



CARERS VICTORIA CARER KIT

AN AUSTRALIA THAT VALUES AND SUPPORTS ALL CARERS

www.carersvictoria.org.au

AN AUSTRALIA THAT VALUES AND SUPPORTS ALL CARERS

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Carers Victoria is supported by the Australian Government, Department of Social Services. Visit www.dss.gov.au for more information. Carers Victoria acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.

For more information, phone our Advisory Line on 1800 514 845 or email reception@carersvictoria.org.au

 @CarersVictoria  /CarersVictoria



Carers Victoria acknowledges the traditional owners of this land and pays respect to elders both past and present.

LETTER FROM CEO



Level 1, 37 Albert Street
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www.carersvictoria.org.au
ABN 12 533 636 427 ACN 143 579 257

Dear Carer

We are pleased to present you with this Electronic Carer Kit, which includes information relating to a range of services provided by Carers Victoria and others. There are also some tips and information to assist you in your caring role.

At Carers Victoria, our staff are available to discuss any issues or needs you may have as a carer. This service operates from 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays). To access this service please Phone our freecall number 1800 514 845. This number can also be used to access our Carer Counselling program.

In addition to these services, Carers Victoria represents the concerns of carers to government and policy makers. Carers Victoria played a pivotal consultancy role in the development of the Victorian Carer Strategy 2018–22 which is the first whole-of-government strategy to support carers and addresses the unique and specific needs across areas such as employment, health, education and financial disadvantage.

I encourage you to join and support us in making a difference for caring families by becoming a member. Membership is free and comes with exclusive offers including: the latest information, invitations to special events, and member forums that help us build a better future for carers in Victoria.

To find out more, please visit our [website](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#) or on [Twitter](#).

I hope you find this kit a valuable addition to your carer resources.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Walker'.

Scott Walker
Chief Executive Officer
Carers Victoria

ARE YOU LOOKING AFTER SOMEONE?

LET US HELP

- Did you know one in eight Victorians has a caring role?
- Anyone at anytime can become a carer.
- A carer provides unpaid care and support to a family member or friend who has a disability, mental illness, chronic health issue or older with care needs.
- Everybody knows somebody who cares.
- A carer may not choose to become a carer; it can be something that life chooses for them.

Carers Victoria is a not-for-profit organisation which provides advice, information and support to unpaid carers to improve their health, wellbeing, capacity and resilience.

We provide a number of state-wide services which are available to help carers navigate the different challenges they may face.

“I never thought of myself as a carer – I was just helping mum. But once I identified with the role I realised that I could get some help.”

BECOME A CARERS VICTORIA MEMBER

Join today and help us build a better future for carers in Victoria. You can help us advocate for better services and recognition for carers in our community, while keeping up to date on latest information.

Carers Victoria membership is an online digital service which is free for carers, former carers and supporters.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Carers Victoria members receive:

- Carers Victoria Monthly Ebulletin ‘Voice’
- Invitations to special events and member forums
- Opportunities to participate on Carer Advisory Panel
- Member loyalty offers

Go to our website for more information
www.carersvictoria.org.au/membership

GETTING STARTED CARERS ADVISORY LINE

It's good to know there are services available to help carers – but finding out about them is not always easy.

Our experienced staff will listen to you and provide information and support to help you in your caring role.

“They listened to me; they were willing to talk to me, answered my questions, gave me information and offered advice.”

We can also connect carers to a range of services, including:

- Health and wellbeing activities;
- Counselling;
- Practical support;
- Carer education;
- Respite and recreational activities; and
- Carer support groups.

**Did you know help is just a phone call away?
Contact the Carer Advisory Line on 1800 514 845**

Available Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm.

**You can also find helpful information on our website
www.carersvictoria.org.au**

TALKING IT OVER CARERS COUNSELLING

If you have a lot on your mind, talking it over can help.

Our professional counsellors understand the difficulties carers face, and are focused on helping you manage your caring role.

Counsellors will be respectful, will listen and focus on what is most important to you.

**“Counselling helped me to slowly regain my confidence, step by step.
I realised I had the ability within to regain control of my life.”**

Counselling can be arranged at the Carers Victoria Office if you live in the western metro region, or we can support you to access counselling in your area. We can provide individual or family counselling to support your caring role either face to face, over the phone or via video.

Please discuss the option of accessing counselling in your preferred language with our counsellors. Carers Victoria also provides a range of themed group counselling options.

