

Carers

news

Summer 2015

*Deloitte Access
Economics
Report*

Carers Provide \$60.3 Billion
in Care Annually

*Carer
Story*

Discovering Joy
Through Painting

*National
Carers Week
Round Up*

Recognising and
Celebrating Carers

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Message from Caroline

Welcome to Carers News Summer edition.

This has been a busy time for us at Carers Victoria. In September we presented at the 6th International Carers Conference *Future Proofing the New Demographics* (3–6 September 2015) in Gothenburg, Sweden. This was a fantastic conference, sharing the latest international knowledge and research in regards to caring (see page 12 and 13). Mingle events were another great success, with over 1200 carers coming together across Victoria to have a break, a reminder about caring for themselves and to catch up with each other. It was lovely to see so many carers unwind and enjoy the entertainment and activities provided. During National Carers Week in October carers attended a range of events across Victoria and our campaign raised awareness of caring in the media and among the wider community. We have just released our Annual Report 2014–2015. In the midst of major sector reforms, we made real progress in our mission to engage with and powerfully represent Victorian carers. The last financial year was one of significant achievement and growth for Carers Victoria.



A new *Deloitte Access Economics Report*, commissioned by Carers Australia has found that the current replacement cost of the care provided by Australia's 2.9 million carers has increased to a staggering \$60.3 billion per annum. Turn to pages 8 and 9 to read more about the Report.

I am very pleased to announce Guy Cavalho and Charles Hardman have commenced with us as Board Members. Guy has experience as a senior financial and commercial executive across a range of customer services, industries and companies in Australia and the Asia-Pacific region. Charles joined the Board earlier in the year and is a specialist in organisational transformation. Charles has also worked across numerous and diverse sectors including ASX Top 50 listed companies in Australia and overseas.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition.

Caroline Mulcahy
CEO, Carers Victoria

What's happening at Carers Victoria



Left to right // Mayor of Bairnsdale, Peter Neal, CEO, Carers Victoria, Caroline Mulcahy, General Manager—Policy, Strategy & Public Affairs, Carers Victoria, Annie Hayward, Hon. Member for Gippsland, Darren Chester.



Mingles 2015 Update

Our Mingle events (September to November 2015) were well received with over 1200 carers coming together across Victoria to have a break and to catch up with each other and Carers Victoria staff. This year's theme was 'Fun, Food and Fitness' and many enjoyed the good company.

See www.carersvictoria.org.au for more details.



Above // Carer and Community Education Officer, Carers Victoria, Helen Carr chats to a carer.



Above // Carers with CEO, Carers Victoria, Caroline Mulcahy and third from the right, Gabrielle Williams, MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Volunteers and Carers Victoria.

Palliative Care Submission

In August Carers Victoria made a submission to the Parliament of Victoria Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues' Inquiry into End of Life Choices. The aim was to contribute to the Committee's assessment of the practices currently being utilised within the medical community to assist a person exercise their preferences for the way they want to manage their end of life, including the role of palliative care.

See www.carersvictoria.org.au/publications/policy-submissions for more details.

Annual Report

Carers Victoria has just released our Annual Report 2014–2015. The last financial year 2014–2015 was one of significant achievement and growth for Carers Victoria. In the midst of major sector reforms, we made real progress in our mission to powerfully represent the 774,000 Victorian carers and to be sustainable and innovative.

For more information see www.carersvictoria.org.au

Mental Health Submission

Carers Victoria made a submission to the Department of Health and Human Services' next 10-year mental health strategy in September. The paper outlines a vision to guide mental health policy and strategic investment, proposes key outcomes and strategies and invites submissions in response to how a new strategy can provide a long-term vision for mental health in Victoria.

See www.carersvictoria.org.au/publications/policy-submissions for more details.

LGBTIQ Carers 2015 Projects

Young LGBTIQ carers... online education for workers

In November 2015, Carers Victoria launched the Young LGBTIQ Carers program for workers. This eLearning course builds workers' skills and knowledge to better identify and respond to the needs of young LGBTIQ people with caring responsibilities.

Removing barriers for carers

Developed with young people and workers across Victoria, the program provides tips on how to make services more inclusive and remove barriers for young LGBTIQ carers.

LGBTIQ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans/gender diverse, intersex and queer or questioning.

You may have noticed various acronyms which reflect research and sector differences.

Young LGBTIQ carers are not always recognised or well understood by services and there is little research about their particular concerns. Understanding that young carers within the LGBTIQ community are individuals with different experiences and challenges is often the first step.

Issues raised include the lack of age-appropriate inclusive services (especially in rural and regional areas), dealing with

homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and/or intersex stigma and frustration with having to explain themselves to workers over and over again. Several young people said they didn't know where to get support or find other young LGBTIQ carers to talk to.

Spread the word!

Contact us on **1800 242 636** to find out more. Like us on **Facebook** or follow us on **Twitter** and tell workers about the project.



This program is supported by the Victorian Government through the Health Equal Youth program. Carers Victoria thanks our HEY Project Partners, LGBTIQ organisations, and members of the Victorian Carer Services Network and the Victorian Young Carers Action Team for their support.



Older LGBTIQ carers ... national research project

Launching in December 2015, this project examines the caring experiences of older lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans/gender diverse and intersex (LGBTI) carers and people caring for older LGBTI people in Australia. It is a partnership between Carers Australia and the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society at La Trobe University. State and Territory Carer Associations have been involved in planning and recruitment.

