



ANNUAL REPORT 2023/2024



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Thank you to our Board of Management

Carers WA wishes to acknowledge our Board of Management for their contribution during 2023/2024.

Linda Wayman

CHAIR

Gabor Hernadi

VICE CHAIR

Denise Quathamier

TREASURER

Lydia Gallant

Renay Eade

Gavin Bagley

Jamie-Lee Read

Michael Schoch

Alison Neal

List of Key Funders

Department of Social Services
Department of Communities
Department of Health and Aged Care
Department of Health WA
Lotterywest
WA Mental Health Commission

Acknowledgement of Country

Carers WA acknowledges the Wadjuk Noongar Nation's lands, water, customs, and culture of which the Carers WA Head Office is located. Carers WA recognises our services reach beyond the Perth (Boorlo) region, and so we also acknowledge the cultural diversity of First Nations Peoples across our state and throughout Australia.

Diversity and Inclusion

Carers WA is committed to understanding, embracing and celebrating the rich and multi-dimensional experiences that shape our lives and aims to ensure that everyone who engages with the organisation feels welcome and included. Carers WA welcomes all people irrespective of ethnicity, lifestyle choice, faith, sexual orientation, ability and gender identity.





Our Vision, Mission and Values

VISION

A society where the role of a carer is valued and supported.

MISSION

We will support the empowerment and wellbeing of carers through our programs, services, and advocacy.

VALUES

Compassion: We take time to understand and respond to what life is like for people.

Diversity and Inclusion: We welcome the diversity of people who access our services and contribute to our organisation.

Innovation: We challenge ourselves to think beyond standard practice and continuously improve what we do and how we do it.

Positive Impact: We focus on the measurable differences we can make to carers and each other.

Chair and CEO's Report

2023/2024 saw Carers WA progress into the second year of our ambitious three-year Strategic Plan, supporting the empowerment and wellbeing of carers through our programs, services, advocacy and outreach.

Being a Western Australian peak body, it's important that we operate across the state and represent all carers, regardless of where they live. With this in mind, we embarked upon a bold regional campaign hosting engagements, activities and consultations from Broome, through to the Goldfields, the Wheatbelt as well as the Mid-West, Great Southern and Esperance. This was followed up with over 20 visits to smaller towns and regional centres. To further express our commitment to carers in the regions we increased our place-based Regional Coordinators from three to five, ensuring we can respond to local issues with local solutions. We expanded our peer support groups into additional regional towns with new offerings in Manjimup, Boyup Brook, Denmark, Harvey, Moora and Esperance.

We also introduced two new programs funded for the 2023/24 financial year. This included the 'Intensive Support Navigator' program which was specifically designed to support carers in complex caring situations; and the extension of our education and employment program, focusing on supporting carers into higher education and new employment opportunities.

Advocating for carers at all levels of government, both systemically and individually, saw us undertake a record number of policy submissions including the National Autism Strategy, the Review into the NDIS, the new Aged Care Act, a response into the Disability Royal Commission and Mental Health Lived Experience; with both

written and in-person appearances into the Parliamentary Inquiry into Unpaid Carers.

From a state perspective we also developed submissions into the WA Youth Action Plan and the WA Disability Legislation Discussion Paper. Nationally we continue to support the work currently being undertaken into the National Carer Strategy and the Carer Superannuation Campaign.

Young carers have been well represented with the formation of our first ever Youth Advisory Group (YAG), comprising of young carers aged between 16-24 providing valuable insight and guidance into services and supports which directly affect them. The YAG also had a personal audience with the Minister for Community Services during Carers Week 2023 and as part of Youth Week 2024 launched "Cooking up a Healthy Mindset"; a cookbook by young carers for young people focusing on healthy eating for a healthy lifestyle.

Fundamental to all this work is our unwavering focus on building a society where the role of the carer is not only recognised and valued, but also celebrated. None of this would be possible without the tireless efforts of our staff and diligent oversight by our Board who continue to live our values, advocate for increased and improved services, and achieve better outcomes for WA carers.