Please phone us to discuss 1800 514 845

INCREASING YOUR SKILLS EDUCATION SERVICES

Carers Victoria offers carer workshops and educational programs. These are designed to enhance your knowledge about how to support your own health and wellbeing as well as supporting the person you are caring for. Through our Education Services you will gain practical advice about your caring role.

To see the latest sessions available, visit

www.carersvictoria.org.au/workshops

CARERS VICTORIA VIDEOS ON WAYS TO WELLBEING

Carers Victoria has developed a series of 'Wellness' videos available online. They cover topics such as Mindfulness, Creativity and Wellbeing and Barriers to Self-Care.

You can access these online via the Carers Victoria Facebook page
www.facebook.com/CarersVictoria

TAKING A BREAK RESPIRE SERVICES

There are times when carers just need a break. The services which enable this break are broadly referred to as 'respite' and include in-home help provided by a support worker (during the day and overnight), recreational activities, day trips and school holiday programs.

The services may also include 'residential respite' where the person you care for has a short-term stay at a facility. Carers Victoria recognises that all individuals and caring situations are unique.

Respite can provide a much needed break from the caring routine – time to get other things done, to have fun with the family, or simply to relax and recharge your batteries.

Connect with your local respite service by calling our Carer Advisory Line.

**Carers who require emergency respite after business hours
can phone 1800 059 059**

SUPPORT FOR CARERS PROGRAM

Carers Victoria provides a range of flexible options to support you in your caring role and aim to help you live a fulfilling life.

As an unpaid carer of a family member or friend, you may often overlook your own wellbeing while putting the needs of the person you care for first. It may be your parents, your child with a disability, a sibling with mental health support needs, an older person with care needs or a relative with a chronic health issue. You could even be a young person under 25 caring for a family member while trying to juggle your study and social needs.

Examples of services

- Respite options during the day and overnight
- Qualified and experienced paid staff to support the person you care for at home or in the community
- Recreational and social activities such as brunch groups, walking groups, movie groups and fun events
- Some domestic assistance
- Garden maintenance
- Simple home modifications, such as hand rails
- Transport assistance
- Funding towards equipment like pressure cushions or portable hoists
- Educational workshops
- Health and well-being activities
- Counselling focused on the impact of your caring role
- Financial counselling

To access our service there is no formal referral process. It doesn't matter if the person you support is receiving a Home Care Package or NDIS funding, you are still eligible. To find out how the Support for Carers Program can be tailored to suit your needs, phone 1800 514 845.

www.carersvictoria.org.au/supportforcarers

MY AGED CARE

My Aged Care is an Australian Government website and phone line to help people find the government subsidised aged care services available to help them.

Carers, family members and friends of someone needing help with My Aged Care will need their consent to speak for them or legally be able to make decisions for them.

For more information about becoming a representative in My Aged Care go to www.myagedcare.gov.au/appointing-representative

NDIS CARER ADVISORY SERVICE

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) is the new way of providing support for Australians with disability, their families and carers.

Carers Victoria provides a free personalised phone-based support for carers and families supporting a person with the NDIS. Our team can help solve problems, assist with understanding the scheme, managing an NDIS plan and put you in touch with the right people. This service is available to caring families in all regions of Victoria.

Carers Victoria Advisory Line 1800 514 845

NDIS Australia 1800 800 110

www.carersvictoria.org.au/ndis

NDIS CARERS ONLINE

Join over 2,200 carers and family members supporting someone to transition to the NDIS in our Facebook Group NDIS Carers Online. NDIS Carers Online is a closed group managed by Carers Victoria for families and carers of people transitioning to the NDIS. The goal is for the group to be a safe space to ask questions regarding the NDIS, share constructive ideas and work together.

www.facebook.com/groups/NDISCarersOnline

JOIN A COMMUNITY CARER SUPPORT GROUPS

Often people find it helpful to talk to their peers – people who can relate to their situation, offer practical advice based on experience, and help them feel less alone.

Benefits of joining a group

Support groups are made up of people with common needs and experiences. Members help each other in many ways:

- **Emotional support** – you may find it a relief to talk things over with people who understand the pressures of caring but are independent of the person you care for or your family.
- **Practical information, tips and resources** – most support groups share information about local services and supports, medical treatments and research, or tips to help make caring easier.
- **New friends** – many carers find that the demands of caring make it difficult to keep in touch with friends and family. Regularly getting out to a support group can expand your social circle and help you feel less alone.