Many older LGBTI people are carers with unique and diverse historical experiences. Older LGBTI people are more likely to be single, less likely to have children or contact with biological family and often delay access to services they need, due to fear of discrimination.

This project asks how sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status impact on older LGBTI carers. It will inform education resources for aged care and carer support services to raise awareness and promote inclusive services for older LGBTI carers.

For more information contact Pauline Crameri at La Trobe on **(03) 9479 8740** or email: **p.crameri@latrobe.edu.au**

10 ways... To Better Brain Health

Certain lifestyle and health behaviours can start affecting your brain health. The negative effects can begin before you reach 40 years old. It's never too late to make positive changes, here are 10 ways to better brain health.

1 Look after your heart

Research indicates that high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol can damage blood vessels in the brain, which can affect brain function and thinking skills.

2 Get regular doctor health checks

These should include blood pressure, cholesterol and weight.

3 Be physically active

Physical activity increases blood flow to the brain and stimulates the growth of brain cells. It also helps reduce depression and cardiovascular diseases.

4 Mentally challenge your brain

Keeping your brain active is important to keep it functioning well. Learning something new challenges the brain, helps develop new brain cells and strengthens the connections between them.

ways...



7 Avoid caffeine drinks

Replace them with water and herbal teas.

5 Turn off the TV

Swap TV for games that involve memory or thinking strategically. Challenging the brain wakes up new areas while unused parts of the brain stop working.

6 Nourish your brain

The brain is composed of 70 per cent fat. It needs omega-3 fatty acids for normal brain development and for maintaining balanced moods. Omega -3 is found in oil-rich fish like mackerel, sardines, linseeds. Every day eat foods which slowly release energy: oats, unrefined whole grains like brown rice and quinoa, and protein rich foods like meat, fish, beans, eggs, cheese, nuts and seeds.

8 Enjoy social activity

Being social is mentally stimulating. Best of all try an activity with friends that is mentally stimulating and physically challenging.

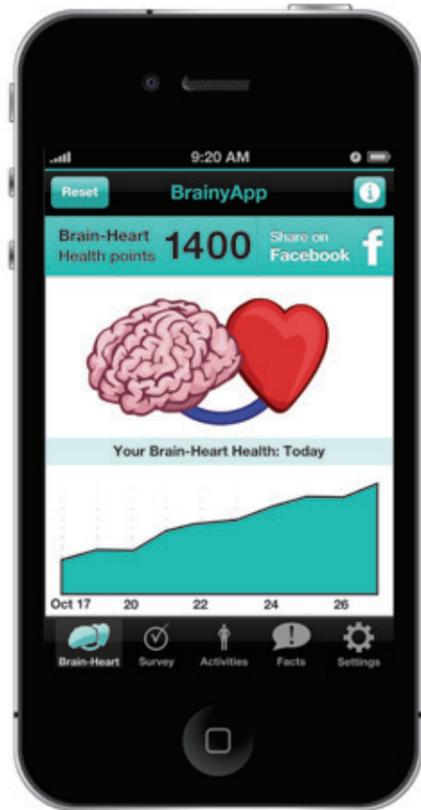
9 Rest and sleep

During sleep the brain repairs itself, boosts the immune system and consolidates information from the previous day. Poor sleep can lead to fatigue, memory and concentration difficulties.

10 Protect your head

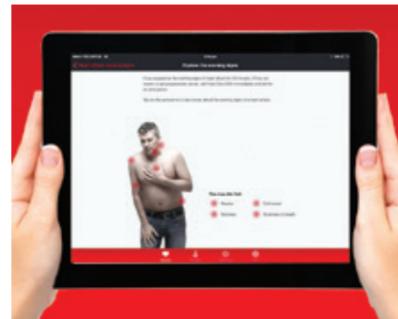
Wear appropriate head protection when doing certain activities such as bike riding, rollerblading and playing certain sports. Always wear seat belts in the car.

Latest Apps



Heart Foundation Mobile App

The Heart Foundation Mobile App helps you manage your medicines and health stats, including your blood pressure and cholesterol. It also has over 400 healthy recipes and useful information on warning signs for heart attacks.



The Heart Foundation Mobile app is available to download for free from www.myheartmylife.org.au or from Google Play and iTunes.

Brainy App

Brainy App has been developed in conjunction with Alzheimer's Australia and the BUPA Health Foundation.

After downloading the user is asked to fill out a survey. Once the survey is completed Brainy App lists the top three recommendations, including checking blood glucose and blood pressure and working out your body mass index (BMI). It has games to maintain your mental agility and suggestions to stay mentally and physically active. Users accumulate points which they can share with their friends via Facebook.

Brainy App is available for iPhone and iPad from iTunes and for further information see www.brainyapp.com.au



The app helps you manage your medicines by being able to keep a list of current medicines your doctor has prescribed and set up a reminder to take your medicines at the times prescribed and by your doctor.

You can record and monitor your blood pressure, cholesterol, waist circumference and emotional wellbeing.

View the heart attack plan and watch the warning signs of heart attack video.

