

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## Let's #EmbraceEquity for carers this International Women's Day

This International Women's Day 2023, we are encouraged to start conversations about why equal opportunity is not enough, what gender equity means, and how it can lead to equality.

In celebration, Carers Australia is recognising the integral role women have as carers within Australia and that gender equity cannot be achieved without adequate support for carers.

There are over 2.65 million carers in Australia and data shows that 7 out of 10 primary carers are women. Across nearly all age groups, women carers outnumber men. Many women already face disadvantage due to ongoing discrimination on the basis of gender. This discrimination can take many forms such as the gender pay gap, barriers to full and equal participation in the workforce, and exclusion in relation to domestic and other family responsibilities.

For the many women who also take on the role of carer to a family member or friend, they may face additional obstacles in accessing opportunities and maintaining their own wellbeing and financial security.

"Every day, carers do unpaid work that is essential to our society and our economy. The majority of the carers fulfilling this work are women." said Alison Brook, Carers Australia CEO. "They do not need to be facing additional disadvantage for undertaking this vital role."

Despite the contribution carers make, carers encounter ongoing barriers impacting on their physical, mental, and financial wellbeing. Carers Australia's [Caring Cost Us report](#) found that:

- Many carers struggle to maintain participation in paid employment. Working-aged carers are less likely than their peers to be employed, and carers are often underemployed.
- Being a primary carer is associated with an average loss of \$392,500 in lifetime earnings and \$175,000 in superannuation at age 67.

Additionally, the [2022 Carer Wellbeing survey](#) found that carers are heavily impacted by stress, with more than half of carers experiencing low wellbeing.

"Understanding the impacts of the caring role is just the start," said Ms Brook. "We must make it a priority to provide accessible and sufficient supports for Australia's carers in order to enable their participation in society. Equitable action is necessary for inclusion and belonging. This is as true for carers as it is for women everywhere."



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