Linda Wayman
Carers WA Board Chair



Richard Newman
Carers WA CEO

Financial Summary

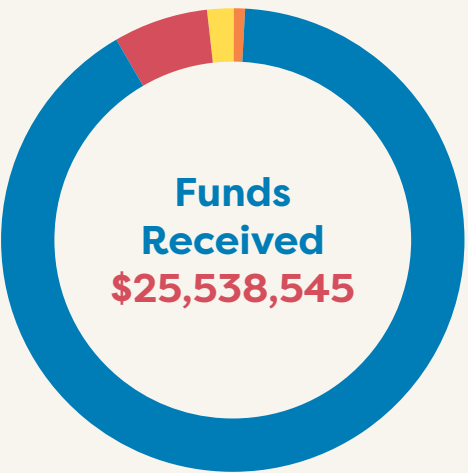
CARERS ASSOCIATION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA INC.

For the year ended 30 June 2024

Funds Received

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Grant Income | 23,366,862 |
| Deferred Income | 1,680,726 |
| Miscellaneous Income | 427,235 |
| Retreat Income | 63,722 |

25,538,545



Grant Income Deferred Income Miscellaneous Income Retreat Income

Expenses

| | |
|----------------|------------|
| Staffing | 13,827,261 |
| Operational | 6,780,061 |
| Administration | 2,166,832 |

22,774,154



Staffing Operational Administration

Disclaimer:

These are estimated and unaudited figures. For full disclosure of financial statements, please go to the Carers WA website www.carerswa.asn.au

Stephen's Story

Seven years ago Stephen received a phone call that changed his life. It was from a support worker explaining that his adult son had developed severe mental health issues.

Caught unawares - his son had bravely downplayed his challenges - Stephen dropped everything and together with mental health professionals, supported his son to stabilise and reintegrate into family life.

At 67, becoming a full-time carer was far from Stephen's mind but it soon became his reality.

Not long after stepping up to help his son, Stephen's ex-wife suffered a series of devastating strokes and developed severe disabilities as a result. In addition to caring for his son, Stephen now had to care for his ex-wife and their daughter with autism who had previously lived with her mother.

In the blink of an eye, Stephen went from working full-time to caring full-time, navigating the complexities of mental health care for his son, the challenges of providing intensive physical care for his ex-wife, and constant vigilance and support for his daughter.

"There's a lot of emotion in my house when you have three people with different types of disabilities and brain injuries and psychosis - there's never a moment where it's the same."

A good sense of humour is vital, he says. His loyalty and resilience in the face of adversity is admirable, but as a carer he needed support too.

Stephen found a lifeline in Carers WA which has played a pivotal role in helping him connect

with appropriate services and provided non-judgemental advice and support throughout his journey.

"When you've lived the experience, you get quite a bit of knowledge. And you live with it 24-hours-a-day, so you're getting that knowledge all the time. And one thing that Carers WA has done for me, it's reassured me a lot, and it's given me a lot more energy, knowing that I'm doing the right things."

From managing medical appointments and therapies to ensuring the emotional well-being of his family members, Stephen's days are filled with responsibilities that reflect the relentless nature of his role as a carer; however it's a role that he would never change.

"For me, it's very rewarding. I enjoy the work, I enjoy the responsibility, and I do get a lot of happiness out of it."

As Stephen continues to look after his family, he is also planning for the future to ensure continuity of care. His goal is to secure a stable support network that will guarantee their well-being in years to come.

Stephen's dedication to his family demonstrates the often unseen impact that carers have in our communities.

Inspired by Winston Churchill, Stephen lives by the motto "never give up, never give in", and his happy, well-cared for family is testament to this unwavering determination and his ability to enjoy the positives when life throws a curve-ball, or three.

