

ANNUAL REPORT

2024-25



AN AUSTRALIA THAT VALUES AND SUPPORTS ALL CARERS

This report highlights Carers Australia’s activity, progress and achievements throughout 2024-25.

This report, the Carers Australia financial statements and previous years’ reports for are available online at www.carersaustralia.com.au.

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Carers Australia acknowledges Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities as the traditional custodians of the lands we work on and pays respect to Elders past, present and emerging.

As an inclusive organisation we celebrate people of all backgrounds, genders, sexualities, cultures, bodies and abilities.

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ABOUT CARERS AUSTRALIA

Carers Australia is the national, peak body representing Australia's 3 million carers (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2022), who provide unpaid or informal care and support to family members and friends living with disability, chronic conditions, mental ill health, drug or substance abuse, terminal illness or who are frail and aged.

ABOUT CARERS

Unpaid or family and friend carers are people who provide assistance to someone living with disability, illness, chronic conditions or age-related frailty.

Carers are an essential part of Australia's care systems and economy. Australian society as we know it functions partly due to the often-invisible contributions of carers.

If the work of carers were paid at market rates, the annual cost would have equalled \$77.9 billion in 2020 (Deloitte 2020). Credible estimates place this figure at above \$100 billion in 2025.



CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME

2024-25 has been a year of change, which I am confident will position Carers Australia to achieve practical outcomes for Australia's 3.1 million carers in the years ahead.

As the national peak body for carers, the primary task of Carers Australia is to advocate for changes that make a tangible difference to the lives of carers.

The Young Carer Bursary Program is an example of this advocacy succeeding. This program was initially funded to deliver 1736 bursaries in 2024-25. Carers Australia's strong advocacy resulted in the number of bursaries being increased by 70% to 2968. This means more young carers are receiving the support they need to balance their education and caring commitments.

Carers Australia's focus is on achieving further outcomes like this for carers of all ages. To do so, we need strong relationships across government and the broader carer community. The re-election of the Albanese Government in May 2025 provides the opportunity to work with a second-term national government, which has a strong focus on lifting productivity and the care economy.

Carers Australia firmly believes that carers are an integral part of the nation's productivity agenda; they make an enormous economic contribution as carers; and they are skilled and resilient members of any paid workforce. Supporting carers to undertake their caring responsibilities and enabling their participation in the paid workforce is better for carers, and better for the nation.

After the election, Carers Australia and the National Carer Network jointly undertook a review of our strategy. As a result, we have agreed to focus our advocacy on three core themes: Remuneration (financial security), Respite, and (systemic) Recognition of carers. These three themes will drive our advocacy work going forward.

We reaffirmed our commitment to working closely and collaboratively with the National Carer Network in everything we do. We are stronger and more effective when we work together. We also established a Policy and Advocacy Board Sub-Committee.

In December 2024, our Chairperson, Cathy O'Toole retired. I wish to express the Board's deep gratitude to Cathy for her strong leadership, untiring service, and passion for carers. I also want to thank our other retiring Board members during 2024-25, Bruce Howle (Deputy Chairperson and Chair of the FARM Committee), Steve Sant (former Chairperson of Carers Australia), Lyn Woodforde OAM from South Australia, and Marie-Louise Pearson OAM from the Northern Territory. All brought important skills and perspectives to the Board and have made a very meaningful contribution to the betterment of carers in Australia.

Last but certainly not least, I wish to thank our CEO, Annabel Reid and all the Carers Australia staff for their commitment both to the organisation and improving the lives of carers. It is a team effort, and we greatly appreciate the work you do.

David Quilty
Chairperson



CEO'S WELCOME

I want to share a story that highlights what Carers Australia is all about.

Earlier this year, we were preparing for an appearance at a Senate committee hearing about the new home care packages.

Our research had identified that of people on home care packages, more receive care from an unpaid (family or friend) carer compared with those who receive care from a paid support worker; we knew carers were vital to the system's function and sustainability.

We asked carers for their views on the system as part of the preparation.

One carer told us that the new system was one of the worst she had ever experienced in her life. She spoke of spending hours and hours on the phone, in the car, with her brother next to her, trying to navigate an aged care system that was letting down not only her mother, but also the two adult siblings caring for her. One day, she spent nine hours on the phone.

Carers Australia and others pushed hard for a solution – specifically, bringing aged care packages into effect earlier, so people could access support. It worked. The government announced the change, and people were able to access care and support they needed.

