



2020 ANNUAL REVIEW



truly
incredible
care

Contents

- 01 A message from Sue Peden and Callum Ingram
- 02 Supporting Carers Through 2020
- 03 The 2020 Shift: Moving to an Online Landscape
- 04 Truly Incredible Care: Our Digital Presence
- 06 Our Impact
- 10 Connecting Carers
- 12 Events from your Living Room
- 16 Community Engagement
- 20 Financial Report
- 21 Community Groups, Partnerships and Sponsorships

Read our stories of Truly Incredible Care



08

JULIE'S STORY



14

MERRIN'S STORY



18

MICHAELS'S STORY

A message from Sue Peden and Callum Ingram

The start of 2020 saw Carers Victoria in the middle of a restructure, adapting the organisation to fulfil our role in the new carer support model launched by the federal government. We were rolling out plans and developing strategies... when the world changed.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought with it a year of change and response like no other. By the beginning of March, we knew — like every other organisation — that we were facing an unprecedented set of challenges to the way we connected with carers, our teams and our community.

Our mission and our values are our *northern star*. This helped us focus and collaborate as an entity and move together through a year of enormous change and constant upheaval. Working with increasingly vulnerable individuals, it was these values that allowed us to weather the COVID-19 storm and continue to make carers' lives better.

As well as rapidly adapting to the new model of service delivery, we now also had to pivot our internal operations while remaining responsive to the escalating needs of carers.

Reinventing how we connect with our carers, we moved our support services, programs and workshops online to ensure access was maintained. We created a videocast, held a state-wide expo for carers and continued to provide connections through our projects and events. We achieved Rainbow Tick accreditation and launched a state-wide campaign raising awareness about carers, aptly named *Truly Incredible Care*.

We listened and tuned in to the needs of carers and connected with leaders and politicians to ensure their voices and concerns were heard. We shared knowledge and empowered carers throughout the constant changes of 2020.

Reflecting on the way we responded to these extraordinary challenges, we are filled with pride and admiration for the flexibility we have seen within teams at Carers Victoria and we are humbled by the strength and resilience we see in the carers we work so closely with.

We appreciate all staff for their commitment to carers in 2020.

You'll notice this annual report looks a little different. As we look forward with hope and optimism, we decided it was important to reflect and capture a truly unique year from start to finish.

Thank you

We would like to gratefully acknowledge the enormous contribution of our board of volunteer directors, for their commitment and guidance during 2020, a year like no other.

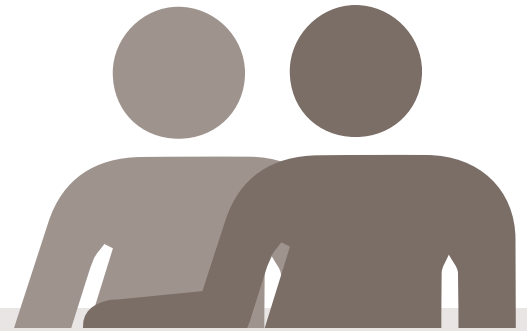


Sue Peden AM
Interim CEO



Callum Ingram
Interim Chair

Supporting Carers Through 2020



The first ever National Carer Survey was conducted in 2020. Victorian carers described the relationship with the person they care for as:

53%
caring for child

30%
caring for partner

18%
caring for parent

3%
caring for sibling

Carer Support in 2020

An influx of calls from carers at crisis point showed us how much COVID-19 was affecting carers and impacting all aspects of their lives.

From late March 2020, our interactions with carers predominantly took place over the phone or video. We also reached out to carers in Melbourne Western Metro region sending letters and direct outreach support.

Federal and State Government funding parameters were relaxed to allow us to be agile and provide services more flexibly than before. This enabled us to meet the needs of carers and the people they care for in new ways as they adapted to working, schooling and entertaining themselves at home.

The Carer Gateway

The Carer Gateway is a Department of Social Services (Federal Government) initiative designed to:

- › Significantly increase the amount of support delivered to carers in Australia;
- › Create awareness about the role of carers and relevant support services;
- › Equip carers with knowledge and skills to support their caring role and manage stress;
- › Provide carers with better access to crisis and emergency services;
- › Improve the quality of supports available to carers;
- › Take a preventative/early intervention approach to service delivery.

