



Supporting Family Carers

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Service Providers Network News

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Australia's National Carer Strategy Released

The Carers Strategy is an important and valuable document which clearly articulates a series of strategies that will, no doubt, have a positive effect on the lives of carers.'

Carers Australia President, Tim Moore at the launch of the National Carer Strategy on the 3rd of August, 2011 thanked Ministers Macklin and Roxon and Senator McLucas for their contribution to making 'significant progress in redressing the challenges and difficulties faced by carers.'

Last year Carers Australia spent some time consulting with over 300 carers in cities, towns and communities across the country about what was most important to them and what they most needed.

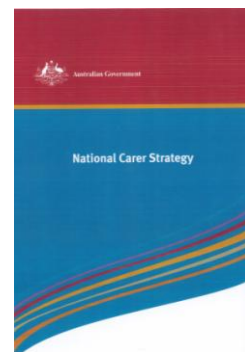
The National Carer Strategy has six priority areas:

- Recognition and Respect
- Information and Access
- Economic Security
- Services for Carers
- Education and Training
- Health and Wellbeing

The National Carer Strategy introduces six 'new' areas of funding over the next four years, including:

- \$10.3 million to continue Carer Adjustment Payment
- \$2.9 million to ensure fairer access to the Carer Supplement
- \$2.1 million to ensure fairer access to Bereavement Payment
- \$1.6 million over 2 years to fund a national and targeted campaign to raise public awareness of the role and contribution of carers
- \$1 million to hold a young carer festival in each state and territory.

Mr Moore said 'Carers felt that they needed recognition and support: from their communities but also from their doctors, from the service system, from the health care teams who were treating their loved ones.' Mr Moore also said that carers 'deserve respect as significant partners in care'.



The Carer Strategy recognises that carers need opportunities to participate in community and to have their health needs met.

This support needs to be available to all carers regardless of where they are living or who they are caring for.

Tim Moore said 'We thank the Gillard government for placing carers in the centre of the policy landscape and for showing that it does indeed know, care and act to achieve better outcomes for caring families.'

As a long term strategy for Australian carers Mr Moore said 'We look forward to working together with the Government to further refine and develop appropriate measures and implementation plans across all the key priority areas to respond to the unmet needs of carers.'

Mr Moore said 'Together we need to demonstrate a measurable improvement across the key priorities in an acceptable time frame for the carer community.'

These monitoring and reporting on progress of each of the priority areas will be undertaken by The Commonwealth Carers Forum on an annual basis to Council of Australian Governments (COAG).

To view the report visit www.carers.sa.asn.au, contact Carers SA on 8291 5600 or info@carers-sa.asn.au

Caring for Older Australians Productivity Commission Report

The focus of the Caring for Older Australians report released 8th August, 2011 is on the wellbeing of older Australians – promoting independence, providing choice and retaining their community agreement. A five year timeline is planned for transition to the new system. Carers Australia President Mr Moore said 'changes that improved access, care and choice for older Australians invariably also benefited and provided new options for their carers.'

The report recognises the importance of planned and emergency respite services for carers, but relies on the National Carers Strategy to reform the respite system in terms of its availability, flexibility and cost.

Under the proposed new system carers will be separately assessed for their needs and capacity to care; an expanded range of services would be offered to carers directly through Carer Support Centres. The Government has yet to endorse the recommendations, but will use them to guide reforms of the broader ageing agenda.

Key Recommendations

- Establishing a simple Australian Seniors Gateway Agency (ASGA). Providing general community information and education and specific information and assessment of individuals and families.
- Establish a new regulatory body - the Australian Aged Care Commission.
- New co-contribution funding arrangements for the costs of accommodation and care across community and residential care.
- Removing the distinction between high/low residential care.
- Restructuring the system to remove constraints, improve continuity and accountability.
- Carers identified and recognised.

Visit www.pc.gov.au to view the full report.



Anyone Anytime can be a carer

Carers Week is a national celebration of the valuable work of Carers for their loved ones and the community. Carers SA invites carers, service providers and support groups to join in the celebration by holding an event to support Carers.

For information and registration call 8291 5600 or email info@carers-sa.asn.au.

To receive this newsletter and other notices about events and activities by email contact info@carers-sa.asn.au. For information on Carers SA membership, including subscription to the magazine SA Carer, call 8291 5600.

Disability Care and Support Productivity Commission report

Carers Australia has given strong support to the key recommendations for the introduction of a NDIS contained in the Productivity Commission report, released 10th August, 2011. It is particularly pleasing that under the scheme people with a disability due to mental illness have now been included.

Mr Tim Moore, President of Carers Australia said 'for far too long carers have felt undervalued by the service system and not engaged in the reform process.' Carers Australia strongly urges the government to provide ample opportunity for carers to participate in the development and implementation of a NDIS.

Mr Moore remarked on the potential of a NDIS to facilitate greater participation of carers in the workforce. To ensure that this potential is realised it will be important that government provide training and other assistance to help carers return to the workforce or to move into more demanding jobs.

Key Recommendations

- There should be a new National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) that provides insurance cover for all Australians in the event of significant disability.
- The National Disability Insurance Agency will oversee the NDIS.
- People would have much more choice in the proposed NDIS. Their support packages would be tailored to their individual needs.
- The scheme would be gradually rolled out from 2014. It would start in a few regions. By 2015-16 it should cover all regions for the highest priority groups, completed by 2018-19.

The Australian Government has endorsed the NDIS and has committed \$10 million to building the foundations of the reforms.

Visit www.pc.gov.au to view the full report.



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The Take Action campaign continues. Visit this interactive website to show your support for the National Disability Insurance Scheme.