



Carers WA



CEO Message

I hope over the last few months that all families in a caring role have managed to negotiate the difficult challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic. Much of my own time has been devoted to contributing to a plethora of task forces set up by state and federal governments to respond to this issue. Whilst each of these task forces focus on particular sections of the community (seniors, mental health, disability etc.) I have continued to advocate for

family carers to push for further supports.

Furthermore, we are working with the state government to review and update the Carers Recognition Act 2004 which should bring a renewed focus on the contribution that carers make to our society.

We are now leading the delivery of Carer Gateway in WA and whilst processes continue to be refined in the new system (which has also been impacted by the pandemic) we have already

supported a significant number of carers through this new system of supports. You may have seen our television advertising campaign, featuring on Channel 7 and GWN. I would encourage all carers to engage with Carer Gateway (carergateway.gov.au or 1800 422 737) to explore what services and supports may be available to them.

Best wishes,
Paul Coates,
Carers WA CEO

Carer Gateway: A holistic model of care

Launched in April 2020, Carer Gateway is an Australian Government initiative providing a mix of free digital, telephone and in-person supports, services and advice for family carers in Australia. Carers WA is excited to be leading the delivery of the in-person services in Western Australia.

This new model of support aims to provide carers with a holistic action plan of services based on the outcomes of a needs assessment and tailored to their individual needs.

Getting help early can make a big difference to a carer's life. There are many ways in which Carer Gateway services can support carers in managing and sustaining their caring role, whilst also looking after their own health and wellbeing.

To help explain what happens when a carer calls Carer Gateway we have used the example of John, 50, who is a carer to his 75 year old mother, Jane, who lives with a chronic condition. John is worried about his work/life balance. He is unsure if he can keep up with his finances whilst being a carer as he sometimes has to take time off work to transport his mother to medical appointments, which he may not be able to do in the future. He hears about Carer Gateway services from his

neighbour and decides to call to see what support may be available for him. His call is answered by a Carer Support Planner at our Perth office.

After explaining that he is interested in exploring what supports may be available to him, the Carer Support Planner registers John on our system and schedules a time that is suitable for John to complete his Carers Star™ assessment. The Carers Star™ assessment is completed over the phone and is designed to help our Carer Support Planner gain a comprehensive understanding of John's situation and identify areas where John may benefit from additional support. During the Carers Star™ telephone assessment, John and the Carer Support Planner talk about his caring role, how he is coping with his finances and work/life balance, plus other areas he may require support with. The Carer Support Planner identifies that John is struggling with work commitments, taking his mother to her medical appointments and having

enough time for himself. The situation is causing him to feel stressed for the future and affecting his health.

The Carer Support Planner creates an action plan with goals and relevant supports, tailored to John based on his Carers Star™ assessment.

From this action plan, John receives help with taking his mother to appointments and has regular allocated time to take a break from his caring role which he spends catching up with friends watching football.

John's decision to engage with Carer Gateway and go through the carer support planning process provided him with a pathway to services that were most relevant to his caring situation.

Carers can learn more about Carer Gateway by calling 1800 422 737 (Monday to Friday, 8.00am - 5.00pm) or visiting carergateway.gov.au



Report into housing for people with disability in Western Australia calls for change

Carers WA, in partnership with Foundation Housing, has released a report on the barriers people with disability face when seeking a safe, accessible, affordable and secure home.

Through extensive consultation, the report found people with disability have poorer experiences in the housing system and struggle to find suitable homes in the community of their choice.

The full report including recommendations and

supporting documents can be viewed at www.carerswa.asn.au/resources/policy-submissions/

Carers WA and Foundation Housing will continue to advocate for change to improve the housing outcomes of people with disability in Western Australia. The State government is close to releasing a State Disability Strategy and a WA Housing Strategy. It is hoped the recommendations of this report will be reflected in these plans.

Update on the Aged Care Royal Commission

The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety continues, following a break in public hearings as a consequence of COVID-19. To the end of July 2020, the Commission had received 8,749 submissions and conducted 20 hearings.

The main focus of recent hearings has been the response of the Aged Care system to COVID-19 and what can be learned from this experience for responding to future pandemics, infectious disease outbreaks or other emergencies.

The latest paper released by the Royal Commission is new research by Flinders University which shows that Australians strongly support increased funding to ensure universal access to high-quality aged care services in the future. The research paper can be found at <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/publications>

Carers Australia, with input from Carers WA, provided a second submission to the Royal Commission in late July. This submission can be found at www.carersaustralia.com.au/publications/submissions/

New Community Connectors Program

Carers WA are pleased to announce a new community based program providing information and support to senior parents and carers of people with disability to enable them to positively engage with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS). The aim of the program is to improve knowledge and experience around the NDIS and to ease the level of pressure and concern in making sure their loved one receives maximum benefits with their NDIS package.

The target group for the NDIS Community Connectors program is ageing parents and carers of people with disability, whereby:

- Ageing means over 65 years; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people over 50 years; prematurely aged people over 50 years

Carers WA is interested in hearing from eligible carers. Contact the Community Capacity Development team by calling 1300 227 377 or email ccdteam@carerswa.asn.au

Young Carer Pen Pal Program

The Pen Pal Program is a place for WA young carers to form long-lasting friendships with young people in the UK. The program is run in partnership between Carers WA and Young Carers Bristol & South Gloucestershire and Scarborough & Ryedale. The aim of the program is to help

create a peer-to-peer support system for young carers whilst having fun.

Young carers who are interested in being matched with a young person in the UK should email penpal@carerswa.asn.au

Coming Soon! Pen Partner Program for carers over 25.

“My Community My Contribution” Youth Book Project

The Community Capacity Development team at Carers WA are excited to launch a series of three inclusive books co-developed and written by young people living with a disability. The first book in the series, “Zac’s Game Plan”, written by Ewan Fowles, is available on our website in e-book and PDF

download formats. For a hard copy version, please email ccdteam@carerswa.asn.au to receive a free copy* via post (*limited copies available).

There are two more books to come in this exciting series so watch this space for more announcements.

Call for carer stories

Carers WA are currently seeking carers who would like to tell their story including how they became carers and what support they have found beneficial through Carers WA and other local service providers. Interested carers can contact marketing@carerswa.asn.au for more information.

Please note: carers wishing to share their caring story will need to be able to undertake travel to the Carer Centre (182 Lord Street, Perth) or engage in a phone call for the interview. This will take approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour.

Introducing new Young Carer team members

Cecilia, our Young Carer Assessment and Planning Officer, is a qualified Social Worker providing outreach support to young carers aged 8-25 years old. Cecilia works with the young carer to discuss their individual needs, how their caring role is impacting on school, home, work, social life and other relationships, and how Carer Gateway and other youth related services could improve their wellbeing.

Laura, our Young Carer Education, Employment and Engagement Project Officer, is a career and employment specialist who can provide job guidance and support to help young carers secure training, education and employment. Our broad scope of services cover all aspects of job searching, drafting applications, interview skills and career guidance; assisting young carers to build a clear pathway to a bright future.

 1300 227 377

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