This highlights several things – firstly, the value Carers Australia can bring by connecting the experiences of carers with decision-makers in government. Secondly, that systems are not fit for purpose and drive carers to their wits' end.

Finally, this story shows the sheer resilience and generosity of spirit of carers. Not only to slog out hours on the phone working with

a difficult system, but then also share a personal story with Carers Australia in the hope of bringing about change for others.

The 2024-25 period has been one of operational growth and consolidation for Carers Australia. We continue to strengthen our advocacy capacity, including the engagement of Delta Advisory as government relations partner. This has helped lead to the reestablishment of the Parliamentary Friends of Carers group, which has been inactive for several years. This will prove a very valuable tool in highlighting carer issues with Ministers, advisers, Parliamentary Secretaries, Members of Parliament and Senators. (The re-establishment was completed outside the time period of this annual report).

As the Chair has referenced, Carers Australia and the National Carer Network also undertook a rigorous policy review following the May 2025 Federal Election, resulting in the identification of priority themes – Remuneration, Respite and Recognition.

It is essential to focus our agenda with these high-level priorities. When Carers Australia meets with a Minister, Treasurer or Prime Minister, those stakeholders do not want 20 or 30 ideas; they want three at most which they can have confidence will be worth pursuing.

I want to thank the Carers Australia Board for their leadership and support, and the National Carer Network CEOs for their advice and cooperation.

Annabel Reid
CEO



BOARD OF DIRECTORS



DAVID QUILTY
CHAIRPERSON

David is a successful strategist, trusted adviser and corporate affairs executive who has served with distinction at the highest levels of government, business and national industry associations for 25 years.

He served as National CEO of the Pharmacy Guild for more than six years and the national head of corporate affairs and government relations at Telstra for five years. David has led multi-billion-dollar negotiations, driven significant regulatory and policy change, run major national campaigns, advocated in the public arena, built organisational reputation and community and stakeholder support, and successfully led large and diverse teams.

Chief of staff and senior adviser at the highest level of the Federal Government working for a Prime Minister, Cabinet Minister and the Cabinet Office over ten years, he provides policy, political, legislative and tactical campaign advice across a broad range of portfolios, including communications, information technology, industrial relations, health, aged care, disability services, indigenous affairs, immigration, the environment and the arts.



SUE HAM
DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

Sue brings invaluable expertise in human service delivery, human centred design, public policy and corporate governance from a range of senior executive roles spanning 30 years in the public and not-for-profit sectors. She is passionate about public policy that contributes to innovative and quality services that deliver real outcomes for people.

Sue served as Chief Executive Officer for Colony 47 Incorporated and as a member of the Senior Executive Service at the National Disability Insurance Agency, including Tasmanian State Manager. She worked for the Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs in Canberra where her focus was on closing the gap, housing, disaster recovery and the National Partnership Agreement for remote Indigenous Housing.

She has also held the positions of President of the Tasmanian Council of Social Service, Vice President of the Australian Council of Social Service and President of Tagari Lia Community Living and Nexus Inc. Sue continues to serve as a non-executive director on a number of not-for-profit boards.

She joined the Board of Carers Australia in November 2021, representing Carers Tasmania.



LINDA WAYMAN
DIRECTOR

Linda is a non-executive director and Principal of a strategic communications and marketing business. She has over 40 years' experience in communications and marketing, both in the public and private sectors, and 25 years' experience as a Board member with several organisations.

Linda has a Master of Arts (Communications) degree from Monash University and currently sits on the Board of Carers WA. She cared for both her mother and father; her mother having suffered a stroke and her father being diagnosed with Alzheimer's soon after.

Linda joined the Carers Australia Board in April 2020.



TONY FITZGERALD
DIRECTOR

Tony has enjoyed an executive career in three organisations over his working life, NAB and State Trustees, with his most recent role being CEO of the Centacare, Catholic Diocese of Ballarat and Centacare Housing Services. Tony retired from Centacare Ballarat in December 2020.

As CEO of Centacare and Centacare Housing Services Tony was committed to increasing affordable housing on behalf of the homelessness, unemployed and disability sector. He strived to ensure Centacare delivered a broad range of programs to clients across the Diocese of Ballarat. He was a member of the Board of CatholicCare Victoria Tasmania, the Australian Catholic Housing Alliance, and was the former Chair of the Central Highlands Family Services Alliance.

