



Carers WA Policy Working Group

2025-27 Membership Term Nomination Manual

About Carers WA

Carers WA is the peak body representing the needs and interests of carers in Western Australia and is part of a national network of Carers Associations. Carers provide unpaid care and support to family members and friends with disability, mental health challenges, long term health conditions (including a chronic condition or terminal illness), have an alcohol or drug dependency, or who are frail aged. The person they care for may be a parent, partner, sibling, child, relative, friend or neighbour.

Caring is a significant form of unpaid work in the community and is integral to the maintenance of our aged, disability, health, mental health, and palliative care systems.

Some important facts about carers include:

- There are currently 3.04 million unpaid carers in Australia.
- There are more than 320,000 families and friends in a caring role in Western Australia.
- The replacement value of unpaid care, according to a report undertaken by Deloitte, Access Economics, "The economic value of unpaid care in Australia in 2020" is estimated at \$77.9 billion per annum.

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 Nation Peoples across our state and throughout Australia.



Enquiries

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1.0 Introduction

Carers WA is seeking expressions of interest from carers and former carers for the 2025-2027 term of membership for the Carers WA Policy Working Group.

A carer is a person who provides care and assistance to another person with disability, chronic illness, mental illness, alcohol or other drug dependency, or who is frail. A carer can provide care for multiple people; can be any age; and could be a family member, friend or neighbour of the person receiving care, as detailed under the *Carer Recognition Act 2004* (WA).

The Carers WA Policy Working Group was first established in 2023 with six members, in response to carer feedback indicating a need for a forum focused on systemic policy.

Following the success of the first term of the Group, nominations are now being sought for up to 8 member positions, over a two-year term, running from March 2025-March 2027. Members of the group will meet four times per year (online or at the Carers WA Office). Meetings will run for two hours, facilitated and chaired by the Carers WA Systemic Policy Team.

Policy Working Group members will be paid a flat rate of \$120 per meeting, which includes payment for three hours of members' time (two hours for the meeting and one hour of reading and preparation). Additional reading time may be agreed upon, dependent on the meeting agenda. Travel time and other costs are also incorporated into this flat rate payment.

Previous members of the Policy Working Group are also encouraged to apply for the 2025-27 term of membership, although this does not guarantee a position on the group. All nominations for the 2025-27 term will be considered in consultation with the Carers WA Executive, and with consideration to achieving demographic and carer diversity across the membership of the group.

Acknowledgement

The 2023-2025 members of the group have gone above and beyond in their contributions, and Carers WA would like to sincerely thank everyone involved over this time. Carers WA has seen these group members expand their networks, build their advocacy expertise, and participate in opportunities to use their lived experience to speak up strongly for carers across the country.

1.1 How to nominate for the Carers WA Policy Working Group?

Carers or former carers interested in nominating for the Carers WA Policy Working Group are invited to contact Carissa Gautam or Stuart Jenkinson from the Carers WA Systemic Policy Team, to discuss their interest in nominating. The Systemic Policy Team can be contacted at policy@carerswa.asn.au.

To nominate, please send the following to policy@carerswa.asn.au:

- A copy of your CV or resume.
- A one-page statement addressing the selection criteria in the position description (item 1.2).
- A signed copy of the Policy Working Group Code of Conduct (although this does not guarantee the nominee a position on the Group).

The Policy Working Group is seeking expressions from individuals who have an interest and experience in caring, policy and systemic change.

Appointment to, or membership on the Policy Working Group is not an avenue to address individual caring issues or concerns, or to address personal carer/care recipient relationship matters. These items can be addressed with access to Carers WA's programs and services through standard referral methods.

1.2 Policy Working Group Member Position Description

Position: Carers WA Policy Working Group Member

Reporting to: Carers WA Systemic Policy Team

Time Commitment: Approximately twelve hours over the year (4 two-hour meetings per year and one hour of preparation and reading per meeting).

Position Description:

A Carers WA Policy Working Group member is responsible for participating in carer-focused discussions within the Carers WA Policy Working Group. This group is focused on systemic issues of relevance to carers, external to Carers WA and within the capacity of the organisation's Systemic Policy Team to address.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Identify and communicate to the Carers WA Systemic Policy Team external systemic issues of relevance to carers, including emerging systemic issues experienced in your role as a carer.
- Participate in meeting discussions about possible policy solutions to systemic issues.
- Provide input into Carers WA's systemic policy work at Policy Working Group meetings. This may include provision of feedback to assist with the formation of policy priorities, policy submissions, and responses to State and Federal Government consultations where required.
- Adhere to the Carers WA Policy Working Group Code of Conduct and Terms of Reference for this group, within the scope of the Carers WA Strategic Plan and Group.