Emergency +

Emergency + is a national app developed by Australia's emergency services, Government and industry partners, helping people to call the right number at the right time, anywhere in Australia. The app uses a mobile phone's GPS functionality so callers can provide emergency call-takers with their location information as determined by their smart phone. Emergency + also includes SES and Police Assistance Line numbers as options, so non-emergency calls are made to the most appropriate number.

When calling Triple Zero (000) remember to stay focused, relevant and on the line.

Emergency + is available to download for free from Google Play and iTunes.

Discovering Joy Through Painting



A new-found love of painting has helped Serpil Kara-Manugul open up her imagination. Serpil was among ten Turkish women who found their creative flair as part of an art therapy workshop, **ArtAbility®** for carers in the Flemington area of Melbourne. She had never painted or explored art before.

'Painting makes me happy, makes me feel good,' Ms Kara-Manugul said.

'All the other ladies are the same and some had no experience before. We started with drawing and talking and all the ladies are happy and laughing.'

The women created individual projects such as tapestries, drawings, silk painting and traditional Turkish art.

Carers Victoria, Carer Support Worker, Kei Murakami said 'Carers like the idea of art, but they don't like the concept of therapy because that's an acknowledgement that there's something wrong with their community.'

Serpil won the award for the best landscape for one of the pieces she submitted in **ArtAbility®**'s first annual exhibition which was shown at 'the Transition Spaces' exhibition at Federation Square in December 2014.

Background

The **ArtAbility®** - Arts Together workshops emerged from a conversation between Kei Murakami, Carer Support Worker, Carers Victoria and Chris Lawrence, co-ordinator of Action on Disability, Ethnic Communities (ADEC). Both brought an intention of exploring new ideas and approaches to working with caring families from CALD backgrounds.

Drawing on both their creative arts therapy backgrounds, they decided to develop a series of facilitated arts workshops which were funded by Carers Victoria. The workshops' objectives were to improve carers' self-esteem, confidence and provide a therapeutic outlet.

The Carer Victoria sponsored **ArtAbility®** art group this year have been busy preparing for this year's **ArtAbility®** 2015 exhibition to be held in early December 2015.



Future Landscapes 7-17 December 2015

The Atrium, Federation Square, Melbourne, VIC

ArtAbility® 2015 is holding its 11th annual exhibition 'Future Landscapes' at The Atrium, Federation Square, Melbourne from 7-17 December 2015. The exhibition showcases artwork by over 100 artists of all ages, either living with or caring for someone with a disability from culturally diverse backgrounds throughout Victoria. Come and explore the rich heritages showcased through a plethora of unique art and craft projects. See how the artists share their stories in a cacophony of colour, image and texture and how the healing powers of art connect the community and bring about well-being for all.

The exhibition is open every day and is free.

For more information: www.artability.org.au

Report // Carers Provide

\$60.3 Billion in Care Annually



Commissioned by Carers Australia and released in August by Deloitte Access Economics, *The Economic Value of Informal Care in Australia 2015* report found that the cost of replacing the unpaid care provided by family and friends would be AUD\$60.3 billion annually (equivalent to 3.8 per cent of gross domestic product and 60 per cent of the health and social care industry).

This is an increase of almost \$20 billion on the \$40.9 billion figure that the report found in 2010 and is almost double the figure from 2005 of \$30.5 billion.

The figure was arrived at by estimating the cost of replacing unpaid care with the cost of care from the formal sector. That is 1.9 billion hours of unpaid care provided in 2015 by family and friend carers of people with disability, mental illness, chronic illness or who are frail aged. The report also notes that the time spent providing unpaid care can reduce paid employment prospects

due to the lack of access to paid care and low awareness of the needs of carers in the workplace.

This is especially true for women, who are largely responsible for taking on caring responsibilities. The latest Australian Bureau of Statistics Survey on Disability, Ageing and Carers in 2012 (SDAC 2012) found that females made up the majority of carers. They represent 70 per cent of primary carers and 56 per cent of carers overall. Similarly, the Deloitte Access Economics report shows that while there has been a downward trend in the overall propensity, or likelihood

to take on a caring role over the last 10 years, there was actually an increase in the propensity to care, for females over 55. This shows the gendered nature of caring and that women of working age are more likely to take on a caring role in our society, often to the detriment of their own health, wellbeing and financial security.

The unpaid caring role leaves women exposed to financial insecurity in later life. They are unable to collect enough superannuation, save money or make investments. In contrast, according to the SDAC, men are more likely to take a caring role after retirement

age: 'After the age of 65 years, the proportion of female carers declined, whereas the proportion of male carers continued to increase.'

While recognition of the role of family and friend carers has been growing in recent years there is an awareness that this contribution often comes at some cost to carers. Support is needed to maintain the caring role. The Deloitte Access Economics report shows that in the next ten years the demand for informal care is set to increase beyond its supply as the number of people aged over 65 increases. The report looks at some of the policy consequences of a decreasing supply of family and friend carers when the demand for care is growing.

The report says:

If left unmet, growing demand for care is likely to result in a strain on the formal health sector and poorer health outcomes for those who are unable to afford formal care or services. The growing complexity and duration of care required may also place greater pressure on informal carers.

It then points out that governments will need to continue to invest in carers into the future if they are to address the shortfall in supply. Therefore, supporting carers is an investment, not just a cost.

