



HOSPITALS

Peak body study finds prevalence of unpaid carers



Lourdes Antenor · Nov 9, 2020



Nearly half of all Victorians have been in a situation where they've provided help to look after a loved one but only a fraction realise their efforts make them unpaid carers.

The study by Carers Victoria, the peak body representing unpaid carers across the state, has shared its findings to illustrate the prevalence of unpaid care.

It's urging Victorians to pledge their support for these unsung heroes to make sure that those who care are also cared for.

Carers Victoria found 45 percent of Victorians have provided care at some stage in their lives, but because it's often for a friend or family member, many see it more as personal responsibility or family duty. A carer is someone who provides unpaid care and support to family members and friends with a disability, mental illness, chronic health issue, or age-related condition.

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The study conducted in August 2020 revealed an estimated three million, the

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calculation is based on a population of 6,651,100 in Victoria, as of December 2019 Victorians have an experience of providing unpaid care, meaning almost half of the population in Victoria understand what it's like to divide their time between caring for a loved one in need and other commitments in their lives. True to the convention, more women assumed the roles of carers than men (35 percent versus 24 percent).

“The thing we want people to understand is that anyone at any time of their life could find themselves becoming a carer to a family member or a friend. Becoming an unpaid carer is something that comes upon us and for most, it's a call they take up willingly, particularly for those close to them,” said a spokesperson at Carers Victoria.

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“We want to raise awareness of these amazing people that live among us and pay respect to the complexity this role adds to many relationships. We also want to make sure there is somebody there to care for them. Too often, we find that unpaid carers sacrifice their own health and wellbeing in delivering care for loved ones. Our services mean that unpaid carers can feel supported and take a break when they need top.”

The role of unpaid carers has been a vital support to the state, especially amidst the current pandemic when pressure on medical resources has been heightened and lockdown restrictions have meant a huge drop in the availability of primary health care.

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Moana Hope, a former AFLW player and campaign ambassador for Truly Incredible Care, is the sole carer for her sister Vinny, who has a rare neurological condition. When asked about her passion for the campaign, she said, “As a full-time carer myself I know how challenging it can be at times, especially at the moment during this pandemic, and I want other carers to know that there is help and support available for them too.

“It's really important we all show we care about carers. It doesn't matter if you're not a carer or even know anyone who is, by pledging your support you can make a difference. You never know when you might need some help yourself.”



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