Selection Criteria:

Essential:

- Current or past lived experience in a caring role.
- Well-developed understanding of systemic issues impacting on carers.
- Ability to identify key systemic issues of importance to them as a carer.
- Understanding of legislation and standards in relation to carers.
- Experience in carer advocacy and/or carer research.

Desirable:

- Relevant qualifications or work experience.
- Demographic and carer diversity across the membership of the group (i.e. Culturally and linguistically diverse, from a First Nations background, are LGBTQI+ SB, are a young carer or former young carer (carer aged under 25 years), or are regionally located).

2.0 Terms of Reference

2.1 Purpose

The Carers WA Policy Working Group (the Group) is a carer reference group which provides a forum for Group members to discuss and provide increased input into Carers WA's systemic policy work, as outlined within the Policy Working Group Member Position Description (item 1.2).

A systemic issue is one which is likely to have widespread impact on many carers, rather than affecting one individual, which may be alleviated by a change to procedures, structures or policies within a system. The systemic issues considered within the Policy Working Group are issues external to Carers WA and dependent on the capacity of the Systemic Policy Team to take action on them.

2.2 Guiding Principles

Members of the Group and any work undertaken will align with the Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Objectives outlined in the [Carers WA Strategic Plan](#). A copy of the Strategic Plan will be provided to Group members.

Membership of the Group is a paid opportunity as per the attached payment schedule, at a flat rate per meeting attended.

2.3 Term

Group members are appointed for a two-year term, following which positions will be readvertised.

Membership may also be advertised if a casual vacancy becomes available or if additional expertise is sought. Terms for members appointed outside of the standard membership cycle will extend to the end of the current membership term.

Should any Group member wish to leave the group to pursue other opportunities at any time during their term, notice should be provided to the Carers WA Policy Team in writing.

2.4 Meetings

Four scheduled meetings per year will be held at the Carers WA premises and/or online. Group members may attend online or in person, subject to Carers WA policies and legislative requirements.

Secretariat and facilitation will be provided by Carers WA.

Meetings may be recorded to ensure all systemic policy concerns and potential responses are captured and actioned appropriately. Group members may request the recording to be paused at any time during the meeting.

Carers WA will maintain the confidentiality of concerns spoken about during Group meetings, and if examples are given for feedback purposes will deidentify them appropriately.

Carers WA supports diversity and inclusion and encourages members to advise of any support or access requirements to ease their participation on the Working Group.

2.5 Membership

Group membership is formed of 8 individuals with caring experience as defined under the *Carers Recognition Act 2004*. Additional temporary members may be appointed from time to time for special projects.

Other Carers WA staff may attend meetings to provide policy advice and support as required.

Carers WA may also arrange for government or other stakeholder participation in response to a particular concern or for informative purposes.

2.6 Roles and Responsibilities

Chair

A member of Carers WA's Systemic Policy Team will serve as Chair of the Group. The role of the Chair is to maintain the order of business and conduct during meetings, as well as facilitate actions and Group administration outside of meetings.

Role of the Carers WA Policy Team

The Policy Team advocate for an improved quality of life for carers through systemic change. This includes preparation of policy submissions, participation in relevant consultations and external groups, and building awareness of carers and their needs and interests.

The Carers WA Policy Team can be contacted at policy@carerswa.asn.au.

Group Members

The role of a Group member is to bring a carers perspective on emerging systemic issues and/or gaps in policy and services, as well as to discuss prospective solutions to these issues. Group members also provide input from a carer perspective into systemic policy work, as described in the group member position description.

Group members act in an advisory role only to Carers WA for the purposes of the Group and are not to act or identify as representatives of Carers WA unless explicitly requested or given permission to do so by Carers WA.

2.7 Governance

The Group will report to the Carers WA Systemic Policy Team, who will report to the Carers WA Executive Team and the Carers WA Board as appropriate.

Members of the Carers WA Executive Team, Carers WA Board and/or other Carers WA staff may attend or participate in Group meetings as appropriate. Outside persons affiliated with service providers, agencies, departments or peak bodies may also attend from time to time for presentation or other participation purposes.

