. Social media also generated significant results across all platforms – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube with over 1.1 million impressions.

We would like to thank our carer ambassadors, the National Carer Network and stakeholder who supported our materials and events, as well as all of the organisations, community groups and individuals that participated in National Carers Week.

NEWS & MEDIA

Throughout the financial year Carers Australia developed and rolled-out a new communications strategy for external communications and we maintained a strong public presence during 2020-21 through interviews, media releases, a regular online newsletter and social media postings on issues of concern to carers.

The **website** carersaustralia.com.au had over 414,000 page views. The top 4 webpages were:

- Support for Carers>Centrelink payments for carers
- About carers>Who is a carer
- Support for carers>Carer Gateway
- NDIS and carers>Support for families and carers

Staff presented at a number of conferences virtually including two keynote addresses, at the National Dementia & Aged Care Reform Conference, and the Taiwanese Association of Family Caregivers 2021 Annual Conference on Carers.

Issued weekly to 5,328 subscribers, the **Carers National News e-newsletter** provided a COVID-19 update, information on our work, relevant national news items affecting carers, research and consultation opportunities and the activities of other organisations.

Our **social media** engagement has grown significantly with new followers across all platforms and remains a keyway for us to engage with carers and the broader community.



over 6.7 million impressions



over 40,800 impressions



over 7,500 impressions

MEDIA RELEASES

Millions of Reasons to Care – National Carers Week 2021

Carers Australia Office Closure COVID-19

Aged care consumer bodies welcome new visitor access principles to set national standard that puts older Australians first (joint release)

Older Australians advocates urge Senate to pass Aged Care Reform Bill (joint release)

A little support makes a big difference this Dementia Action Week

Celebrating Carers - National Carers Week

The importance of having access to support for unpaid carers is clear

Calls for GPs to help improve carer wellbeing this National Carers Week

Help identify hidden young carers this National Carers Week

Carers Australia thanks outgoing Chair and CEO

Joint statement on Equal Access to Assistive Technology (joint release)

Who cares for carers?

New survey looks at less known effects of medicines (Joint release)

Carers Australia Welcomes New CEO

Productivity Commission Inquiry into Carers Leave welcome but it must be for all carers

Let's be clear on the value of carers

Who cares for carers? Not this budget

Caring Costs Us report finds average lost earnings and superannuation is over \$567,000

Carers are \$17,700 worse off every year in superannuation payments

Australia's 2.65 million carers urged to weigh up their vote - responses to Carers Australia's election survey

Caring for carers in the new Ministry

Carers Australia appreciates Bronte Campbell's support on Celebrity Apprentice

PROGRAMS AND PROJECTS

Despite the challenging conditions of the ongoing pandemic, Carers Australia continued to deliver a wide range of programs and projects to support carers.

CARING THROUGH COVID SUPPORTING THE MENTAL HEALTH OF CARERS

In partnership with Mental Health Australia and Mental Health Carers Australia we wrapped up the #CaringThroughCovid project which commenced in late 2020 with funding provided by the Australian Department of Health through the National Mental Health and Wellbeing Pandemic Response Plan.

The project encouraged carers of people living with mental illness and/or psychosocial disability to connect with other carers, assess and monitor their own wellbeing, and take part in and engage with online resources which promote self-care and wellbeing.

This included a social media campaign, access to the Personal Wellbeing Index self-assessment tool, and an online mindfulness program developed with carers and delivered by a Mental Health Social Worker. The program was available live (over 4,000 registrations), on demand and was translated into Auslan and written transcripts to increase the accessibility. It is still available via the Carers Australia website.

Additionally, we produced *The Secret Life of Carers* podcast with Jamila Rizvi, a series showcasing the experiences of five carers of people living with mental illness and/or psychosocial disability through the pandemic. This had over 2,000 listens in the first two months and continues to attract new listens.