Carers who struggle to combine paid work with an unpaid caring role need access to paid care services that fits with their working hours. They need employers who are willing to provide flexible work and leave arrangements. Allowing carers to combine work and care helps ensure that more

people don't end up relying on income support payments or being unable to get back into the workforce after years of caring. Employers who don't provide carer-friendly workplaces risk losing experienced employees.

Governments must continue to invest in people who provide unpaid care because our health, disability and aged care systems simply wouldn't survive without them.

In recent years, the Federal Government has made important steps to increasing support for carers in Australia. This work continues with the development of a National Carers Gateway. The Carer Associations have been advocating on carers' behalf regarding this integrated plan for carer support services. It will be available to all carers regardless of the age or condition of the person they care for.

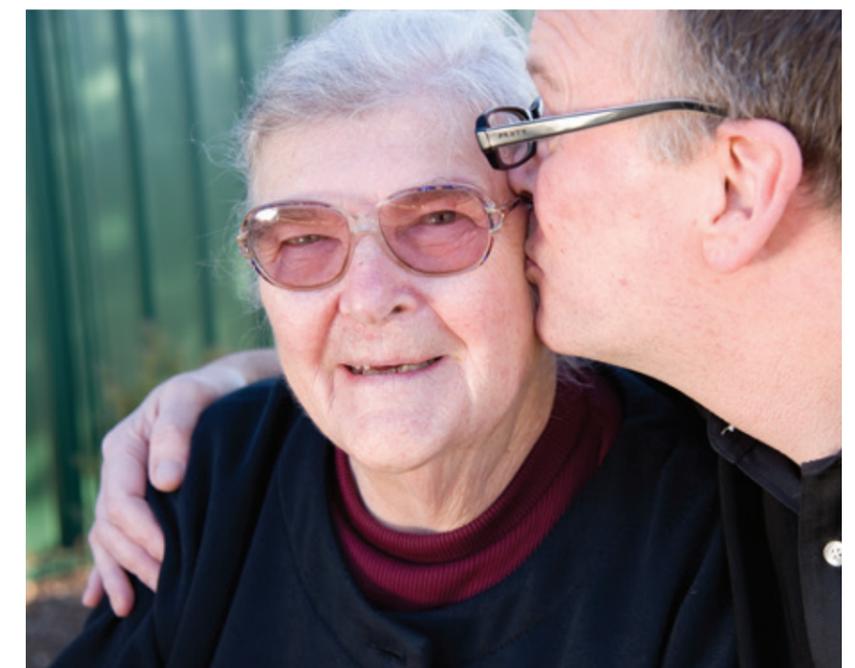
This is especially important in the context of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) as the number of people who will be supported by individual NDIS packages is only a proportion of all people with disability. Those

who are not eligible for individual packages may be eligible for other supports funded by the NDIS under Information, Linkages and Capacity building (ILC).

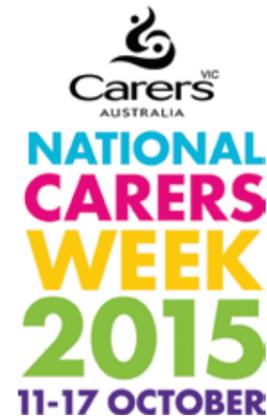
\$60.3 billion is a difficult number to visualise but it is about the same as the combined Aged Pension Payments (\$44 billion) and Disability Support Payments (\$17 billion) in the 2015-16 Australian Government Budget. Carers who are focussed on providing care to family members or friends often feel isolated and alone in their caring role. This report reminds us that the social and economic contribution of carers in Australia is significant. The service carers provide is invaluable and carers deserve greater recognition in the community and by government.

More Information

The Deloitte Access Economics report was launched by Carers Australia at Parliament House, Canberra on 19 August 2015
www.ow.ly/ThoFe



Recognising & Celebrating Carers



National Carers Week 2015 was celebrated throughout Australia from 11-17 October with numerous events held across ACT, South Australia, Tasmania and Victoria.

Carers ACT

In the ACT we kick-started the week with 'Canberra Cares', a community event to recognise and celebrate family carers in our community. The day was full of entertainment, activities and food. The highlight however was singing sensation Amber Nichols who was recently a contestant on 'The Voice'.



Above // Amber Nichols with young ACT carers.



Above // Carers SA Murray Bridge: thanks to Lions Club Murray Bridge for catering and cooking bbq for approximately 50 carers.

Carers SA

South Australia celebrated with many events including luncheons, a Pop up Mini Expo, a cruise event and a BBQ event with over 50 carers. His Excellency Hieu Van Le, Governor of South Australia and Mrs Le, held a reception at Government House to celebrate Carers SA's 25th birthday.

During National Carers Week, Carers SA held a 'Safeguarding Carers from Risk of Financial Abuse' forum.



Above // His Excellency Hieu Van Le (Governor of South Australia and Patron of Carers SA) (centre) hosted a reception at Government House to celebrate Carers SA's 25th birthday (14 October 2015)

Carers Victoria

Carers Victoria kicked off National Carers Week with an afternoon of celebrations with the National Carers Week Carnival held at Kensington City Hall with 350 carers enjoying live entertainment, face painting, roving clown, photo dress up booth and numerous game activities. This was followed with many events across the week, from film screenings including a red carpet event at Sun Theatre, Yarraville-'A Walk in the Woods', day trips, art sessions, workshops to morning teas and lunches; all hosted by local carer support groups and Carers Victoria staff. It ended with the Young Carer Festival on Saturday for Young Carers and their families-held in partnership with Little Dreamers. We also held a joint 'Progressing an Agenda for Carers' Forum with RMIT and Deakin Universities.