As Managing Director of State Trustees, he spent over 11 years looking after people with a legally recognised mental or intellectual incapacity and managing all of their financial and legal affairs under statutory appointment from VCAT.

Prior to this, Tony spent over 25 years at the NAB both domestically and overseas working in senior positions in Marketing, Credit and Strategy & Planning.

Tony joined the Board of Carers Australia in January 2024, representing Carers Victoria.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



DAVID FAGAN
DIRECTOR

David has been a decade-long director of Carers Queensland and is a former editor-in-chief of Queensland's largest media outlet, The Courier-Mail. He is the author of four books and has worked as both an advisor and executive in the higher education and superannuation sectors since leaving full time work in the media. He is a Graduate of the AICD, serves as QLD chair of the National Heart Foundation and is a councillor of the Royal National Association which runs Queensland's largest community event, the Ekka.

David joined the Board of Carers Australia in January 2024, representing Carers Queensland.



TERRY MCEVOY
DIRECTOR

With over 25 years of experience in the Vocational Education sector, Terry is known for his strategic, operational, and leadership expertise.

In his current role as the Director of the Built Environment and Sustainability program area at RMIT University, Terry is engaged in developing and delivering high-quality strategic priorities and programs, as well as enriching teaching and learning experiences for young people from diverse range of backgrounds.

With a career spent working with young people entering the workforce, often for the very first time and a committed volunteer in local sport, Terry has developed a passion for ensuring that people are enabled to feel safe and respected. He is committed to learning and supporting a positive approach to strong mental health and suicide prevention.

A graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Terry works across a number of mental health organisations including Mind Blank, The IF Foundation, Aquinas Old Collegians Football club and in the past has been a serving board member and chair of Brodies Law foundation and served on the board of the Victorian Amateur Football Association.



PHIL MARTIN
DIRECTOR

Phil has extensive experience in developing and delivering high quality services to help people overcome social disadvantage. This has included ensuring successful development and implementation of long-term strategies for social change at state and national levels.

With over 35 years' experience undertaking key CEO, Executive, Board and strategic management roles, he has shaped strategy and policy for not-for-profit organisations at both the Federal and State levels.

Phil was appointed to the Carers Australia Board in November 2024 by Carers South Australia.



JANINA JANCU
DIRECTOR

Janina is currently the Chief Executive Officer of the University of Sydney Student Union, having formerly held Chief Operating Officer roles at ReachOut Australia, a digital youth mental health service and Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, Australia's preeminent cardiovascular research institute. She brings more than 30 years of experience as a senior executive in the not-for-profit, government and corporate sectors.

Janina has a Bachelor of Arts/Law from UNSW and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Sydney. She is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors. She has served as a Director of UNSW and Parkinson's NSW, and has acted in an advisory capacity for several not-for-profit boards.

She joined the Board of Carers Australia in February 2025 as the Carers NSW member appointed Director where she is a current Director.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



IAN YATES
DIRECTOR

Ian is an independent advocate and advisor on public policy in ageing, specialising in aged care, retirement living and retirement income policy. He is the principal of the consultancy CONSULT.AGEING. From January 2023 to January 2025 Ian was Acting Inspector-General of Aged Care in the Commonwealth Government. Prior to that Ian was Chief Executive of COTA Australia, the peak organisation for older Australians, and formerly Chief Executive of COTA SA 1989 – 2013.

Ian has been Chair of the Aged Care Council of Elders, a member of the National Aged Care Advisory Council, the Aged Care Quality and Safety Advisory Council, the Aged Care Financing Authority, the Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce, the Aged Care Sector Committee and its Aged Care Roadmap Committee, the ASIC Consumer Advisory Panel, the ACCC Consumer Committee, the Board of Liveable Housing Australia, the ATO Superannuation Industry Stewardship Group, and other federal bodies. He served on a number of hospital and regional health boards in SA and was a member of the SA Health Performance Council, Chair of the Cancer Council SA, and for 20 years a member of Flinders University Council, including 7 years as Deputy Chancellor. He is a Doctor of the University and Emeritus Deputy Chancellor, and a Member in the Order of Australia.

Ian is an Independent Board Director of the Carers Australia Board.