In April 2020 Carers Victoria became a Carer Gateway service provider for carers living in the Melbourne Western Metro region.

Significant collaboration with all stakeholders ensured our systems, processes and practices aligned with the Carer Gateway.

2,800

clients worked with Carers Victoria



The 2020 Shift

Moving to an Online Landscape

The COVID-19 pandemic shifted the ways we work across all areas of the organisation. By the end of March 2020, all staff were working from home, support to carers was exclusively offered over the phone or via video conferencing and all in-person events transitioned to online.

While this shift meant an immense amount of work for our staff, the move to an online-only landscape presented significant opportunities for Carers Victoria. The ability to hold all our events online removed geographical barriers for many carers, allowing carers from across the state to attend workshops which would usually be held in our Footscray head office.

New ideas were developed to connect with carers, including our weekly videocast *Conversations with Carers Victoria*. The videocast was established to discuss health and wellbeing for carers, introduce special guests from relevant external organisations, and share tips and advice for carers. The videocast is interactive and viewers have the opportunity to communicate with the host via the chat function. Our videocast continues to run in 2021. Tune in each **Wednesday at 2pm** via our Facebook page or scroll through our video library to catch up on past episodes.

“Carers Victoria staff have shown great resilience and continue to do their best every day to make a difference to the lives of carers.”

Tanya Large, HR Manager

Carers Victoria Online



30
events



266
workshops



7,765
attendees

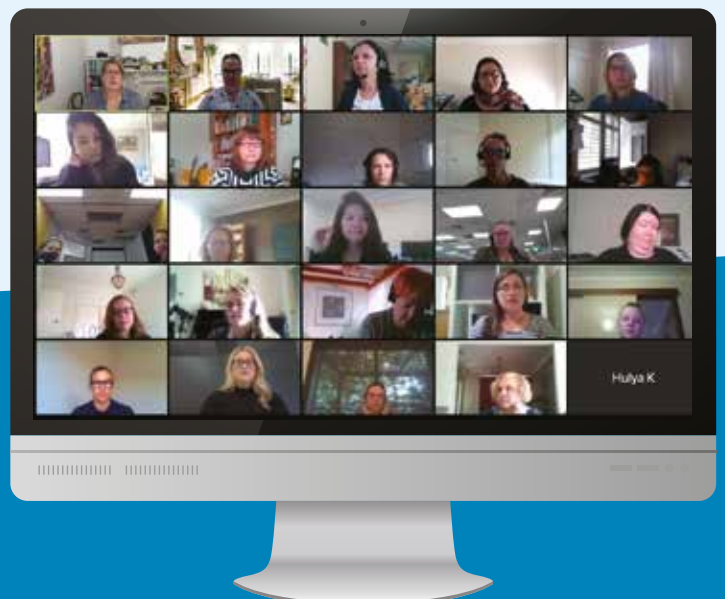
Conversations with Carers Victoria Videocast



1,022
live viewers



3,448
views of one
minute or longer



Truly Incredible Care

Our Digital Presence



145,000+

website users

9,655

subscribers to our
eBulletin 'The Voice'

13,364

our social media
community

Our Social Media Community



Facebook

7,675 followers
6,081 likes



Twitter

3,516 followers



LinkedIn

942 followers



Instagram

1,231 followers

Humans of Carers Victoria Campaign

The *Humans of Carers Victoria* campaign was created to explore how carers were coping during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the strategies they were using to stay happy, healthy and connected. The stories were shared on Facebook and Instagram and triggered conversations around the different experiences that carers had during the pandemic, and particularly during the stay-at-home period.

2,000+

engagements

121

comments

43

shares

Keep up to date with Carers Victoria



Follow us on social media

@CarersVictoria



Subscribe to our eBulletin 'The Voice'

www.carersvictoria.org.au/voice

#HumansOfCarersVictoria





Truly Incredible Care Campaign

Carers Victoria launched a statewide digital campaign from 28 September to 8 November, coinciding with National Carers Week. The aim of the *Truly Incredible Care* campaign is to raise awareness about the enormous contribution that carers make to our community, thank them for the incredible care they provide and create a movement of people who care deeply about unpaid carers.

truly
incredible
care



OVER
1 million
VIDEO VIEWS



OVER
48 million
PEOPLE
Total PR Reach

OVER
1,000
NEW FOLLOWERS
Across Facebook, LinkedIn,
Twitter and Youtube



624
PIECES OF COVERAGE
Across print, online,
TV and social media



1,383
SUPPORTER SUBMISSIONS



OVER
10,000
LANDING PAGE VISITORS

Our Impact



Carers Victoria advocated at state and national levels for change in systems affecting people in care relationships in 2020.