Above // Carers Tasmania Hobart staff out and about during National Carers Week.

Carers Tasmania

The 2015 National Carers Week Tasmanian celebrations had many special moments. Many of the Carer Support Groups celebrated with lunches, BBQ's and support group activities. Key highlights included the Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra's 'Concert for Carers'.

Carers enjoyed singing along with especially written lyrics to 'Song of Joy'. This was followed by an afternoon tea at the Henry Jones Art Hotel, thanks to the Federal Group. Carers also attended an official reception at Government House, and were addressed by the Honourable Justice Shan Tennant in the absence of Tasmania's Governor, Kate Warner and Lieutenant Governor Alan Blow.

The 'Young Carers Talk' was the finale of a project generously funded by Aurora Energy. This event launched a book of young caring stories, six monologues were performed by young actors, and a panel of young carers answered questions about their caring experience. This evening finished with an uplifting medley of songs by the Choir of High Hopes.



Above // Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra's 'Concert for Carers'.



Above // Caroline Mulcahy, CEO, Carers Victoria with Christof the Clown at the Carers Week Carnival in Melbourne.



Above // Carers enjoying themselves at the Carers Week Carnival in Melbourne.

6th International Carers Conference



Above // Group photo of Carers Associations of Australia Representatives.

A number of representations from Carers Australia and the Carer Associations—Carers ACT, Carers South Australia, Carers Tasmania and Carers Victoria attended the 6th International Carers Conference Future Proofing the New Demographics (3–6 September 2015) held in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Our representatives included Carers Australia CEO, Ara Cresswell, Carers Victoria, CEO, Caroline Mulcahy and General Manager, Carer and Community Services, Kate Johnson, Carers South Australia CEO, Rosemary Warmington, Carers ACT Branch Out Disability Services Manager, Jean Giese, Carers NT, Executive Officer Programs, Sharon Tentye and Carers NSW CEO, Elena Katrakis.

The world is facing major challenges. The demographic changes will affect society in a number of ways.

How welfare services such as health and social care services will be guaranteed both now and in the future has become a question that is increasingly dominating the public debate. During these three intensive conference days at the 6th

International Carers Conference, this growing challenge was discussed with a carer's perspective in mind. With key global players working to develop solutions to these challenges.

The conference presented the latest international knowledge within carer issues.

Providing an opportunity for government representatives, international NGOs and representatives of unpaid carers worldwide to confer and exchange ideas.



Left to right // Karen Cook, President, Carers Victoria, Elena Katrakis, CEO Carers NSW, Jauhari Wright, Young Carer, Carers NT, Caroline Mulcahy, CEO, Carers Victoria, Paul Coates, CEO, Carers WA, Rosemary Warmington, CEO, Carers SA, Tim Moore, Senior Research Fellow, Institute of Child Protection Studies, Australian Catholic University, Ara Cresswell, CEO, Carers Australia.

The conference programme included over 250 lectures, seminars and debates within five different themes—Health, social care and well-being, combining work and care, paying for care, technology-enabled care and support and young carers.

With attendees representing major caring organisations from 30 countries including Australia, the UK, Finland, Canada, New Zealand and USA.

The Conference was opened by H.M. Queen Silvia and Asa Regnér, Swedish Government Minister for Children, Older People and Gender Equality.

Kate Johnson, General Manager, Carer and Community Services, Carers Victoria presented, 'Building Capacity for Family Carers in Self-Management'. This presentation provided an overview of how Carers Victoria assists family carers in developing confidence and capacity to effectively manage a self-directed care package.

Jean Giese, Branch Out Disability Services Manager from Carers ACT spoke on the topic of 'Australia's National Disability Insurance Scheme—Impacts upon Informal Care'. Her talk centred around the opportunities and challenges faced by informal carers in the NDIS first year, including importantly, how the scheme has responded to carer needs.

Rosemary Warmington, CEO Carers South Australia presented on the

challenges faced by young carers in Australia now and in future models of care.

The 7th International Carers Conference will be hosted by Carers Australia in Australia.

6th International Carers Conference
www.carersconference.com



Above // Jean Giese presenting 'Australia's National Disability Insurance Scheme - the Impact on Informal Care'.

Write a Film or Book Review or Carer Story

Icon Film Distribution—Home Entertainment has kindly given us five DVD prize packages—total value \$648.50 (one DVD price package \$129.70) including fantastic films of not only 'Last Cab To Darwin', but also 'Oranges & Sunshine' (2010), 'The Black Balloon' (2008), 'Two Hands' (1999), 'Rabbit Proof Fence' (2002) and 'Strange Bedfellows' (2004).

To win one of these fabulous DVD prize packages please write a film or book review, or a carer story about your caring experience (min. 350 words and maximum 600 words) and submit to publications@carersvictoria.org.au or mail to Editor, Carers News Magazine, Carers Victoria, PO Box 2204, Footscray VIC 3011.

Win a DVD prize package

Last Cab To Darwin



Originally written and performed as a stage play in 2003 by Reg Cribb, the *Last Cab to Darwin* was adapted to be a film with some significant differences.

