

**MEDIA RELEASE: Tuesday 10 December 2024**

## **NATIONAL CARER STRATEGY WELCOMED, CONCRETE ACTIONS FOR CARERS NEEDED**

The National Carers Network welcomes today's release of the [National Carer Strategy](#) and thanks Minister Amanda Rishworth for delivering on this election commitment, as well as the Department of Social Services for its significant role in the development of the Strategy.

"The Strategy identifies the issues and challenges that carers grapple with every day and provides a blueprint for the future," said Carers Australia Chairperson David Quilty. "The crucial next step is to build on this important work with concrete actions that make a meaningful difference in the lives of carers."

Unpaid carers are critical to Australia's future; over 3 million Australians provide care and support to one or more loved ones who live with disabilities, health conditions, addiction, are frail and aged or require palliative care. Without their contributions of at least \$78 billion annually our economy would collapse.

The National Carer Strategy was informed by consultation with Carers Australia and our direct engagement with hundreds of carers and 28 stakeholders in every state and territory across 55 activities that involved diverse cohorts (including young carers, elderly carers, carers with disability, LGBTQIA+ carers, First Nations carers and remote/Outback carers).

"The clear message from these consultations was that carers need tangible commitments to assist with their financial security, health and wellbeing, and access to carer supports, including respite," said Mr Quilty. "The Strategy reflects these priorities, and there is now a need for clear actions and timelines to address them with the degree of urgency required."

The cost-of-living crisis is having an acute impact on carers, with current support barely covering day-to-day living expenses, prescriptions and doctor visits, and higher housing, transportation and other carer costs. The [2024 National Survey of Carers](#) found nearly 60% of carers experience financial stress – not surprising, given they lose on average \$567,000 in earnings and superannuation over their lifetimes.

The National Carers Network welcomes the additional 10,000 funded counselling services for carers in the Strategy as well as the commitments to extend the successful [Carer-Inclusive Workplace Initiative](#) and the [Young Carer Bursary](#) (YCB). However, there is an urgent need for YCB top-up funding so young carers are not denied this lifeline in 2025.

"Ahead of the 2025 Federal election, Carers Australia asks every politician to commit to tangible actions that will make a meaningful difference for carers," said Annabel Reid, Carers Australia's CEO.

"Our [Election Asks](#) align with and build on the National Carer Strategy," said Ms Reid. "We are committed to working with the Albanese Government and all political parties to enhance the financial security, health, wellbeing, and services and support for carers."