MEDICINES SAFETY

In this period we were fortunate to again work with the Therapeutic Goods Administration on a smoking cessation and nicotine vaping products campaign, following previous work related to opioid safety. The aim of the campaign was to raise awareness of the regulatory changes that require a prescription to legally purchase nicotine vaping products, as it was identified that many carers may be sourcing products for the person they are caring for. In addition, with ongoing isolation periods ordering online had increased, as well as the potential for people to turn to vaping inside rather than smoke cigarettes within the home.

Materials were also aimed at supporting people to quit smoking, and included a series of factsheets and an animation which were both launched on our website for World No Tobacco Day on 31 May 2022.

BETTER START FOR CHILDREN WITH A DISABILITY INITIATIVE

Carers Australia finished activity under the Better Start Initiative in 2021-22, after being involved for over ten years and with full commencement of the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Funded by the Australian Department of Social Services, we supported Carers South Australia and Carers Tasmania to deliver workshops to provide information and support to families and carers of children with disability (aged 0-7 years). Additional Carer Information Sessions were also facilitated by our member organisations in the Northern Territory, Victoria and Queensland to supplement the supports being received by a child with disability in these jurisdictions.

We developed a new series of our *The Secret Life of Carers* podcast, building on success of the first series. This second season was a four-part 'Early Childhood Edition' and again hosted by Jamila Rizvi, launching in February 2022. The podcast featured carers, parents and supporters of children living with disabilities and/or have gone through the early intervention process and was published on all major podcast streaming services, and on the Carers Australia website.



DIGITAL HEALTH LITERACY

Carers Australia continued work with the Australian Digital Health Agency to provide information and advice to carers and upskill the Agency to better understand the needs of carers. This included activities to support advance care planning and National Advance Care Planning Week, information on the process to become a nominated or authorised representative for the My Health Record, accessing My.Gov and a series of 'audiograms' to build community awareness of digital health. We also collected data on use of My Health Record and other areas related to vaccination records and digital literacy in the 2022 Carer Wellbeing Survey.

'WOMEN WHO CARE' EMPLOYMENT HUB

Work commenced on a communication and capacity building project for both carers who are women and employers, and we established an 'online hub' of information, resources and connections. The aim is to support workforce participation and increase awareness of the strengths and value of employing carers and supporting them to maintain employment alongside their caring responsibilities. This funding has been provided for three years through the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's Women's Leadership and Development Program.

The project is underpinned by significant research into the needs of carers who are women, and the barriers and enablers to gaining or maintaining paid employment. We look forward to building on this work in the years to come. We encourage any employers who wish to be involved in the project to reach out to Carers Australia.

YOUNG CARERS NETWORK

Carers Australia continued to deliver the Young Carers Network (YCN) on behalf of the Australian Department of Social Services. This is a national resource to raise young carer awareness, provide information, direct young carers to appropriate pathways for support and work towards improving the services and supports available for young carers.

New YCN website (youngcarersnetwork.com.au) branding was implemented and we continued Young Carers Connect, a safe online space for young carers to find support, share, listen and engage with each other, after a pilot in 2020-21 to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. 37 sessions were provided and professionally monitored by Relationships Australia Canberra and Region, with each session designed to be available to all young carers cross Australia digitally, ensuring that Indigenous and culturally diverse young carers are included and provided with access to language services when required.

YOUNG CARERS BURSARY PROGRAM

The Young Carer Bursary Program (YCBP) is a component of the Young Carer Network and supports young carers to either continue, or return to, their education. The program offers a minimum of 1,000 bursaries each school year worth \$3,000 each.

Applications for the 2022 school year opened in August and due to the increased response, we were able to increase the number of bursaries to 1,848 in liaison with the Department of Social Services.

An independent review was undertaken by the University of New South Wales – Centre for Social Impact. Recommendations to improve and advance YCBP are being implemented from 2022-23.



This includes launching a new application portal through the YCN website for 2023 applications, to facilitate a smoother application process and streamlined communication.

