



Carers Victoria

Annual Report 2003 - 2004



The year in brief...

Carer Representation and Advocacy services are delivered statewide including the Commonwealth Carer Resource Centre. These include:

Information and Support

Our Freecall line keeps us in touch with the daily experiences of Victoria's carers and provides an opportunity for carers to raise their issues and concerns. The statewide focus of this program ensures that all Victorian carers have equal access to consistent and relevant information, emotional support and individual advocacy.

Education and Training

Carers Victoria's education and training programs continued to expand in the 2003-2004 period. In particular, a focus on collaborating with the regional carer services meant many more carers were able to access programs.

New modules encourage carers to protect their own health and wellbeing.

Carers Victoria also gained registration as a training organisation. Accredited training will provide an opportunity to influence practice and carer inclusive and responsive services.

For the first time ever in Australia, Carers Victoria has developed carer specific competencies which will influence tertiary education.

Community Development

Building a strong carer base and mobilizing carers to action and advocacy is a key priority.

Two statewide Advocacy Forums focussed on *Income Support and Financial Issues* and *Better Access to Services* were held during 2003/2004. 110 carers attended these forums, which provided them with advocacy strategies and also provided Carers Victoria with useful data about carer experiences.

Carers Victoria's Speakers Bank has continued to develop with the rollout of three specific training programs: presentation skills; working with the media; and representing carers.

Policy Work

We need new ways of thinking about how care is provided, with a better balance between family and community responsibilities and greater choice for carers. Government agencies can meet this challenge by engaging with us in developing a vision for the future and a whole of government policy approach to carers' issues.

Our future focus will be on changing the health and community care systems so they can be more responsive to the needs of carers and the people they support, and carers have a stronger say in service design.

Carers Victoria policy work is across the whole care system and is linked to state and national networks and regional carer services. It addresses carer diversity; promotes carer inclusion and friendly practice; maps services and key stakeholders.

Over the past 12 months Carers Victoria's policy work has focussed on:

- Participation in disability action campaigns and collaboration on the review of the Victorian Disability Legislation
- Work with regional carer services on ageing carers
- Work on young carer issues — awareness raising, media, government lobbying and establishment of a statewide network
- Ongoing collaboration with the mental health sector to influence practice and research
- Continued lobbying with the health sector to influence service delivery and carer inclusive practice
- Collaborative work on national community care reform and state HACC directions
- Aged care policy and practice including palliative care, community based respite and transition to residential care
- State budget submission

National Carer Counselling Program

The National Carer Counselling Program is now established and fully operational. This new service for carers provides formal counselling sessions by qualified counsellors, provided by both in-house (face to face and telephone) or by contracted counsellors. The Counselling Program has contract counsellors in over 110 locations around Victoria and can provide counselling to carers from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds in 24 languages.

The feedback from carers and the sector is extremely positive and the demand is increasing beyond the capacity of the program. Expansion is crucial.

Special Projects

- Indigenous carers counselling
- Carers group counselling
- Self care for CALD carers
- Web-based information products for carers
- Veterans and veteran carers outreach
- Carers Education and Workforce Training (CEWT)
- Carer Friendly Practice in Residential Aged Care
- Carers Quilt Project



Carers Victoria

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Commonwealth Carer Resource Centre
1800 242 636

Carer Links West/
Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre
1800 059 059

About Carers Victoria

Carers are a diverse group of people in our community who provide care and support for family members or friends who have a chronic or acute condition, mental illness, disability or who are frail aged.

Carers Victoria is the peak organisation representing the interests of carers in Victoria. We offer direct services to support carers in their caring role; education and training; and advocacy programs to increase awareness of carers and carers issues. We also encourage innovative, high quality service delivery through policy and research.

Carers Association Victoria Inc "Carers Victoria" is incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act. Incorporation number: A0026274M.
ABN 12 533 636 427

This Annual Report was prepared by Maria Bohan, Eileen Hayes, and Carers Victoria staff. Commentary contained in this report is based on results achieved during the year July 2003 to June 2004.