MEAGAN LAWSON
DIRECTOR

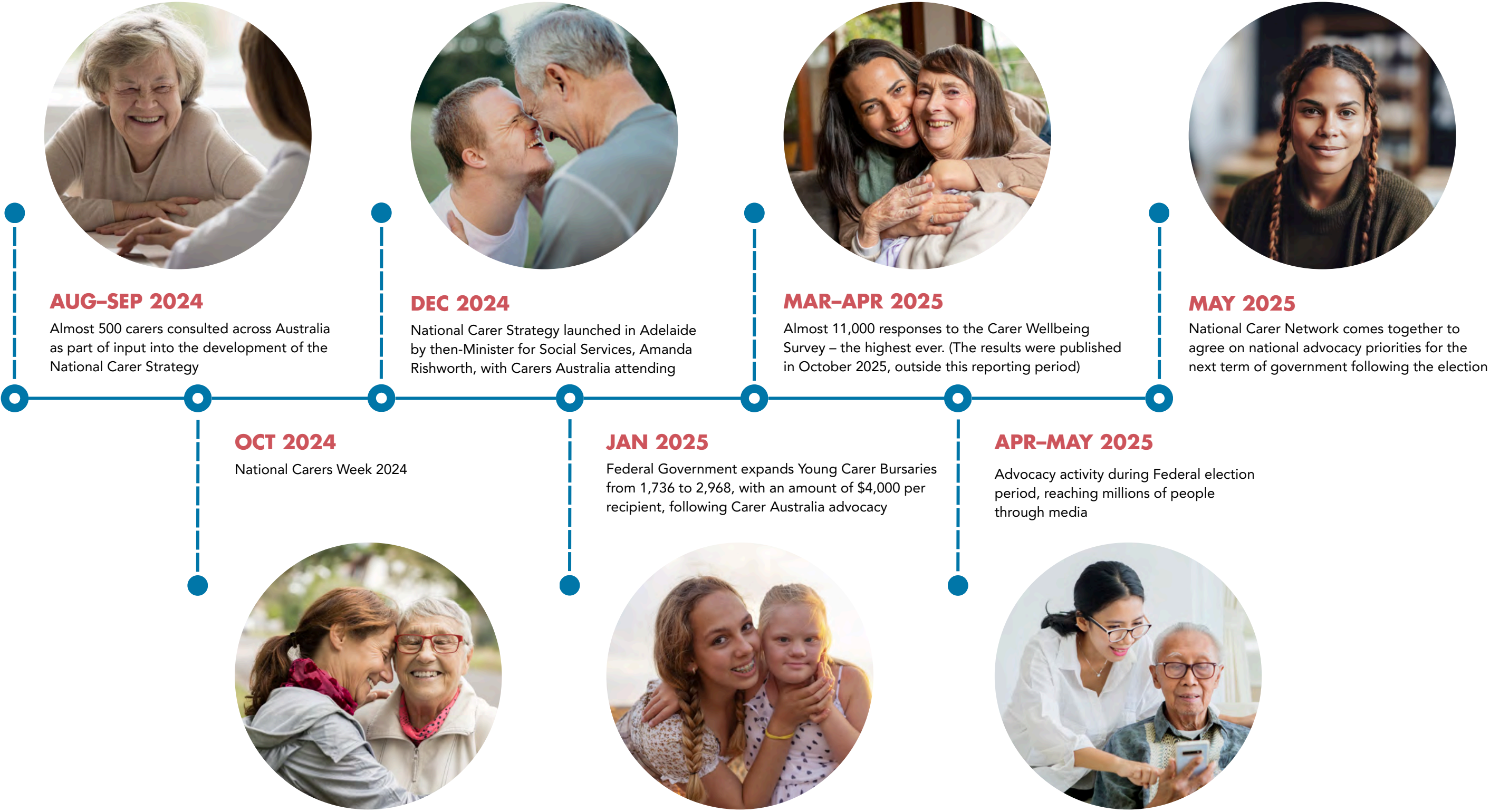
Meagan is a Government Relations, Corporate Affairs, Advocacy and Communications executive, with over 25 years of experience working across a broad range of public, private and not-for-profit organisations.

She currently works with the Pharmacy Guild as General Manager Government Relations and Advocacy, working closely with National Council to develop and implement the Government Relations and Stakeholder strategies.

A seasoned CEO, prior to joining the Guild Meagan was a Director at Nexus Public Affairs, where she worked with clients across a range of industries to support their interactions with government. She has worked with several Ministers and MPs in state and federal governments and has extensive skills in stakeholder engagement and consultation, advocacy and campaigning as well as media and communications experience.



