

New WA Carers Strategy

ASK: WA needs a new Carers Strategy.

The Problem



The WA Carers Strategy was created in 2016, prior to the introduction of key services such as Carer Gateway and the National Disability Insurance Scheme, which vastly changed the landscape for carers.



The demographics of carers, those they care for, and the health conditions involved in this care, have shifted. This has resulted in an increased demand for carer support, as well as a shift in the type of supports needed. The current Carers Strategy is not reflective of this shift.



The WA Carers Strategy has not achieved the outcomes in its four priority areas, and these do not contain quantitative measures to determine their success.

The Solution

Carers WA calls for a new WA Carers Strategy as a key 2025 WA State Election commitment, building on the work already undertaken as part of the National Carer Strategy. A new strategy should:

- Recognise the diversity of carers and caring roles.
- Ensure that carers are equipped with the necessary resources, training, and support to meet their evolving needs and those of the person being cared for.
- Address issues and solutions for improvement in recognition of carers; carer economic and financial security; access to carer respite care; and education, training and skills development for carers.
- Contain actions and quantitative measures leading to the achievement of better outcomes for carers.
- Support the implementation of the Objects of the Carer Recognition Act 2004 (WA) and the WA Carers Charter.



Carers Count
WA 2025 Election

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All carers should:

- ✓ Be recognised, valued and appreciated for the immense contribution they make to the community.
- ✓ Be supported by government policy, legislation and strategies which are contemporary and that reflect the diversity of carers and caring roles.

The current estimated value of care to the Australian economy is **\$77.9 billion**, an increase of approximately **30%** since the current WA Carers Strategy was written.

51%

of carers feel that the WA Carer Recognition Act 2004 is ineffective or very ineffective in supporting their needs.

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Voices of WA Carers

'Every carer I know needs support, primarily financial, to enable them to get by day to day. Recognition is not going to allow carers to fund their own health needs, pay their bills, take a break, or retire and age with financial or housing security. I feel like a lot of money is being wasted on token reviews that make no difference to the lives of carers.' – response from a carer

Note: Quote not attributed to the carer pictured.

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What is Working Elsewhere

- National Carer Strategy – Extensive and recent consultation has been undertaken across Australia to inform the development of the National Carer Strategy, including with WA carers. This work can be built upon, leveraged, and utilised in the development of a new WA Carer Strategy – leading to a shorter time for development.
- Carer strategies and action plans in nearly every state and territory in Australia are either more recent and contemporary than WA's 2016 Carers Strategy, or are presently under development and review.

Alignment to Legislative and Policy Frameworks

- Carers Recognition Act 2004 (WA) – The WA Carers Charter states that carers must be recognised, treated with respect and dignity, and that the views and needs of carers must be taken into account.
- Review of the Carers Recognition Act 2004: Report to Parliament – Supports Findings 2 & 3 of the Review, in which it is stated that further action is required to achieve greater and wider community awareness, recognition and understanding of carers.
- WA Carers Strategy – Recognises the significant impact of the caring role on carers, and the need to support carers to balance their caring responsibilities, personal wellbeing and life outside of caring.