Inspired by the story of Max Bell, a Broken Hill taxi driver who drove 3000 kilometres to Darwin to take advantage of the Northern Territory's euthanasia laws.

Rex (played by Michael Caton) appears to have a simple life. Having lived in Broken Hill his whole life in a modest weatherboard house with his 1970s treasured record collection, his mates at the Pub and Polly his neighbour/lover. We discover that he has terminal stomach cancer and has been given only three months to live. He hears on the radio Dr Nicole Farmer (played by Jacki Weaver) being interviewed about a euthanasia machine she has invented and discussing the terminally ill patient's right to die.

On his single minded roller coaster emotional journey from Broken Hill to Darwin he encounters many characters along the way. He befriends the young wild quick-witted, indigenous lad Tilly (played by Mark Coles Smith) and a travelling backpacking English nurse (played by Emma Hamilton). While the character is completely fictional, it is written against the backdrop of when the controversial Northern Territory's voluntary euthanasia law ('The Right of the Terminally Ill Act (1995) NT was passed by the Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory of Australia. Later nullified in 1997).

A thought-provoking film with quintessentially Australian dark humour, 'Last Cab To Darwin' provokes deep conversation about life and what we treasure.

About the Directors/Writer

Director // Jeremy Sims.

Film script // Jeremy Sims and Reg Cribb.

Actors // Michael Caton, Mark Coles Smith, Ningali Lawford-Wolf, Jacki Weaver, Emily Hamilton.

Currently on general release. *The Last Cab To Darwin* will be available from 9 December 2015 on dvd \$39.95.



Deadline // Entries close 4 January 2016. The winners will be announced in Carers News Autumn Issue 2016.*

*** Terms and Conditions:**

1. One entry per person.
 2. All entrants agree to give reprint copywriting permission of their articles submitted for inclusion in the Carers News magazine and across all communication channels of all Carer Associations (Carers Victoria, Carers ACT, Carers South Australia and Carers Tasmania).
 3. Entry is limited to Carer Associations Members (Carers ACT, Carers South Australia, Carers Tasmania, Carers Victoria) only. If you are not a member please call 1800 242 636 to join for free.
 4. If you wish to subscribe to the Carers News Magazine please call 1800 242 636 or email: publications@carersvictoria.org.au
 5. Winners will be judged on skill of entry and will be selected by Carers Victoria, General Manager, Policy, Strategy and Public Affairs. Judge's decision is final.
- Any competition complaint is to be directed to the Editor Carers News Magazine via email: publications@carersvictoria.org.au and will be formally addressed through Carers Victoria's formal complaint procedure process.



ICON HOME ENTERTAINMENT



We've Got Each Other

Hannah is just like any other 18 year old girl. She enjoys shopping, spending time with her friends, trying out new make-up and playing sport. However, unlike her friends Hannah has the responsibility of being a carer for her mother, Karen.

Karen suffers from Complex Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) which sometimes means that she needs to be admitted to hospital.

Carers ACT Youth Carer Coordinator, Luke Cookson stressed the importance of a young person understanding their parent's mental illness, disability or addiction problem, especially in situations where they might be involved in caring for them.

"A young carer may not be the main person who looks after their relative, but they usually have extra responsibilities at home compared to other people their age. Each young carer helps their family in different ways," Luke said.

While Karen is in hospital, Hannah must look after the running of the house while also giving support to her mum. She also assists her mother in reminding her about her medication and helping her to maintain a scheduled lifestyle.

A year 12 student, Hannah has aspirations of joining the Navy or Australian Federal Police (AFP) once she finishes her schooling.

"The biggest difficulty I find with my friends is that they don't understand what it's like and they aren't mature enough to grasp the heaviness of the situation," Hannah said.

Asked what she thought was the most important support Carers ACT has provided her, Hannah quickly answers, the camps. Carers ACT often run a young carer retreat assisting the young carers in getting some time away.

"With my life being different from my friends I really enjoyed going to camp and meeting like-minded people who get what I'm going through."

And Karen is no stranger to being a carer herself.

"When Hannah was just two years old, she was diagnosed with leukaemia. It was a tough road we travelled and

for years I had to watch my daughter experience painful treatment."

Some recent test results unfortunately indicated that Hannah might be facing these battles again.

"Hannah has a very rare type of cancer and also a rare bone marrow make-up," Karen said while smiling at Hannah.

"We've got each other and we stay strong and get the other through the day," Hannah concludes.

"I have found that looking after myself is essential to my caring role. Through all of it, one thing has kept my head above water—quite literally it is rowing."

If you are a young person caring for someone or would like more information about young carers programs, contact your Carers state branch.

Making Incidental Exercise Part of Your Life

Many people when they hear the word exercise think of gyms, or don't have fond memories of school sports days. However, Incidental Exercise is effectively getting exercise when exercise is not the main objective.

If you are currently doing no exercise at all, focusing on Incidental Exercise is a good place to start. As Incidental Exercise becomes part of your daily life you will start reaping the benefits. While it doesn't replace concentrated exercise incidental exercise can be beneficial. Physical activity is a major factor in preventing and reducing the risk of many health conditions, for example heart disease, diabetes and some cancers.