Highlights

Carer Gateway

Carers WA continues to lead the delivery of Carer Gateway in WA and in the last financial year has registered **5,826 new carers** to access a range of services delivered under this federal model. Carers WA has conducted **4,535 Carers Star planning sessions** and have seen an **increase of 45%** in the number of coaching sessions.

5,826
Carers Registered

4,535
Carers Star
Planning Sessions

Youth Advisory Group

The Carers WA Young Carer team were proud to establish and run the Carers WA Youth Advisory Group (YAG) throughout the last financial year. The YAG, consisting of eight carers aged 16-25 years with current or previous young carer experience, contributed to program development, policies, and government submissions on a local, state and national level.

Notable highlights from the past year include an inaugural meeting hosted by the Hon. Sabine Winton at Parliament House during Carers Week 2023, where the young carers shared their experiences and ideas. This meeting marked the beginning of an ongoing dialogue to ensure better support for young carers. Another highlight was the release of 'Cooking Up A Healthy Mindset', a cookbook and wellness guide created by the YAG to fit the theme of Youth Week 2024, "Head, Body, Heart". The book, dedicated to all young carers, offers a variety of quick, wholesome recipes and relaxing wellness activities.



Policy

As the peak body representing the needs and interests of carers in Western Australia, we continue to ensure that carers are well represented in government policy development and policy submissions. Over the last year we have worked on many key projects but to name just a few, our work includes contributions to the 'Inquiry into the Recognition of Unpaid Carers', 'Reforming WA Disability Legislation Discussion Paper', 'NDIS Review', 'National Autism Strategy' and the 'Mental Health Lived Experience Peak Bodies – Family/Carer/Kin Peak Body'.

Gwabba Koort Yarning

In 2023, our First Nations team introduced a program called 'Gwabba Koort Yarning' (Good Heart Talking). This initiative encourages First Nations carers to engage in open dialogue, share their cultural narratives, learn from one another, partake in healing activities, and enjoy communal meals. The group convenes on a weekly basis and has already made a positive impact on those who attend.



Sponsorships

Carers WA was excited to sponsor a number of key sector events including the 2023 Perth Royal Show Sensory Space, 2023 MND Ball, 2023 Kalgoorlie Spring Festival, 2023 Palliative Care in WA Awards, 2023 City of Rockingham Seniors and Carers Expo, 2024 Palliative Care WA Sector Breakfast and the 2024 ADHD Conference. These opportunities provided a platform for Carers WA to increase awareness of unpaid carers in the community and the services and supports available to them.



Carers WA in the Regions

Carers residing in regional areas continually face significant challenges in accessing services, notably disability services. They often endure higher levels of distress, increased social isolation, and financial stress compared to the average Australian¹.

Specifically in the regional areas of Western Australia, carers encounter amplified service challenges, particularly with the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), aged care, and mental health services. They also grapple with a higher degree of unmet carer support needs, poorer health, and a greater occurrence of major illnesses². In essence, a substantial proportion of regional carers in WA are confronting crisis situations.

The COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbated these issues, leading to heightened levels of stress, burnout, and isolation among regional carers in WA³.

These challenges were highlighted through past consultations with regional carers and service providers in WA. Key issues identified included a severe shortage of respite facilities, workforce shortages, a need for local community supports beyond those available through Carer Gateway, prolonged wait times and high demand for

services, a lack of understanding of regional challenges, and a demand for increased funding for regional services to acknowledge and address carer stress.

In response to these findings and to reconnect with regional communities post-COVID-19, Carers WA has pledged to enhance its existing service offerings with a greater emphasis on regional communities. In the 2023-24 financial year, this commitment materialised by not only increasing our place-based Regional Coordinators from three to five but also through visits and consultations to identify and address region-specific issues.

During these visits, we engaged with a diverse range of community members, benefiting from the unique insights and knowledge that only long-term regional community members can provide. Key concerns raised included a lack of respite and carer retreats, insufficient awareness of carers and carer services, a scarcity of locally available services, and a need for improved service connectivity and navigation.