Our efforts to advocate for carers included a range of forums, government submissions and Carers Victoria's research agenda.

In addition to attending numerous consultations on key issues, we prepared **11 stand-alone submissions** and contributed to Carers Australia and Victorian Council of Social Services (VCOSS) submissions.

A highlight of the year was welcoming the Hon. Bill Shorten MP and Ms Emma McBride MP for a visit to the Carers Victoria office. The visit provided an opportunity to collate carer feedback and policy recommendations to improve the NDIS. These included examples of unnecessary 'red-tape' and financial issues for carers especially around combining paid work and family care.

COVID-19 Response

Carers Victoria supported carers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We worked closely with VCOSS and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to put forward the needs of carers and to highlight the challenges they were facing during lockdown. We also attended regular Human Services and Health Partnership Implementation Committee (HSHPIC) meetings to strengthen the health response during the pandemic.

Our team responded to queries and sent out regular communications to carers to help them understand the implications of the lockdown restrictions.

Pre-Budget Submission

The 2020/21 Pre-Budget submission, **Delivering for Victorian Carers**, urged the Victorian Government to fund a fully costed roadmap to implement the *Victorian Carers Strategy* in addition to a comprehensive education and jobs package to include:

- › A new local apprenticeship program to support young carers;
- › A new TAFE accreditation program for carers to recognise current skills and experience;
- › A new Victorian employer accreditation program to create carer-friendly workplaces and deliver coordinated support for carers;
- › The establishment of a state-wide education and social connectedness program for young carers;
- › The expansion of the LaunchME program to support more carers to become entrepreneurs and build the skills necessary for the modern workforce; and
- › A new online toolkit and series of workshops to support carers to find work.

Rainbow Tick Accreditation

Carers Victoria proudly achieved Rainbow Tick accreditation after years of championing LGBTIQ+ inclusion. This milestone shows our commitment to safe and inclusive practices for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex consumers and staff, including:

- › Ongoing LGBTIQ+ inclusive and culturally safe services which are incorporated into our organisational values;
- › Equity and Inclusion Committee and staff Pride Network;
- › Resources for people working with LGBTIQ+ carers.



Research

Carers Victoria values our collaborative partnerships which enhance our ability to understand, influence and affect change for carers.

In 2020, we supported the development of the inaugural National Carer Survey leading to the first ever national dataset about carers and services. The survey received a total of 7,735 valid responses from carers across Australia.

Carers Victoria also partnered with La Trobe University's Centre for Higher Education Equity and Diversity Research as co-investigator to establish the first major evidential base for young carers in Australian higher education.

Our Policy Submissions included:

Submission:	In response to:
Inquiry into Expanding Melbourne's Free Tram Zone	Victorian Parliament Economy and Infrastructure Committee
Inquiry into Mental Health Response Draft Report	Productivity Commission
Disability Worker Regulation Scheme Proposed Registration Standards and Proposed Regulations Consultation Papers	Disability Worker Registration Board of Victoria and Department of Health and Human Services
Inquiry into Homelessness	Victorian Parliament Legal and Social Issues Committee
State Disability Plan 2021-24: Consultation Paper	Office of Disability and Department of Health and Human Service
Skills for Victoria's Growing Economy: Issues Paper	Skills for Victoria Review Commissioner
Aged Care Worker Regulation Scheme: Consultation Paper	Commonwealth Department of Health
Whole of Government LGBTIQ Strategy	Department of Premier and Cabinet
'Beyond the Rhetoric of Choice and Control': Building Fairness and Equity into the NDIS	National Disability Insurance Agency
Parliamentary Inquiry into the Victorian Government's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic	Public Accounts and Estimates Committee - Parliament of Victoria
Response to Discussion Paper	Victorian Youth Strategy



truly
incredible
care

JULIE'S STORY

Julie Fisher, a 50-year-old mother of four and author from Langwarrin Victoria, would never have expected the journey she would go on when her son Darcy was diagnosed with Down syndrome in 2006.



