

MEDIA RELEASE



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Further support needed for unpaid carers during COVID-19 pandemic

A further one-off payment of \$750 to all unpaid carers receiving carer payments across Australia would go some way to providing the support they need to continue caring during the ongoing uncertainty that the COVID-19 pandemic brings.

Carers Australia CEO, Ms Liz Callaghan, said, 'Carers have been doing a tremendous job throughout this difficult time, not only maintaining their caring roles in trying circumstances, but often going above and beyond to ensure the safety of those they care for.

'The contribution of unpaid carers during COVID-19 has seen an increased provision of care - especially as there has often been cancelled in-home services and closure of community-based services. This diligent provision of care, often in isolation, has been of benefit in combatting community transmission and should be acknowledged by government not just with words but with adequate financial support.

'Recent clarification on the status of the JobSeeker and JobKeeper programs has provided welcome certainty and some financial security over the next few months to the recipients of those programs. Unpaid carers deserve the same in these difficult times.'

As a country, lockdown has been a frightening experience, but carers have contributed to the flattening of the curve by shielding and caring for vulnerable people, including people receiving the NDIS and older Australians.

'Without unpaid carers, Australia would not be in the current situation of even thinking about the road out of COVID-19 and the commencement of an economic recovery. Sheltering at home will not stop for carers as the recovery begins, and it is vital that carers continue to be supported in their roles. One way to do this is through a further one-off payment of \$750 to all eligible unpaid carers across Australia who have not received the Coronavirus Supplement,' said Ms Callaghan.



About Carers Australia

Carers Australia is the national peak body representing Australia's unpaid carers, advocating on their behalf to influence policies and services at a national level. Its member organisations, the Network of state and territory Carers Associations, deliver a range of essential carer services across states and territories.

About carers

An informal, unpaid carer is a family member or friend that cares for someone that has a disability, chronic or life-limiting illness, is frail aged, has a mental health illness, alcohol or other drug related issue. Informal carers are distinct from paid support workers who are colloquially also called carers but are fully employed and remunerated with all the benefits of employment. Conversely, family carers perform their caring duties without remuneration.