Carers WA has now compiled a series of reports summarising our findings from these visits, as well as outlining our commitment to address the identified issues.



[1] (Carers NSW, 2023)
[2] (SAGE Design & Advisory, 2023)

[3] (Carers WA, 2022)

Albany 15-17 Aug 2023



View Report

Broome 29 Sep–4 Oct 2023



View Report

Esperance 27-29 Feb 2024



View Report

Northam 20-21 Mar 2024

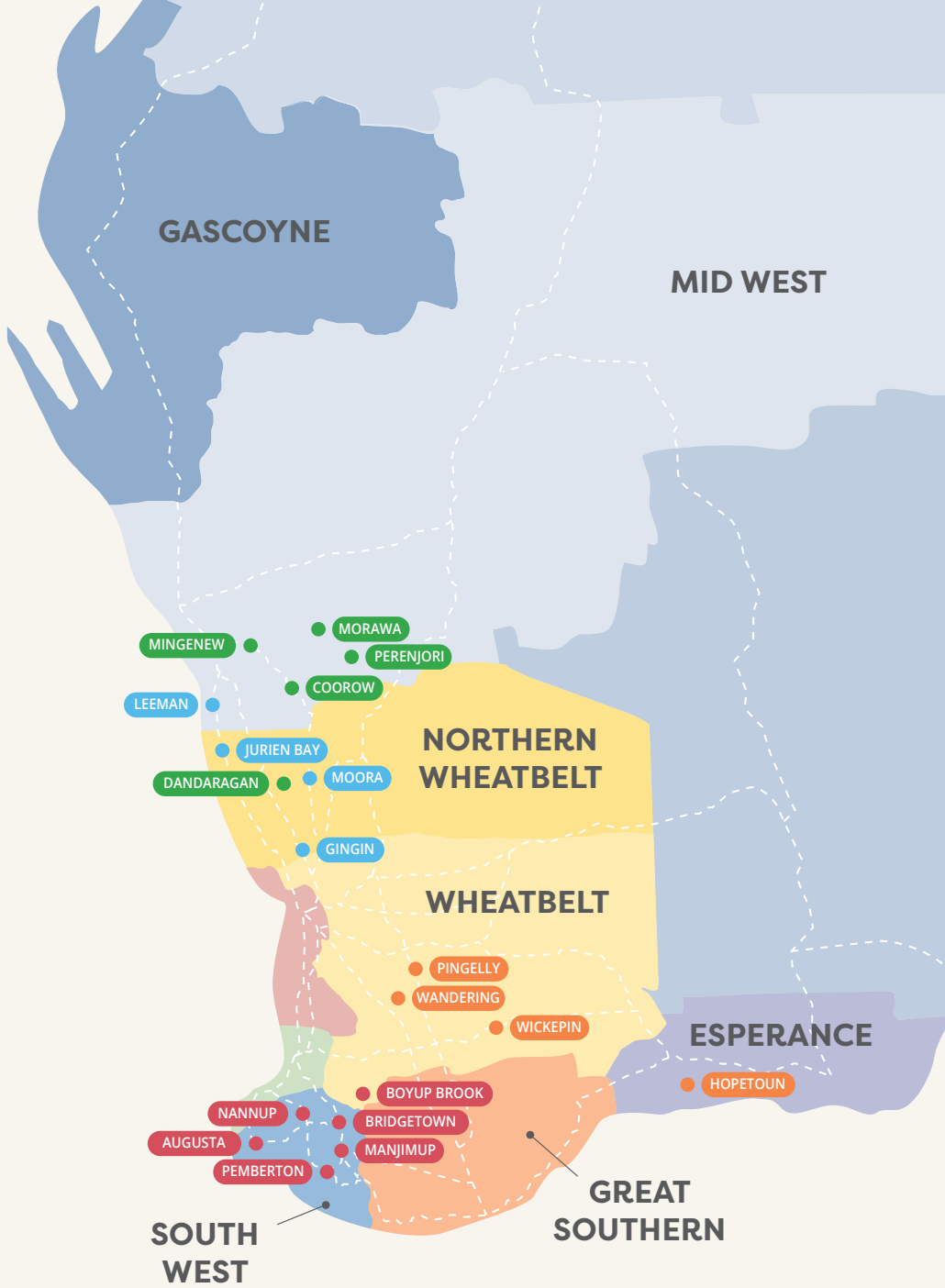


View Report

Geraldton 7-9 May 2024



View Report



Priscilla Road Trip

Esperance Feb 2024
Hopetoun, Pingelly, Tambellup, Wandering, Wickepin

Southwest Mar 2024
Augusta, Boyup Brook, Bridgetown, Manjimup, Nannup, Pemberton

Lancelin Apr 2024
Gingin, Jurien Bay, Leeman, Moora

Geraldton May 2024
Coorow, Dandaragan, Mingenew, Morawa, Perenjori

Regional Coordinators
Northern Wheatbelt
Wheatbelt
Esperance
Great Southern
South West

Carers Week

Carers Week, a national initiative held annually in the third week of October, has consistently served as a vital platform for identifying and supporting those providing care who may not identify themselves as carers, while also celebrating their invaluable contributions to our society.

In 2023, Carers WA was proud to facilitate **94 events** spanning the entire state of Western Australia. These events included capacity-building initiatives for carers, parliamentary house visits, opportunities for rest and peer interaction, celebrations of their skills and talents, as well as awareness-raising activities targeting service providers and industry professionals.

The overwhelming response to these events, marked by the participation of more than **2,434 carers**, served as a testament to the extensive reach and impact of National Carers Week, reinforcing its pivotal role as a platform for awareness and recognition within the carer community.

94
Events

2,434
Carers



Launch Breakfast Highlights

Special attendance by:

Hon. Sabine Winton MLA - Minister for Early Childhood Education; Child Protection; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services

Esme Bowen - Chair of Carers Advisory Council

Department of Communities Representatives - Mike Rowe, Marion Hailes-MacDonald, Ben Whitehouse and Nikki Kozulin

Panel discussion between Carers WA CEO Richard Newman, Carrie Clark from Kiind, Kane Blackman from Good Sammy and Theresa Kwok from Chung Wah.



Young Carer Art Awards Highlights

- Attended by 94 young carers and their families along with Minister Sabine Winton and Mike Rowe, Department of Communities Director General.
- Regional submissions and families who travelled to attend the awards.