Tough as it was when Julie found out during her pregnancy that Darcy has Down syndrome, she was determined to learn how she could provide the best care possible for her son.

Now 13 years old, Darcy is a very happy, active teenage boy who loves to dance, play basketball and football, and go bowling. However, Darcy still requires assistance with everyday self-care tasks including brushing his teeth, bathing, dressing and going to the toilet. Darcy's sensory issues around food also mean that Julie must assist him at all mealtimes.

Despite the extensive amount of care Julie provides around the clock, Julie struggles to think of herself as a carer. The way she sees it, she's only done what she can so her son can experience everything that his brothers have.

Julie said, "It's taken me a long time to identify as a carer. As a parent, I think it is a bit strange identifying fully as a carer, because when your children are young, it's natural to care for your kids in every way possible. I only really started to feel like a carer when we attended early intervention sessions for Darcy and when we had many hospital visits with aspiration to eradicate the fluid in his lungs so he could breathe properly. It was a scary time.

"Being a carer means that I do have to make extra considerations for my son that most parents never have to think about for 13-year-olds. For example, I have to help Darcy bathe, brush his teeth, put on socks and shoes and climb up and down stairs. He also needs my support with going to the toilet

because he's incontinent. This means I am his guide, teacher, advocate, voice, defender and his mum, all at the same time."

Having had a thorough reflection on her journey as a carer while writing her first book, titled *The Unexpected Journey*, Julie truly understands what it means to love and care for someone with a disability. She describes the unspoken contribution unpaid family and friend carers are making to society as profoundly impactful.

Julie is incredibly proud of her son and everything he has accomplished. "Watching him enjoy life and the things we do with him is a true motivator. He is an amazing little boy who gets so much enjoyment from accomplishing things he's been trying to do. I get an overwhelming sense of pride and joy watching this young man blossom."

Julie understands first-hand that carers like herself need support.

She says that Carers Victoria has played an instrumental role in her life by providing advice, assistance and most importantly a support network.

"To me, the support network is vital. I think it is so helpful to have connections with other people going on the same journey as you. Much like a group for first mums when you first start having your family, it's crucial on many different levels, be it advice, a shoulder to cry on, days out together."

Pledge your support for carers like Julie by visiting <https://trulyincrediblecare.carersvictoria.org.au>

Connecting Carers



Carers Victoria delivers projects to support carers in our community and build an evidence base around their needs.

In 2020, our focus was centred around three key projects:

Carer Wellbeing and Connection

We know that people who provide care often experience loneliness and can feel isolated. *Carer Wellbeing and Connection*, is a free four-week online program developed by Carers Victoria and supported by North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network. These therapeutic group sessions are designed to promote a deeper understanding of connectedness and personal wellbeing. Each session is facilitated by an experienced mental health professional and group numbers are kept small to maintain a safe and supportive environment.

After a successful pilot, ten groups completed the program in 2020, with over 40 carers taking part. Participants reported personal benefits and feeling more connected to other carers with similar experiences and circumstances to their own. *Carer Wellbeing and Connection* program will run again in 2021.

Carer Hubs

Carers Victoria is collaborating with Neighbourhood Houses and Local Councils to establish community resource centres for carers in local, easily accessible spaces. Based on the *Mildura Carers Hub Blueprint*, the local hubs will provide a space to meet in a warm and welcoming environment, find information about supports, connect with others in the local community, participate in local activities and enjoy a dedicated space for carer support group meetings.

The Carer Hubs will enable us to provide opportunities for carers to connect and live healthier and more active lives.

To find out more information about Carer Hubs visit our website.

“I feel relieved, I’m not so different from others. I feel hopeful as I have found a group where I can express myself without being judged.”