Top Tips for Finding Time and Opportunity for Incidental Exercise

- Don't sit for too long. Get up every 30-45 minutes and move. Sitting for extending lengths of time over six hours regularly has been linked to risk of heart disease, Type 2 diabetes and back, knee problems and also reducing your life span.
- Use the stairs instead of a lift.
- Get off a bus a few stops earlier.
- Walk or cycle to work.
- Don't sit still.
- Get yourself a pedometer and count your steps every day.

- Walk a dog. If you have a dog, he/she is the best fitness equipment you can have. If not borrow a friend or neighbours' dog.
- Gardening or mow the lawn.
- Do the housework. Have a dance at the same time whilst you are vacuuming or do the ironing—an hour ironing can burn up 150 calories.
- Whilst watching television—raise your legs one at a time, ditch the remote control, do five mins of exercises whilst the ads are on. If you do stretching exercises while watching a TV program for an hour then you could burn up to 230 calories.
- Park further away from the shop entrance when doing your weekly shopping.
- Catch up with your friends and instead—go for a walk in the park or along the beach front.

Stretch It Out

Before you start each day, try and do a little bit of stretching. It can help you relax and avoid injury. Just five minutes can loosen up your body for the tasks at hand!

Remember to be safe and to not push too hard when trying any of the moves.

Try these easy stretches using the figures below as a guide:



- Push both arms out in front of your chest and curve your back like a cat. Hold for 10 seconds.
- Push both arms behind you at a 45 degree angle from your shoulders. Hold onto your hands and lift them to a 55 degree angle. Hold this pose for 10 seconds.
- Kick one leg up behind you and catch it with your hands. Hold for 10 seconds. Place the foot back down and then do the pose again with the other foot. You can stand next to a wall or chair and balance against it.
- Place one foot in front of the other and step your back foot (roughly about 75 cm) and then lunge toward the ground. Hold for twenty seconds. Then swap your legs around and do the stretch again.

After this give your body a shake. Let your arms and legs go!

Contacts and information:

'Fitness The Easy Way' by Bronwyn McNulty, 4 September 2011, The Sydney Morning Herald

www.liveliighter.com.au for more tips on healthy eating and exercises

*This article has not been written by a medical practitioner—GP, qualified dietician or nutritionist. If you are thinking of changing your diet, please first check with your GP.

'Let's Talk About Sex' Conference

At the recent conference 'Let's Talk About Sex—Relationships and Intimacy as We Age'¹ (8-9 September 2015, Melbourne, Australia)—Mary O'Mara from Carers Victoria's counselling team gave a presentation on Forgotten Partners – The Carer's Perspective.

Mary's presentation focussed on her work with carers of people with dementia. The presentation explored how and if, carers discuss sex in counselling; how the subject is broached and most importantly what carers say. This is an excerpt from Mary's presentation.

The subject of sex often arises in counselling, particularly in group work, where carers can feel safe to explore difficult issues in a confidential and non-judgemental environment. It may begin with conversations about the behaviour of the person with dementia. This behaviour may sometimes cause confusion or embarrassment. Carers rarely speak about sex graphically, but instead may speak about the loss of intimacy, hugs, kisses and holding hands. Many talk of losing companionship and the ability to share their thoughts and feelings with that person. Either way, the impact of this significant loss is often unrecognised.

Some families caring at home struggle to cope if the person with dementia exhibits disinhibited or 'inappropriate' behaviour. This may lead to further isolation if they are concerned about socialising with others. Some may feel sad that this part of their life together has changed or is now gone. However the need for intimacy does not necessarily fade with the onset of dementia. Some carers speak of

continuing to have a healthy interest in sex but of the difficulty in being sure it's what the person with dementia wants, or of being unsure as to whether they are fully aware and giving consent. Carers have spoken about experiencing guilt and great uncertainty even when both people seem open to intimacy.

Carers speak about the issue of intimacy in relation to residential care, particularly about the frustration, resentment and concerns at the lack of opportunity for privacy and intimacy in facilities. Single beds and unexpected interruptions are unlikely to promote an atmosphere conducive to intimacy and affection. Although some acknowledge the improvement made in recent years, carers say staff need more training and policies to help them better understand that relationships do not cease once a person enters residential care, or indeed, that 'old people' do have sex!

Some carers whose partners are in residential care and perhaps no longer recognise them have spoken about the need for male or female company. The idea of perhaps setting up a network with other carers in a similar situation comes up. Carers say they are looking for people who understand they still love their partner and are not looking for a 'replacement' but would enjoy the company of, or socialising with a member of the opposite sex without being judgemental.

Mary O'Mara, Carers Victoria

If any of these issues are familiar to you and you would like to speak to someone or are interested in group counselling please call **1800 242 636**.



Group Counselling 2016

Carers Victoria's counselling team is planning to run more group counselling sessions in 2016. There is an increase in demand for this service as feedback shows carers really appreciate the opportunity to come together to talk about issues with people who understand their situation.

In 2016 we could run groups for:

- Carers of people with mental health issues
- Carers of people who are frail aged or have dementia
- Carers of children with a disability
- Carers of adult children with a disability

In addition Carers Victoria will continue to run the popular Carers in Transition programs:

- 1) Considering Residential Care
- 2) Sharing the Care—for carers with someone in residential care
- 3) New Horizons—for bereaved carers.

All these group counselling programs are available throughout Victoria. To help us plan our 2016 calendar, please let us know if you are interested in any of these groups by calling **1800 242 636** and ask to speak to Mary O'Mara (counsellor).