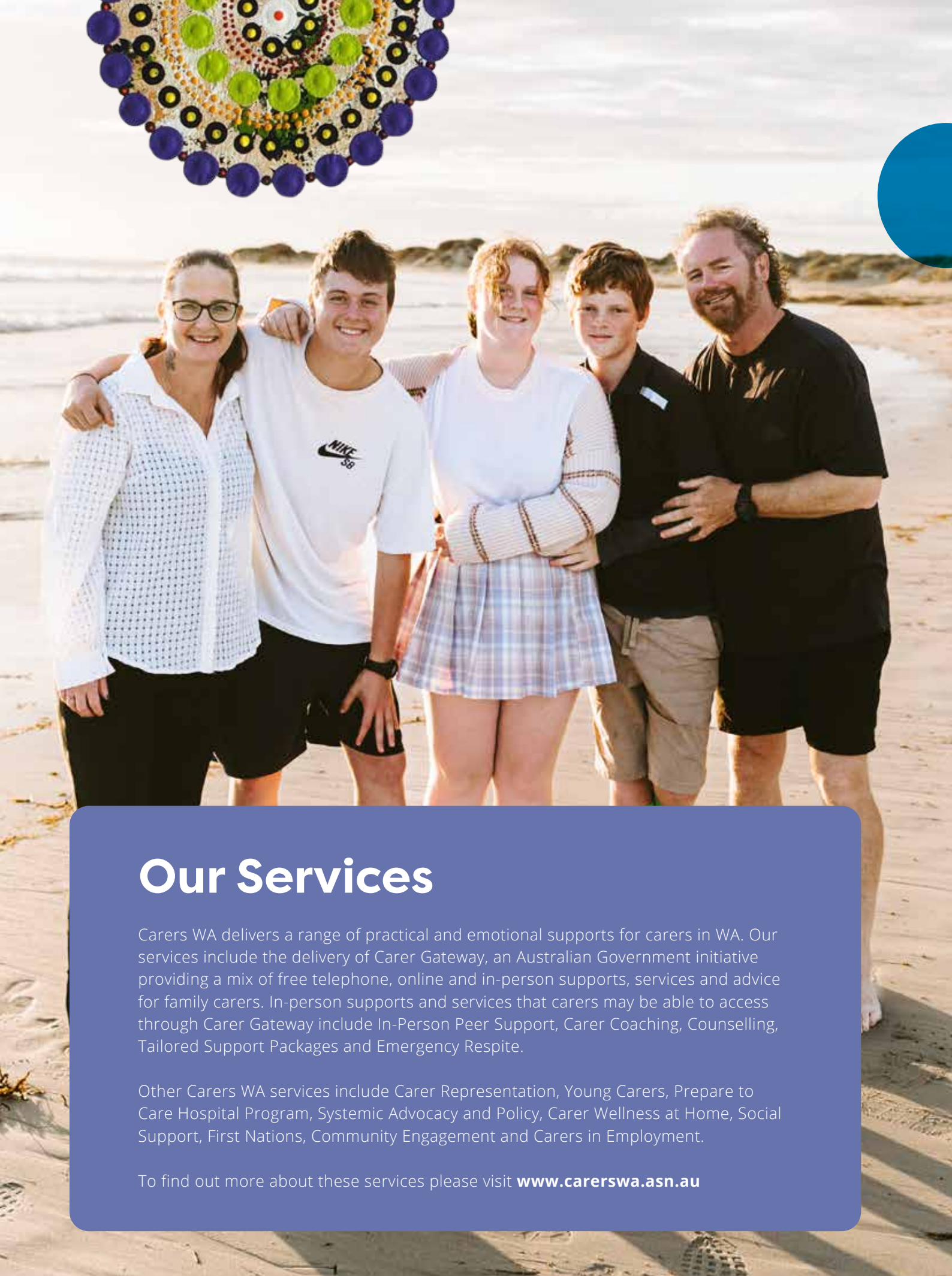
Activity Grant Highlights

- Attended by more than 600 carers across WA.
- Participation in regional areas including the South West, Goldfields, Peel, Pilbara, Kimberley and Wheatbelt.
- Variety of events and activities offered across the state and to different demographics of carers.



Cups for Carers Highlights

- 580 cups of coffee shared between carers and their friends and families.
- Regional partnerships allowing the inclusion of carers across the state.
- Community engagement with various cafes and carers from different backgrounds sharing their coffee moments.
- Promotion of self-care, reminding carer of the importance of their wellbeing.



Our Services

Carers WA delivers a range of practical and emotional supports for carers in WA. Our services include the delivery of Carer Gateway, an Australian Government initiative providing a mix of free telephone, online and in-person supports, services and advice for family carers. In-person supports and services that carers may be able to access through Carer Gateway include In-Person Peer Support, Carer Coaching, Counselling, Tailored Support Packages and Emergency Respite.

Other Carers WA services include Carer Representation, Young Carers, Prepare to Care Hospital Program, Systemic Advocacy and Policy, Carer Wellness at Home, Social Support, First Nations, Community Engagement and Carers in Employment.

