

'Carer' vs 'Support Worker'

I'm a
Carer



- Anyone can be a carer
- Unpaid, informal role out of love or duty
- No formal training
- Driven by personal relationships
- Help with daily tasks like cooking, bathing, and dressing
- Family member or close friend
- Acknowledged as unpaid carers under the Carers Recognition Act 2004

I'm a
Support
Worker



- Paid and professional role
- Professionally trained
- Driven by employment responsibilities
- Assist with daily tasks and provide emotional support
- No personal relationship hired to assist
- Recognised as professional support staff

Understanding the Term 'Carer'

A 'carer' is anyone who provides unpaid support to a family member or friend with disability, chronic illness, mental health challenges, drug or alcohol dependency or who is frail due to age.

Distinguishing 'Carer' from Professional Roles

Carers and professionals may perform similar tasks, but the key distinction is that carers take on the role out of love often without formal training, and are unpaid.

The term 'carer' should not be used to describe someone who is paid for their work. Instead, those individuals should be referred to by their professional titles.

Correct usage of 'Carer'

Although the word 'caregiver' has been used in some other cultural context like America, the term 'carer' is the correct term to be used in the context of Australia. This is because the Carers Recognition Act 2004 provides specific definitions for this term.