Take a Break



Asian Chicken Salad

Ingredients

- 500 g skinless chicken breasts
- 2 cloves garlic, peeled and halved
- 4 coriander stalks with roots and leaves
- 100 g rice stick or vermicelli noodles
- 3 cups Chinese cabbage (Wombok), finely shredded
- 2 carrots, peeled and cut into matchsticks
- 4 spring onions thinly sliced diagonally
- 3 cups bean sprouts
- 1/2 cup mint leaves, loosely packed
- 2 tbs lime juice
- 2 tbs sweet chilli sauce
- 2 tsp fish sauce
- 1 tbs water
- 40g unsalted peanuts, roughly chopped

Method

Place both chicken breasts in a medium saucepan with enough water to just cover. Season with black pepper. Add garlic, coriander roots and stems, reserving leaves. Place over high heat and bring to the boil. Reduce heat and simmer with lid on for 2 minutes. Switch off heat, cover and leave chicken to rest in the liquid stock while preparing salad.

Place the noodles in a large heatproof bowl and cover with boiling water. Set aside for 5 minutes to soften. Drain well. Add cabbage, carrot, spring onions, bean sprouts and mint to noodles. Roughly chop mint leaves and add to salad ingredients. Remove chicken and garlic from liquid stock and set aside to cool slightly.

To make dressing, mash cooked garlic in a cup and combine with lime juice, sweet chilli sauce, fish sauce and water. Coarsely shred or thinly slice the chicken then add to the salad with dressing and combine. Serve immediately, topped with peanuts.

Hint // Peanuts are best to be added just before serving.

	2				6	3		8
					8	9		
	1	5	9	4				
2		9	3	6	4		7	5
	3	1	5	9				
	7	6	8		2	4		
6				8	1		2	
7			6		9	8		4
1	4	8		2	5			

Sudoku

9	1	4	8	7	2	5	6	3
7	5	2	6	3	9	8	1	4
6	9	3	4	8	1	5	2	7
5	7	6	8	1	2	4	9	3
4	3	1	5	9	7	2	8	6
2	8	9	3	6	4	1	7	5
8	1	5	9	4	3	7	6	2
3	6	7	2	5	8	9	4	1
9	2	4	1	7	6	3	5	8

Christmas Trivia

1. Who sang "White Christmas"?
2. What is the country of the origin of the poinsettia?
3. Prince Albert gave Queen Victoria the first Christmas tree in England in 1841. True or False?
4. In Germany, many people hang a pickle in their Christmas tree. The first person to find it gets an extra present. True or False?
5. Pavlova is a popular Christmas dessert in Australia. What is the basic ingredient of a pavlova?
6. What sporting event begins on Boxing Day in Sydney?
7. In the Australian version of 'Jingle Bells' what mode of transport is used instead of 'the one horse open sleigh'?
8. What Australian Christmas tradition began in Melbourne in 1937?
9. In the Australian variation of 'The 12 Days of Christmas', what did 'my true love give to me on the 1st day'?
10. What year was Christmas Island discovered by Captain William Mynors of the 'Royal Mary'?

1. Bing Crosby
2. Mexico
3. True
4. True
5. Egg whites
6. Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race
7. A rusty Holden ute
8. Carols by Candlelight
9. A kookaburra in a gum tree
10. 25 December 1643

Help Make a Difference to the Lives of Many Carers

For most carers, the upcoming holiday season will not provide the long awaited break that most Australians look forward to at this time of year.

In fact, for the 1 in 8 people providing unpaid care to a family member or friend in need of assistance, taking a break at any time of the year is near impossible.

Learning to reach out for support was difficult for Evelyn who started caring for her seriously ill husband early in their marriage. "It took me to saying I couldn't do it any more before I knew that I could also receive some support. I was so used to getting along with it by myself. But there came a time where I just knew it couldn't be 24/7 anymore. I needed access to breaks."

We know how vital it is for carers to have time out to relax and unwind.

To address this need Carers Victoria introduced the Mingle Program ('Mingles'). From its modest beginnings in 2007 with two locations and 110 participants, Mingles has grown to become a highly anticipated event. This year more than 1100 carers attended one of 10 events across Victoria.

Mingles provides carers with the opportunity to spend a day out meeting other carers, sharing experiences while chatting over lunch, enjoying the entertainment and learning something new about their local support services. Feelings of isolation and loneliness are replaced with a strong sense of social connectedness. **Carers come away feeling valued, celebrated and empowered.**

Having attended two Mingles in her home town of Mildura, Evelyn says, "Coming along to the 'Mingles' is great. I am not expected to talk or do anything but listen. I always thought I didn't like crowds but now I know I just don't like being the centre of attention. The connection to other people makes me feel a lot better."

Mingles has become so popular over the past few years we now have waiting lists for some events. As we wrap up another Mingles season, planning for the 2016 Program has already begun.



"I always thought I didn't like crowds... but now I know the connection to other people makes me feel a lot better." Evelyn, Mildura Mingles, 2015.

Our goal is to reach more carers next year but we can't do it alone. The government does not fund delivery of the Mingle Program; we depend solely on the generous support of donors and where possible, philanthropic grants.

Help make it possible for carers like Evelyn to attend a Mingle event next year. You can make a donation to the Mingles Campaign by calling us on **1800 242 636** or going online to www.carersvictoria.org.au



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