WINS FOR CARERS AND THOSE THEY CARE FOR



ADVOCACY

FEDERAL ELECTION 2025

Carers Australia developed five key election asks to advocate for during the election period:

- Cost of living support
- Modelling of superannuation on the Carer Payment
- Young Carer Bursary expansion
- Carer Inclusive Workplace Initiative expansion
- Carer recognition at the point of diagnosis within healthcare systems

These were included in Carers Australia's pre-budget submission and published and promoted on all available channels (website, social media, earned media e.g. interviews) and communicated to all major political parties, as well as minor parties with higher numbers of candidates.

Carers Australia also used a digital tool to encourage members of the public to contact candidates in their electorates. 126 people used the tool; while the number of total contacts is not available due to data limitations, if an average of six candidates per electorate were reached and the total number of contacts with MPs equals more than 700.

Carers Australia also worked with media partner, Are Media, to publish feature pieces on carer issues during the election period. Stories were published in New Idea (500,000+ readership) and Women's Day (700,000+ readership). The partnership also involved three advertisements on Are Media's social media channels, reaching 235,000 people and generating 15,200 clicks. The biggest moment of traffic was the day before the election – Friday 2 May.

Carers Australia also facilitated a long-form feature piece in The Guardian, the fourth-biggest news website in Australia, published the day of the poll.

Other media activity during the election period included The Australian (4.4 million readership across print/online), Channel 10 News (204,000 viewers) and Channel Nine's Today Extra (174,000 viewers).

Following the re-election of the Albanese Government, Carers Australia worked to revive a Parliamentary Friends of Carers group which had been inactive in recent terms of Parliament. At the time of publication, the group is being revived; some of the work to do this took place within the 2024-25 period.

Also of note, following the re-election of the Albanese Government, responsibility for carers policy moved to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, having previously been with the Department of Social Services.



SUBMISSIONS

11 July 2024: Submission to the Establishment of a National Aged Care Mandatory Quality Indicator Program for in-home care

28 August 2024: Submission to the Department of Social Services on the draft list of NDIS supports

13 September 2024: Submission to the Department of Social Services on the National Carer Strategy Discussion Paper

27 September 2024: Submission to the Senate Community Affairs Committee on the Aged Care Bill 2024

5 November 2024: Submission to the Department of Social Services on the National Carer Strategy

5 December 2024: Submission to the Department of Health and Aged Care Consultation: Funding of Aged Care Services

6 December 2024: Submission to Department of Social Services on Foundational Supports

31 January 2025: 2025 Pre-Budget Submission to Treasury

20 February 2025: Submission to the ABS Consultation on Measuring the Labour contribution of unpaid care in the Labour Account

27 March 2025: Submission to the Productivity Commission Inquiry into the Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement

25 July 2025: Submission to the Economic Reform Roundtable on the productivity potential of 3 million carers

CARER WELLBEING SURVEY

The Carer Wellbeing Survey (CWS) is a national, annual survey open to carers aged 14 years and over. It aims to track wellbeing over time, identify risk and protective factors, and evaluate support services.

The 2025 Carer Wellbeing Survey collected data between 19 February and 30 April 2025. (The closing date was extended to allow more time for responses following Cyclone Alfred in Queensland.)

This year's survey involved 10,918 valid responses – a welcome increase on the previous year's equivalent figure of just over 9,000.

Overall, the findings suggest a continued decline in the health and wellbeing of Australia's unpaid carers since 2021, with worsening outcomes across physical and mental health, financial security, and social connection. Loneliness remains a key concern that has grown steadily over several years. Carers in high-intensity roles, those without workforce engagement, and those lacking employer support are particularly vulnerable to poor wellbeing and financial distress.

The 2025 CWS collected new data about young carers, Defence Force and veteran carers and past carers.

NATIONAL CARERS WEEK 2024

National Carers Week (NCW) has been an initiative of Carers Australia since 1993, delivered in collaboration with the National Carer Network, and with the Australian Department of Social Services providing the primary funding.

The 2024 National Carers Week campaign continued the 'Millions of Reasons to Care' theme for a fourth year. This year saw the addition of a National Carer Network agreed call to action of 'Show them you care'.