Find a group at www.carersvictoria.org.au/support-groups

At Carers Victoria, we recognise that all individuals and caring situations are unique. Our vision is that all carers and caring families are valued, respected and supported – regardless of age, ability, ethnicity, race, culture, religious and/or political belief, socioeconomic status, sexuality and gender identity. We work towards identifying and breaking down barriers to inclusion.

LGBTIQ+ CARERS

Carers Victoria seeks to provide support specific to individual carer needs.

We recognise that LGBTIQ+ carers experience unique joys and challenges in their caring role.

Discrimination, combined with lack of recognition of identity, experiences and relationships can increase the stress and health impacts for carers from LGBTIQ+ communities.

Our aim is to provide inclusive and affirming services which value, celebrate and support LGBTIQ+ carers and carers of LGBTIQ+ people.

We welcome carers of any age, ability, background, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity and intersex status.

For more information, go to:  @LGBTcarers and  /LGBTCarersVic

www.carersvictoria.org.au/lgbtiqa



ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CARERS

Are you providing care and support to someone who has a disability, mental illness, chronic health issue or older with care needs?



Carers Victoria helps with:

- Information to help carers with their caring role;
- Information on available services you may want to consider;
- Referrals for respite and other services;
- Support to improve carer health and wellbeing;
- Practical advice and workshops;
- Support and counselling; and
- Connecting carers to share experiences, information and practical ideas.

www.carersvictoria.org.au/Indigenous

YOUNG CARERS

Young carers are children and young people aged up to 25 who care for a family member, usually a parent or sibling with a disability, mental illness, chronic health issue or terminal illness. Young carers may also look after an older person with care needs.

Having a parent or sibling with a disability, mental illness, chronic health issue or terminal illness can be challenging. Young carers may also be involved in supporting an older family member with care needs.

Young carers often tell us this is just what being a part of their family is like. Many young carers are proud of who they are and what they do. But it can also be hard work, affect their schoolwork, time with friends and make everyday life more difficult.

Phone Carers Victoria and we can help with getting support, including:

- handling stress;
- dealing with school;
- talking it over confidentially;
- meeting other young carers who understand;
- time out;
- scholarships; and
- helping young carers with their caring role.

For more information, go to  /youngcarersvictoria

www.carersvictoria.org.au/youngcarers

CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE CARERS

Carers Victoria staff are trained to understand the particular needs of carers from different cultures and we can provide advice, support and information if English is not the preferred language.

If a carer needs an interpreter, this can be arranged.

www.carersvictoria.org.au/cald

CARERS IN VICTORIA – THE FACTS

WHO ARE CARERS?

A carer is someone who provides unpaid care and support to a family member or friend with care needs. They are parents, children, partners, other relatives and friends who assist with a variety of personal care, health care, transport, household and other activities.

HOW MANY CARERS ARE THERE?

12.5% (726,600) of Victorians are carers.

They include 239,100 Victorians who are identified as primary carers. They play the key role in caring and assist with communication, mobility and self care.

CARERS ARE DIVERSE

- Carers are of all ages, but are most likely to be aged 45–54.
- Nearly 10% of all carers are under the age of 25.
- Nearly 20% of people aged 75 years or older are carers.
- 66% of all primary carers are women.
- 49% of primary carers are reliant on a government pension or allowance as their main source of income.
- Only 39% of primary carers participate in the workforce.
- Consequently 47% of primary carers have a gross household income in the two lowest quintile levels compared to only 25% of non-carers.

TIPS FOR CARERS

- Do something for yourself;
- Plan regular breaks; and
- Seek help when you need it.

Key issues

Many people with a caring role do not identify as carers, and so do not access information, services, and supports. The work of unpaid carers contributes enormously to the Australian economy. In 2015, the annual cost of replacing unpaid carers was estimated to be \$60.3 billion.

Victorian Carer Strategy

Victorian carer strategy 2018-2022 is the first whole-of-government strategy to support carers as sets the direction for government to support carers. Carers Victoria played a pivotal consultancy role in the development of this strategy which addresses the unique and specific needs of carers across areas such as employment, health, education and financial disadvantage. In highlighting the diverse needs of carers, the strategy provides an important framework for the State Government.

www.carersvictoria.org.au/viccarerstrategy

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2015) Disability, Ageing and Carers, Victoria: Summary of Findings, 2015 (cat. no. 4430.0).

Deloitte Access Economics (2015) The economic value of informal care in 2015 Report prepared for Carers Australia.