Systemic policy concerns raised in meetings or out of session will be recorded in the Carers WA Issues Log and acted upon as appropriate or within Carers WA's capacity to do so.

2.8 Amendment, Modification or Variation

The Terms of Reference may be amended or modified in writing with consultation with or at the behest of the Group members, Carers WA Policy Team, the Carers WA Executive Team or the Carers WA Board.

3.0 Code of Conduct

Members of the Carers WA Policy Working Group members commit to adhering to the following Code of Conduct, to ensure other Group members feel respected and have the opportunity to contribute. It is the role of the Chair to ensure that all members comply with the Code of Conduct.

Policy Working Group members agree to:

- Treat people fairly and with respect, dignity, courtesy, compassion, and sensitivity.
- Abide by ethical standards of any applicable professional bodies.
- Not act illegally, dishonestly, unreasonably, unjustly, oppressively or in a discriminatory way.
- Treat information about Carers, Carers WA employees, and the Board as confidential and not discuss issues with people outside Carers WA.
- Maintain and respect the confidentiality of information given to them, and not copy, duplicate, share or distribute any printed or electronic material without prior consent in writing.
- Put mobiles on vibrate or silent during meetings, and if calls are urgent to please take the conversation outside the meeting room or away from the computer; and
- Attend at least three scheduled meetings per year and attend meetings on time, and if unable to attend please notify the Chair in a timely manner.

3.1 Agreement

I, _____, have read and agree to abide by the Carers WA Policy Working Group Terms of Reference, Position Description, Code of Conduct and the payment schedule set out in Appendix One.

Full name

Signature

Date

4.0 Reimbursement Information

4.1 Reimbursement Information for the Carers WA Policy Working Group

Participation Payment and Reimbursement for Reading Time

A flat-rate attendance and participation payment of \$120 per Group member, for each scheduled meeting, is made in recognition of the carer's contribution to the Carers WA Policy Working Group.

This flat-rate payment incorporates scheduled meeting participation; up to one hour of reading time; and travel. Any additional reading time is to be agreed upon and approved beforehand in writing with the Policy Working Group Chair.

For reading or review time exceeding one hour, the Group Chair must provide prior approval to the Group member in writing, and the Chair is to sign the Payment Claim Form in order for the reading time to be paid. If the Chair does not sign the Claim Form, Carers WA will not pay for more than one hour of reading time.

Carers WA must approve the participation of a carer on the Group before a Participation Feedback and Payment Claim Form is submitted by the carer.

Group members have the right to accept or decline payment for their participation. If payment is claimed, all forms must be sent to Carers WA no later than **4 weeks** after the scheduled meeting date, otherwise payment is not guaranteed.

Any difficulties with completion or return of this form can be discussed by contacting the Systemic Policy Officer at policy@carerswa.asn.au. The signature of the Group member can be collected at a later time if the form is completed on behalf of the Group member.

Group members are requested to complete feedback forms following each Group meeting to ensure any issues are addressed in a timely manner, and also give Group members the opportunity to identify if they want or need any further support. These feedback forms also assist with alerting Carers WA to emerging carer issues.

Group attendees which are already reimbursed for their time at Group meetings as a representative of an organisation are exempt from these reimbursement arrangements.

Activities that do not attract the offer of a participation payment as per the above table:

The above payment schedule is for the purposes of the Carers WA Policy Working Group and related activities as approved by the Carers WA Executive and Carers WA Board.

Activities that do not attract payment as per the above schedule include, but are not limited to:

- Open invitation to forums and consultations
- Ad hoc discussions and communication with Carers WA
- Activities and participation that have not been agreed upon prior to engagement
- Time taken to travel to an activity (travel costs are incorporated into the flat-rate payment).
- Communication with Carers WA as part of an open consultation process, such as submissions, surveys and feedback.
- Payment through other Carers WA programs or services with unique payment schedules.

Claiming reimbursement of expenses

To claim reimbursement, complete the following process:

- Complete a Participation Feedback and Payment Claim Form; and send to Carers WA no later than 4 weeks from the date of the meeting for which you are claiming the payment.
- Please allow up to 10 business days from date of payment letter for receipt of funds into your bank account.
- If you are claiming for more than 1 hour of reading time, your payment form must be signed by the Group Chair.

For further details and enquiries, please contact:

The Carers WA Policy Team on 1300 277 377 or policy@carerswa.asn.au.