To find out more about these services please visit www.carerswa.asn.au

Emma's Story

Emma never expected that she would become a full-time carer for three people. But life is always full of the unexpected, and for Emma it all began when she met the love of her life and her now husband.

He had some severe health issues, survived a life-threatening pulmonary embolism and went on to have two more during their relationship. She left her job to care for her husband full time and soon after this, found herself also responsible for caring for her husband's mother who was showing early signs of dementia and his sister with intellectual disability.

"It's definitely 24-hour care. You just don't know if you've got to get up in the middle of the night because something's happened."

The demands of caring for three loved ones across two different locations, 100 kilometers apart, took a toll on Emma's health. She began to feel overwhelmed and under a lot of pressure.

"All three of them had high care needs, I felt like I was being stretched in every direction. I thought, if I don't get some help, I'm just going to crumble."



Emma found Carers WA through an online search. They provided her with counselling sessions to help navigate the emotional challenges of being a carer, as well as occasional respite services that offered her much-needed breaks.

"They helped to justify it's okay to feel like this. You've got every right to feel overwhelmed. You are doing so much and it's okay, and we're here to help you to get through it. So it was just so reassuring."

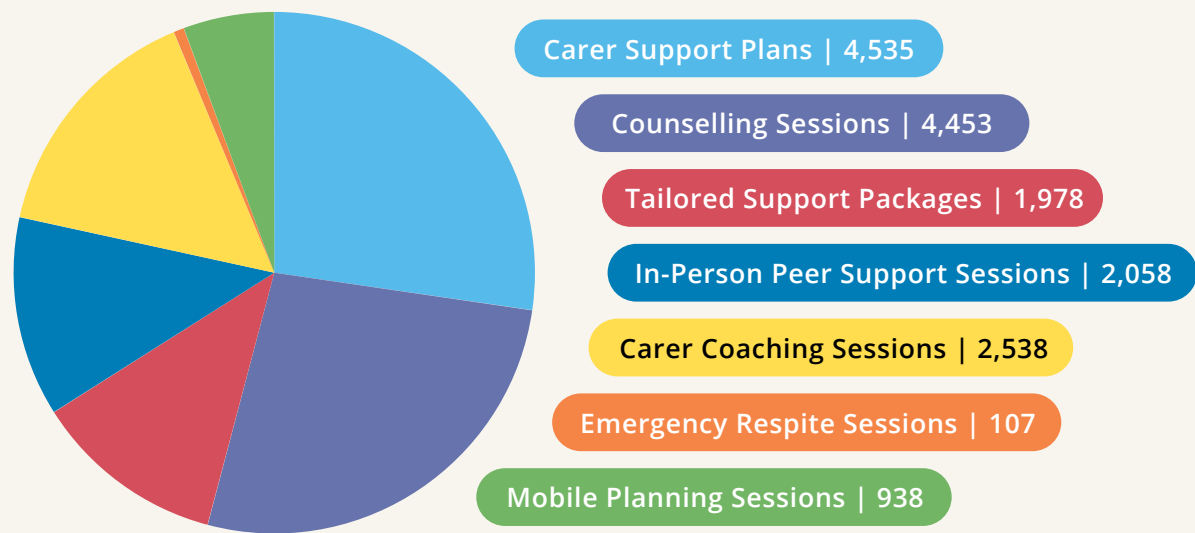
It was these support services that gave Emma the space and hope to pursue her dream of becoming a nurse whilst still continuing to care for her family.

"Carers WA has given me that ability to keep going when I just thought it was too overwhelming. They've helped me to achieve my goal of wanting to do something for me, and without them, I would be lost."

Emma's loyalty, courage and determination, along with the support of Carers WA, has enabled her to not only meet the needs of her loved ones but also pursue her own dreams.