Stephen, Carer Wellbeing and Connection participant

Mind the Step

Caring can have a significant impact on mental wellbeing. Many carers manage daily pressures for some time before seeking support. *Mind the Step*, a free four-week online program facilitated by Carers Victoria and supported by Western Victoria Primary Health Network, was developed for carers whose mood and energy levels were impacted as a result of their caring role. Facilitated by qualified counsellors, the sessions provide a safe space for carers to share their experiences, build personal resilience and develop awareness of resources and support services.

After a successful pilot program in 2018, *Mind the Step* returned in November and December 2020. The re-launch of the program was welcomed by many who experienced stress and anxiety throughout the pandemic. Participants shared their experience of caring through COVID-19 and connected with other carers in similar situations.

Carers felt empowered and gained the support network and skills to maintain a healthy mind while caring for someone. Participants felt more comfortable making decisions to look after their own needs, could better identify when they needed help and felt confident to seek out support.

To find out more about *Mind the Step*, visit www.carersvictoria.org.au/mindstep

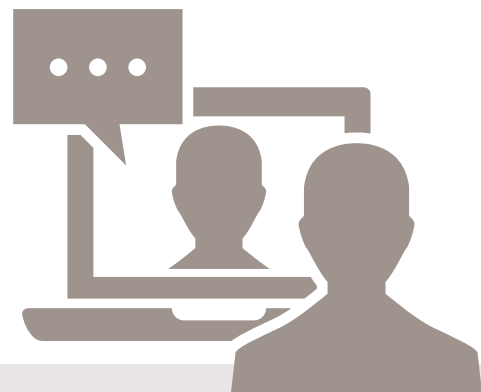
“The counsellor was very professional and engaging. I never realised prioritising myself was a skill I had to learn. Things are really busy for me but now I try to make time for myself everyday.”

Jill, program participant



Events

From your Living Room



The COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges to our events in 2020. Our team rose to the challenge and delivered a number of fun, innovative and educational online events for carers.

Connecting Carers Virtual Expo

Over 550 registrations

Held on Monday 30 November and Tuesday 1 December, the *Connecting Carers Virtual Expo* featured information for carers and their families, guest speakers, fun activities, health and wellbeing events.

In a year where social distancing became the “new norm”, the theme for this expo was “Connection”. Day one focused on connecting to systems including the Carer Gateway, the NDIS, carer benefits and the aged care system. Day two was all about connecting to wellbeing. It was a fun day of health and wellness events and activities including Zumba, meditation and Bollywood dance. Christine Anu, renowned Australian vocalist, closed the event with a special online performance.

The Expo created opportunities to connect with local service providers, peak bodies, community organisations, Carer Support Groups, download resources and live chat with exhibitors.

Jingle Mingle 2020

In December we celebrated the festive season with our online *Jingle Mingle* event. Mingles are a great opportunity for carers to unwind, have a laugh, learn something different or meet some new people. Our online Mingle event looked a little different this year, with carers joining in on the fun from the comfort of their own home. The event still brought plenty of laughs thanks to members of our Education Services team and special guest comedian Denise Scott who shared some hilarious lockdown antics.

[Visit our website to keep updated with the latest Mingle news.](#)

“Thank you so much for organising this. For me it was fun to be able to tune in from home. I would not necessarily have attended in person due to being time and energy-poor.”

Naomi, Online Attendee



To be the first to find out about future Carers Victoria events, subscribe to ‘The Voice’ eBulletin www.carersvictoria.org.au/voice

National Carers Week 2020

Each year we celebrate National Carers Week to acknowledge the huge contribution unpaid carers make to our country. In 2020 we hosted several online events on different themes including young carers, the lived experience of caring, and keeping fit and healthy.

On Sunday 11 October, Carers Victoria CEO Scott Walker and Minister for Carers Luke Donnellan hosted an official launch to kick off National Carers Week celebrations. The formalities were followed by comedic entertainment from the hilarious Claire Hooper.

On the Monday, we launched a new fitness program for carers with our partners City in the Community (Melbourne City Football Club), Latrobe University, ADEC and Vic Health along with special guest Anthony Carbines, Parliamentary Secretary for Carers. The fitness program provides online physical activity sessions for carers and instructional handouts translated into community languages. The 'Let's Get Physical' event was a great way for carers to get up and moving while having fun.