The People

Board of Management: Ben Chodziesner (Vice President); Dawn Gilbert (Treasurer); Graeme Glasson (Treasurer until April 2004); Penelope Houghton; John McGrath; Anne Oakley (President); Zipporah Oliver; Valda Pugh (Secretary); Lee Choon Siau; Bill Skinner; Anne Tuohey.

Staff

Executive Director: Maria Bohan

Carer Representation: Nilgun Yucel (Manager); Sally Benson; Carol Blackett-Smith; Mariette Etter; Simon Harvest; Shirley Hynes; Lou Johns; Dorothy Kennedy; Mary McGrail; Fran Millar; Louise Monahan; Judith Mulcahy; Anne Muldowney; Julie Nankervis; Mary O'Mara; Gill Pierce; Joyce Rebeiro; Chris Twining; Trish Waters; Judith Walker; Dimitra Xinarios.

Carer Support Services: Janet Shaw (Manager) Lucero Barreto; Jill Cameron; David Clunn; Janelle Falkner; Helen Franks; Warren Fuge; Heather Gowan-McKenna; Lorraine Harrison; Kate Jones; Kathy Karaolis; Stephanie Koerner; Chris McGrath; Cheryl McInerney; Peter MacKenzie; Adele McNicol; Yolanta Niedzwiecki; Katerina Tzikas; Cathy Tzoulis; Theresa Wee; Mary-Jane Wyllie.

Resources and Development: Stephen Hill (Manager); Margaret Carty; Rhonda Evans; Bernadette Garcia; Eileen Hayes; Wally Ivlenkov; Louisa Pennell; Chris Porter; Silvana Russo; Frances Ryan.

Special Projects: Kerry Foss; Roseanne Hepburn; Betty Kafanelis; Louise Morphett.

Staff who have left in 2003/2004: Shirley Carlos; Helen Dimotakis; Helen Fine; Jill Mancini; Gitte Mortensen; Denny Townsend; Sue Wakefield.

Auditor: KPMG Assurance and Advisory

Consultants and Contractors: Michael Thornton; BKC Management (Brett Constable); DMI Consulting Group (Jo Klaaysen, Kate Walter & Rowena Kiely); SalPac Remuneration Consultants; Alison Pope; Hays Personnel; VECCI; FPDSavills (Vic) Pty Ltd (Phillip Cullity).

Volunteers: Thank you to the volunteers at Carers Victoria, who play an integral role in the organisation. George Rozensteins; Janet Farnsworth; Carl Wilson; Caroline Stephens; Zelma Riddell; Ida Gottman.

Funders: Carers Victoria's core funding comes from the: Victorian Department of Human Services (Home and Community Care Program and Support for Carers Program); and the Australian Departments of Health and Ageing, Family and Community Services and Veterans Affairs.

Carers Week sponsors: Special thanks to the sponsors of Carers Week, including the Victorian Minister for Aged Care (and Carers), the Victorian Department of Human Services (Aged, Disability and Mental Health Divisions), the Australian Department of Health and Ageing, and Frances Tobin Funerals by Women.

Gifts: Organisations and members of the public made gifts to Carers Victoria in 2003-2004. These contributions have greatly benefited the organisation and are appreciated.

Pro bono support: Pro bono support for Carers Victoria's work has been significant from: KPMG; Public Interest Law Clearing House (Paula O'Brien and Emma Hunt); Phillips Fox (Simon Bailey, Rob Allen and Nghi Tran); Freehills (Dudley Stow, Angie Dickschen, Tamara Connor, James Price and Barbara Whalen); Mallesons Stephen Jacques (Leigh Johns, Bruce Moore and Sharyn Morrison).

Philanthropy and Partnerships: Carers Victoria gratefully acknowledges the wonderful support received from trusts and foundations. Support has been provided for young carers, a 'carer voice in aged care' project, and help to pursue further opportunities. Valuable partnerships with corporations and service clubs are also developing. Thankyou to: Trust Company of Australia Ltd; Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund; Gandel Charitable Trust; Grosvenor Settlement; The Jack Brockhoff Foundation; R.E. Ross Trust; Reichstein Foundation; Calvert-Jones Foundation; The William Buckland Foundation; State Trustees Ltd; Rotary (John Gordon).