Our Performance in 2023/2024

Carer Gateway



Carer Wellness at Home Program

326 Referrals
705 Aged Care Reform Presentation Participants

Prepare to Care Hospital Program

9,839 Resource Packs to Carers
2,323 Hospital Staff Contacts
Number of carers identified and supplied with Prepare to Care Booklet | 5,401

Policy and Systemic Advocacy

Number of submissions, surveys, consultations and presentations | 123

12 Research Consultations
12 Carers WA reports and report summaries on the findings from regional visits and consultations
18 Policy Submissions
81 Consultations

Carer Representation

136 Number of Carer Representatives
93 Number of committees with a Carer Representative

Carers in Employment Program

376 Expressions of interest to our Employment Programs
161 Carers supported across our Employment Programs

Number of employees informed of support information | 13,946

Young Carer Engagement

2,012 Youth Needs Assessments
3,144 Direct sessions with young carers
49 Schools engaged with to raise awareness around young carer needs
157 Young Carer Education & Career Assessments

Our Retreat

190 Nights of respite provided at Pembroke Court Carers Retreat, Warnbro
320 Nights of respite provided at Anne Bluntish Carers Retreat, South Perth

First Nations Engagement

7 Events/Expos
9 Meetings/Engagement Sessions

Social Support and Wellness Events

395 Events
3,545 Attendees

Community Engagement and Community Capacity Development

156 Presentations/Education Sessions
88 Webinars, expos and events
54 Pit Stops & Pop Ups

Marketing and Communications

194,596 Newsletters and e-bulletins distributed
406,815 Facebook reach
9,077 Facebook 'followers'
107,947 Website sessions
23,066 Instagram reach
1,456 Instagram 'followers'

Financial, In-Kind and Organisation Support

Carers WA extends our thanks and appreciation to our supporters who through their generosity have allowed us to enhance our programs and events throughout 2023/2024.

- APM
 - Bassendean Library
 - Black Swan State Theatre
 - Bridgetown Community Resource Centre
 - Business Continuity Institute
 - Carers Australia
 - Carers Plus, Yorkshire UK
 - Carers UK – London
 - Champion Centre Seville Grove
 - City of Melville (AH Bracks Library)
 - Corinium Global Intelligence
 - Governance Institute of Australia
 - Hillview Intercultural Community Centre
 - Ishar Multicultural Women’s Health Services
 - Mandurah Performing Arts
 - Manjimup Home and Community Care
 - Manjimup Wellness and Respite Community Centre
- Nannup Community Resource Centre
 - North East Wales Carer Information Service (NEWCIS)
 - Royal Agricultural Society
 - Ruah Community Services – Fremantle
 - Shire of Wongan-Ballidu
 - Special Families Scarborough, UK
 - Sudbury House Mirrabooka
 - Sunflowers Animal Farm
 - Swan Child and Parent Centre, Stratton Hub
 - WA State Theatre
 - West Australian Ballet
 - West Australian Opera
 - West Australian Symphony Orchestra (WASO)
 - Western Australian Community Resource Network (WACRN)
 - Young Carers Services, Bristol & South Gloucestershire, UK



Volunteering

Carers WA would like to thank all the volunteers who have contributed their time to the organisation.

- Aloma Knuckey
Angela Hobson
Angela Smith
Brenda Cleveland
Carol-Lee Dutton
Diane Hall
Don Boyd
Eddie Phillips
Glenys Hopkin
Ingrid Stokes
Jasmine Nashi
John Gardyne
Joy McComb
Judy Emmanuel
Julia O'Brien
- Kerry Wagland
Lee Bullard
Liz Marzi
Lynette Jacobs
Lynn Stanley Smith
Lynette Watt
Mary Dunlop
Monika Steiner
Paul Hopkin
Pauline Todd
Raewyn Watene
Rikki McLeod
Silvia Davidson
Stephen Sewell
Veronica Hansen





Carers WA

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**CARERS ASSOCIATION OF
WESTERN AUSTRALIA INC.**
ABN 38 219 836 631

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