Activity included:

- A message from the Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese to Australia's carers, shared on social media and with stakeholders
- 120 media mentions of National Carers Week, with a total editorial reach of 71.5 million
- 43,061 views of the National Carers Week website
- A Carers Australia event in Canberra on 16 October, keynoted by writer and comedian Jean Kittson. This was attended by 40 stakeholders from Federal Government departments, peak bodies and parliamentarians. Then-Chair Cathy O'Toole and CEO Annabel Reid spoke to the importance of National Carers Week and launched the findings of the Carer Wellbeing Survey
- Carers Australia engaged in 7 webinars with Kindship, Australian Digital Health Agency, Australia Tax Office, Services Australia, Department of Veterans Affairs and CommBank
- The Carer-Inclusive Workplace Initiative celebrated its 1-year anniversary during National Carers Week. This was marked by a networking event in Melbourne attended by Minister for Social Services, Amanda Rishworth
- Evaluation showed almost half the Australian community were aware of National Carers Week, a clear understanding of the purpose of Carers Week and strong feeling towards the importance of promoting awareness in this area



CARER-INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE INITIATIVE

Carers Australia has been delivering the Carer-Inclusive Workplace Initiative (CIWI) since 2023. CIWI is funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Aging and aims to create more inclusive and supportive workplaces for the 3 million individuals who provide unpaid care in the community.

Over the course of the 24-25 financial year, Carers Australia partnered with Future Women to successfully deliver a substantial suite of programs to equip Australian employers with the tools and confidence to build carer-inclusive workplaces. Future Women delivered two live workshops for leaders and people managers, empowering them with practical skills to support carers within their teams. Alongside this, two targeted webinars for HR and People and Culture professionals provided actionable strategies and self-assessment tools to embed inclusive practices organisation-wide. Across all four events, 318 individuals attended from 282 unique organisations, a pleasing result. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive, with some feedback provided below:

"As a carer in the workplace and an active member of 2 staff networks on disability and inclusion in the workplace, I loved these conversations and I will be sharing some insight, tips and the upcoming webinar with the networks and my managers."
April 2025 webinar participant.

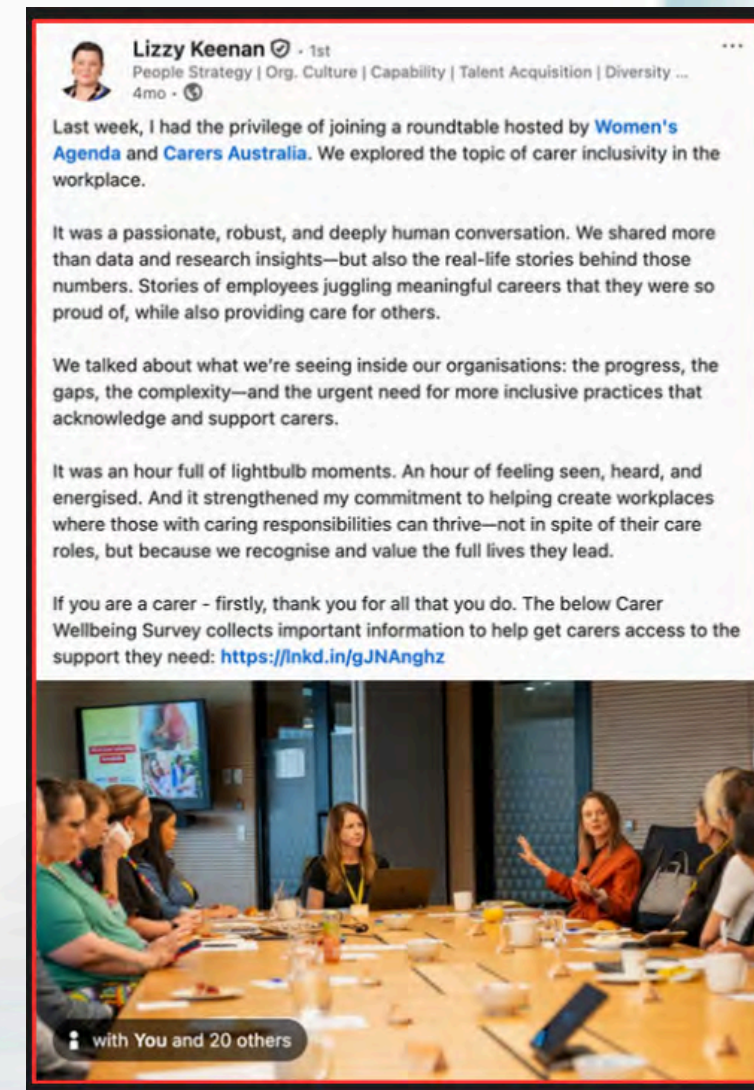
To extend reach, Future Women also integrated a flexible, on-demand e-learning module titled "Spotlight on: Caring for Caregivers" lesson into their Change Makers course, enabling broader access for individual learners and partner organisations. As of June 2025, 30 people had completed the lesson.