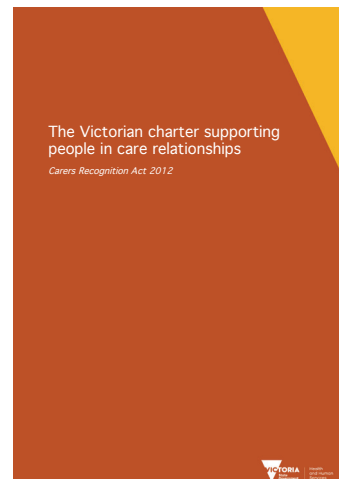
NATSEM (2004) Who's going to care? Informal care and an ageing population.: a report prepared for Carers Australia.

THE VICTORIAN CHARTER SUPPORTING PEOPLE IN CARE RELATIONSHIPS

Carers Recognition Act 2012

The 'Victorian charter supporting people in care relationships' acknowledges the important contribution made by Victorian carers. It articulates the rights and responsibilities of people in care relationships and outlines how they can best be supported by organisations, governments and the community. The charter also encourages caring families to access the services available to them and provides practical help in finding out what is available. The charter reflects and supports the *Carers Recognition Act 2012*.

For more information or to read the charter, go to www.carersvic.com.au/dhhs



VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT CARER CARD PROGRAM

The Victorian Carer Card recognises the significant contribution carers make to the lives of people they care for and the communities in which they live.

From July 2019, Carer Card holders can benefit the same discounts available to Seniors Card holders. There are more than 4,000 participating businesses whose discounts are now available. These include discounts on a range of goods and services like eating out, shopping, getting help with your finances, or even leisure and recreation activities like seeing a movie at a Village cinema.

TRAVEL ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT - VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

There are also new carer transport concessions for Victorians holding a Victorian Carer Card and Carers myki. They will be able to obtain:

- a 50 per cent discount on trains, trams and buses, including V/Line trains and coaches
- free weekend travel in any two consecutive zones and on regional town buses and
- free travel during Carers Week.

Carers can attend a staffed station to obtain a Victorian Carer myki card to access these travel benefits in myki areas.

For regional town buses that do not have myki, Carers can show their Victorian Carer Card for free weekend travel within the town.



For more information and to apply for a Carer Card, go to www.carercard.vic.gov.au

BETTER LIFE MOBILE

WANT TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR MOBILE BILL?

Carers Victoria has partnered with Better Life Mobile to provide carers, carers' friends and families with low cost mobile plans with unlimited calls. For every new customer, Better Life Mobile will provide us with a donation each month.

When you sign up ensure you use our partner code below to support Carers Victoria. Give it to your friends and family!

Partner code: CARERS

For more information or to order online, go to www.betterlifemobile.com.au or phone 03 9018 5349

Better Life Mobile ABN 47 607 567 671 uses part of Telstra's 4G and 3G Mobile Network.

NURSE-ON-CALL

NURSE-ON-CALL is a phone service that provides immediate, expert health advice from a registered nurse, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

If you think your situation is an emergency, you should always phone 000 or go to an emergency department at a hospital.

Phone 1300 606 024 for Nurse-On-Call

For more information, go to www.carersvic.com.au/nurseoncall

COMPLAINT AGENCIES

Aged Carer Complaints Commissioner
P 1800 550 552
www.agedcarecomplaints.gov.au

Disability Services Commissioner
P 1800 677 342 TTY 1300 726 563
www.odsc.vic.gov.au

Mental Health Complaints Commissioner
P 1800 246 054
www.mhcc.vic.gov.au

NDIS Commission
P 1800 035 544
www.ndiscommission.gov.au

Office of the Health Services Commissioner
P 1300 582 113
www.health.vic.gov.au

Office of the Public Advocate
P 1300 309 337 TTY 1300 305 612
www.publicadvocate.vic.gov.au

**Victorian Equal Opportunity
& Human Rights Commission**
P 1300 292 153 TTY 1300 289 621
www.humanrightscommission.vic.gov.au

Victorian Ombudsman
P 03 9613 6222 TTY 133 677
www.ombudsman.vic.gov.au

Carers Victoria recognises that all individuals and caring situations are unique. We believe every individual should be respected and their experiences, emotions and beliefs valued.

Carers Victoria is here to help you.

Carers Victoria
Level 1, 37 Albert Street
Footscray VIC 3011

For more information
T 1800 514 845
E reception@carersvictoria.org.au

 @CarersVictoria

 /CarersVictoria

Carers who require emergency
respite after business hours
can Phone 1800 059 059

