



Broome Carers Family Photoshoot

CEO Message

Before sharing some of our priorities for 2024, I would like to thank you all for your continued involvement with Carers WA. You may not realise it, but when you participate in surveys, complete a feedback form, attend a National Carers Week event or share about your own experiences as a carer, you make a difference. We utilise these stories to influence government and funders to increase recognition of carers and to advocate for more services. So, from us and carers across WA, thank you.

In the last year, Carers WA has reached further across this state than at any other time in our 25-year history. I have personally visited several regional communities with members from our team to meet and listen to carers and engage with stakeholders. The stories shared during these trips have highlighted the need for additional

support and have strengthened our commitment to the regions. As a direct result, we have now recruited 5 permanent regional coordinators who live and operate in regional communities. We also have more than 25 visits planned over the next 6 months to remote towns.

As the peak body we continue to advocate at both a federal and state level for carer interests. To further this, I would like to once again ask for your participation in the National Carers Survey coming up in June. Our vast state and geographical location mean that responses from WA provide impactful information on the national stage, and I encourage those who can, to take part.

I would also like to extend an invitation to attend the premier event for Carers Week 2024, our Carers WA Conference. The conference is free to attend and

will be held on Thursday, 17th October 2024 at Optus Stadium with options also available to attend regionally.

Lastly, but importantly; often the work you do, the generosity of spirit and the selfless act of putting others first before yourselves goes unrecognised and unrewarded by most of our community and you remain hidden. So, I'd like to take the opportunity to say, "you matter." What you do matters and the investment you have in those you care for matters too. It's okay to say, "What about me?" All of us at Carers WA are here to respond to the times you want to focus on you.

Richard Newman
CEO

Carers WA Conference 2024

Save the date for the Carers WA Conference, the premier event in celebration of National Carers Week 2024. Taking place in October, the program will delve into the evolving landscape of caring in WA, addressing key trends, challenges, and perspectives shared by industry professionals and carers.

This event will be free to attend with regional options also available.

More information will be released over the upcoming months. Places are limited so make sure you stay up to date to secure your place.

When: Thursday, 17th October 2024

Where: Optus Stadium

Visit www.carerswa.asn.au/conference to stay updated.

National Carers Week 2024

Mark your calendars for National Carers Week! Join Carers Australia and the network of Carers Associations in celebrating the vital role of carers across the nation.

Running from **Sunday, October 13th to Saturday, October 19th**, Carers Week 2024 will be a week of recognition, celebration, and awareness-building. Keep an eye on our website for updates on Carers WA activities, events, and opportunities for you and your local community to participate.



Spotlight: Intensive Support Navigation Program

The Intensive Support Navigation program is one of the most recent innovations in Carers WA services. Delivered through Carer Gateway, our Navigators work alongside carers within the metropolitan area who are having trouble navigating multiple services, including the NDIS, Aged Care, Services Australia, and any other government or community services that are difficult to explore without support. Navigators meet with carers in their home, in the community or over the phone, to best meet their needs and provide relevant and timely advice on navigating complex services.

Along with offering information to build the capacity of the carer, they offer practical assistance including liaising with health professionals, assisting with forms and attending appointments with carers to make sure they are supported from start to

finish and can achieve long term services for themselves or their loved one being cared for.

In the first 6 months of operating, 100 carers have been through this program and linked with a range of information, services, and supports.

Carers interested in being supported by this program can enquire through Carer Gateway Planning and explore if this service is the right fit for them.

To find out more, contact Carer Gateway on **1800 422 737** or fill out a callback form on our website.

Aged Care Reform: Upcoming Changes

From 1st July 2025, the new Support at Home program will replace the existing Home Care Packages and Short-Term Restorative Care programs to provide important care for older people. The Commonwealth Home Support Programme, which provides entry level services to older people, will transition no earlier than 1st July 2027.

Key reform updates include:

- Streamlining the application process, making it more accessible for carers to seek support through programs like Carer Wellness at Home.
- Shifting focus from what is lacking to what is working well and strengthening those areas.
- Implementing a single assessment process for individualised care based on specific needs and lifestyle.

- Recipients receive a quarterly budget and an additional funding pool, promoting flexibility and a person-centered approach to care.
- Introducing a First Nations assessment tailored to each person's Country, fostering reablement and strengthening their connection to the land.

Read our full blog on www.carerswa.asn.au/navigating-aged-care-changes-overview-of-the-new-reform.

The Carers WA Carer Wellness at Home program is here to ensure you receive the support you need to better understand and respond to these changes.

Visit www.carerswa.asn.au/carers-wellness-at-home to find out more.

New Young Carer Online Peer Support Group

The Young Carer team has recently launched an online peer support group for young people aged 12-17 years, who care for a family member or friend. This group will be a safe place for young people to connect with others like them and to form meaningful relationships.

When: Third Wednesday of every month | 3.30pm – 5.00pm

Where: Online | Discord

Visit www.carerswa.asn.au/young-carers-info to find out more and register your interest.



HOYTS Discount Tickets for Carers

HOYTS Australia has extended its carers discount offers on movie tickets until December 2024. Carers, when accompanying the person they care for, can enjoy a \$1.10 adult ticket (limited to 1 per day) at all sessions, conditions apply.

Carers must present their WA Carers Association card to redeem this offer in person or any other card with government-recognised carer identification, such as a Healthcare Card or Centrelink Pension Card. Online booking is discouraged.

Visit www.carerswa.asn.au/promotions/latest-news/ to find out more and read the full list of conditions.



Connect Up

The ConnectUp platform is an online social connection portal intended for carers and people with disability to connect, meet and engage in their local community. The platform became available for the community to access at the end of December 2023 and memberships are continuing to rise as the platform gains more exposure.

Carers WA project staff have been eager to take on feedback from community members engaging on the platform to ensure optimal functionality, success and longevity. They will continue to liaise with external partners in this project to improve and modify elements of the platform as required post-launch, to support the overall user experience.

If you are caring for someone with disability who would benefit from social connections, accessing the community more frequently, and engaging in physical or recreational activities, this program may be able to support you. Visit www.carerswa.asn.au/connect-up-take-part-now/ for more information.

Policy Priorities 2024-2025

The Carers WA Policy team is excited to share a summary of our policy priorities for 2024-25.

Priorities include:

- Better recognition of carers in Western Australia.
- Investment to improve the health and wellbeing of carers.
- Better economic outcomes, carer advocacy and lived experience participation.
- Improving the systems that carers navigate and use.

Visit www.carerswa.asn.au/resources/policy-submission-research-reports/ to read the full summary.

Pen Pal Program

This program connects carers living in Australia with like-minded carers in the UK through an 'old school' approach of sending letters. It encourages connection and peer support.

To find out more email ccdteam@carerswa.asn.au



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www.carerswa.asn.au



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