The *Young Carer Bursary Information Pack - Young Carers, their families and friends* resource was developed and translated into the top nine languages of YCBP recipients in 2020:

- Arabic
- Traditional Chinese
- Dari
- Karen
- Simplified Chinese
- Pashto
- Farsi
- Turkish, and
- Vietnamese.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank members of the YCBP Independent Assessment Panel for their valuable contributions to this program.

ABOUT US

The Carers Australia office is on the Lands of the Ngunnawal people as the traditional custodians of the ACT and surrounding region. We acknowledge First Nations peoples and communities as the traditional custodians of the land we work on, and pay our respects to elders past, present and emerging.

The impact of the pandemic continued in 2021-22 and all employees moved to working from home with the ACT Government lockdown from 12 August 2021. Our COVID-19 Safety Plan was maintained and reviewed as circumstances changed, and we conducted regular wellbeing check-ins.

Carers Australia was established by our members in 1993 as the peak body for Australia's unpaid carers.

Our members are the carer organisations in each state and territory. Collectively we form the National Carer Network to collaborate in advocacy and support of carers across Australia.

OUR MEMBERS:

THE NATIONAL CARER NETWORK



OUR STAFF

The Board and CEO recognise the experience and dedication of its team, and wish to acknowledge the staff in 2021-22 as the organisation transitioned to a new CEO during a change of government, and with ongoing COVID-19 impacts.

As a small organisation, we pride ourselves on encouraging a supportive and collaborative culture. We seek to attract, develop and retain high-quality people with the skills and capabilities to achieve our strategic objectives, and behaviours that are consistent with our values.

OUR VALUES



LEADERSHIP



EXCELLENCE



INTEGRITY



INNOVATIVE



INCLUSIVE



KINDNESS

We saw a number of staff leave for further opportunities and welcomed wonderful new additions to the team.

Staff at 30 June 2022 were:

Alison Brook, CEO

Melanie Cantwell, National Director-
Corporate Governance

Kelly Gourlay, National Director - Policy
& Strategy

Katie Shoemark, Acting National
Director - Programs & Operations

Sue Elderton, Director - Aged Care Policy

Anne Muldowney, Aged Care Policy
Adviser

Young Carer Network Lead

Bronwyn Mackinder, Project
Coordinator

Lauren Ritchie, Communications &
Project Officer

Felicity Wilkins, Corporate Services
Manager

GOVERNANCE

Carers Australia is governed by a volunteer Board of directors, consisting of eight directors nominated by the member state and territory carer organisations and up to two independent directors. Additional directors may be co-opted on the basis of their skills and experience.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 17 November 2021. Individual biographies for our Board of Directors can be accessed on our [website](#).

Directors of Carers Australia at any time during or since the end of the financial year were:

Jennifer Davies (from February 2020 to November 2021)

Nick Field (from February 2022)

Sue Ham (from November 2021)

Bruce Howle, Deputy Chair, Finance Audit and Risk Management Committee Chair (from November 2019)

Callum Ingram (from November 2019 to February 2022)

Cathy O'Toole (from August 2020)

Marie-Louise Pearson OAM (from July 2020)

Sonia Rutnam, Chairperson to 2021 AGM (from November 2019 to November 2021)

Steve Sant, Chairperson from 2021 AGM (from October 2020)

Brett Walker, Deputy Chair to 2021 AGM (from November 2019 to November 2021)

Linda Wayman (from April 2020)

Lyn Woodforde (from November 2021)

The Board's focus in this period was on CEO recruitment following Liz Callaghan leaving the organisation at the end of 2021, as well as the Federal Election.

After a period with Melanie Cantwell, National Director - Corporate & Governance as Acting CEO, Alison Brook commenced as CEO on 9 May 2022.

FINANCIALS

Financial for the year ending 30 June 2022 are available from our [website](#).



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