"I hadn't considered the impact of carers on inflexible work arrangements, and the biases carers encounter in most workplaces." LMS lesson feedback

"I was not aware that such a large portion of people are carers on top of their day jobs so from that perspective it was great to learn more about how it can be better supported in the workplace." LMS lesson feedback

In partnership with Women's Agenda, Carers Australia also hosted a roundtable event in April 2025. The roundtable brought together senior female leaders and specialists to explore innovative approaches to diversity, equity, inclusion, wellbeing, and advocacy. The discussion fostered meaningful connections, shared best practices, and identified actionable strategies for building more carer-inclusive workplaces.

As of 30 June 2025, 169 organisations are now recognised as carer-inclusive thanks to CIWI. Additionally, 412 organisations registered with CIWI and 245 organisations have completed self-assessments, demonstrating strong interest in the program.



YOUNG CARERS NETWORK

Young Carers Network (YCN) is a Carers Australia initiative, funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Aging. YCN provides a nationally coordinated resource to raise young carer awareness, provide information, and direct young carers to appropriate pathways for support.

The YCN website continues to offer substantial value to young carers, and saw a 280% increase in page views from the 23-24 financial year to the 24-25 financial year, with the average time spent also increasing by 94%.

This financial year also saw a focus on exploring the supports Young Carers need in schools. In May 2025, a group of 19 practitioners, including school counsellors, educators, youth workers, social workers, psychologists, and pastoral care providers, came together in Canberra for a focussed Roundtable discussion on school-aged Young Carers.

Hosted by Carers Australia, the Roundtable aimed to shape a national Young Carer Toolkit for those providing pastoral care to students with caring responsibilities. The Roundtable shared consistent and compelling insights from the frontlines of education and wellbeing. While schools are deeply committed to equity, practitioners navigate a system where Young Carers still often remain invisible – a system where practical tools, recognition, and tailored supports can make all the difference.

"The roundtable opened my eyes to a gap that currently exists in my place of work."

"Having lots of people with experience working with young carers. Hearing the passion people had."

"It was great to have a mix of professionals in the room to gain different perspectives."

After the Roundtable, a report titled "Pastoral care providers supporting young carers in schools: research findings" was developed, along with a pilot Young Carer Toolkit informed by recommendations from the Roundtable. The next steps to progress this work are currently being explored as they require further funding.



YOUNG CARER BURSARY

Young Carer Bursary (YCB) is a component of the Young Carers Network and supports young carers with a bursary to either continue, or return to, their education. It is delivered by Carers Australia and funded by the Department of Health, Disability and Aging. Carers Australia has been delivering YCB since 2015.

The Young Carer Bursary can be used for items such as school uniforms, textbooks, school tuition fees, fees for tertiary education, respite and more. The number of young carers in Australia is more than 390,000 – which equates to one in every classroom. For the 2025 bursary round, Carers Australia was funded for 1,736 applicants to receive \$3,768.

Following advocacy from Carers Australia, extra funding was announced in January 2025 by the then Minister of Social Services Minister Rishworth, Carers Australia was able to award 2,968 applicants a \$4,000 bursary.

"I want to send a huge thank you to the Young Carers Network for awarding my son one of last year's bursaries.

"At the time, I had just been diagnosed with malignant metastatic melanoma on top of over a decade with lupus, and he had started caring for me while I was undergoing immunotherapy infusion treatment, while also looking after his sister (who I'm normally a carer for). He made sure she got to all her medical appointments, kept the house running, managed with his dad flying interstate every fortnight, and still pushed through his final years at uni.

"After I had to leave work, things were really tight and the bursary helped him cover essentials like car rego, uni supplies for his computer science course, petrol, clothes for his uni prac job, and so much more. It was honestly a godsend.

"But more than that, it was recognition of everything he quietly did for our family. He never complained, never made us feel like a burden, and stayed calm and strong through it all, even when things were really tough. I'm beyond proud of our son and beyond grateful to you all. Thank you."





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Carers Australia is committed to transparency and accountability.
This annual report covers all activities during the financial year 2024/2025.



Carers Australia is a registered charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) with DGR status, meaning all Australian donations are fully tax deductible.