The Thursday of Carers Week saw us host an evening of "iso entertainment" for carers and their families. We heard about life as a young carer from young carer ambassador Michael Casha and how to stay connected with other young carers via Little Dreamers' *Dreamer*

Hub. Following this, we heard some hilarious social commentary from iso cooking sensation and popular comedian Nat's What I Reckon.

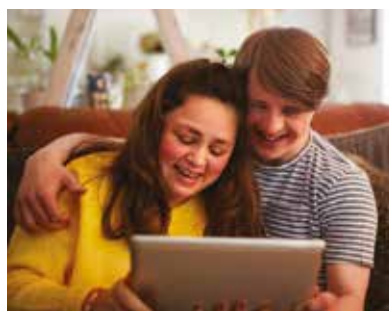
National Carers Week also coincided with the launch of our campaign *Truly Incredible Care*. We saw some fantastic media coverage of the campaign throughout this week including stories on *The Project* and *The Good Morning Show*. Thanks to AFLW Footballer and carer Moana Hope and her sister Vinny Hope.

We had a wonderful response to our National Carers Week events, and we'd like to thank all the special guests who joined us to acknowledge National Carers Week in 2020. Stay tuned to find out what's in store for 2021.

R U OK? Day

Over 250 registrations

This year we acknowledged R U OK? Day with a free virtual event to inspire everyone to ask that simple but important question "Are you OK?" and start a conversation that could change a life. It was a fun morning exploring the history, purpose and importance of R U OK? Day and the need to keep the conversation going. We heard from a Carers Victoria counsellor who spoke about resilience, and we finished the session with a hilarious set from one of the biggest stars of Australian comedy, Nazeem Hussain.





truly
incredible
care

MERRIN'S STORY

Merrin Ayton is a powerhouse of a woman with a lot more on her plate than most. Based in Mount Evelyn, she is a wife, mother of two, full-time high school teacher and primary carer to her elderly mother.



On a daily basis Merrin provides incredible care not only to her husband, sons and students but also for mum Elaine who has Parkinson's disease.

81 year old Elaine was diagnosed over six years ago and requires daily assistance with everyday tasks, such as taking medication, travel and booking doctor's appointments. In addition to her Parkinson's diagnosis, Elaine has several other heart and tendon-related conditions. Staying on top of her fitness is imperative for Elaine's wellbeing, but also challenging with these conditions.

As an unpaid carer, Merrin's daily routine starts around 5.30am. She gets up early to complete housework before she leaves for her teaching job. As a maths and science teacher Merrin is required to spend a lot of time preparing classes and travelling, which can make scheduling challenging - especially when Elaine needs to attend doctor's appointments.

Since assuming the role of primary carer for her mother, there have been some significant financial impacts on Merrin. The family home has been modified to cater to Elaine's special needs, including adding in extra handles in the shower and ramps around the house to ensure she stays safe and won't fall. Travel also plays a large part in this - if Merrin can't take Elaine to the doctor herself, she has to arrange a service for someone else to take her.

Merrin was relieved when she found out about the support available from Carers

Victoria. She has been connected with our network for several years and with our support, now advocates for Victorian carers.

Merrin says "Carers Victoria has helped deepen the understanding of what the unpaid carer role looks like and given us a voice, because individually we don't have the chance to make our voice heard. Having more registered members is critical because the more carers we have, the louder our voice will be."

"Carers Victoria has also organised some amazing support groups for us. Having those support networks is very beneficial - being surrounded by people who understand what you're going through can be so nourishing, particularly when times get challenging."

Despite the challenges, Merrin insists she is more than happy to have the opportunity to care for her mother.

"She's my mum and it's been really nice to repay her for all the years she cared for us. She's always been really supportive and wonderful with my boys over the years. She's been the taxi service for all of us and has done many pick-ups and drop-offs. My boys and mum have an amazing relationship and will talk about anything. Their close connection is something that a lot of grandparents could only wish for. It's very special."

Pledge your support for carers like Merrin by visiting <https://trulyincrediblecare.carersvictoria.org.au>

Community Engagement



Carers Victoria offers informative workshops for carers and service providers. In 2020, we launched a number of new workshops and training programs.

Service Provider Series

In 2020, Carers Victoria expanded its training programs for community care service providers. This practical training is beneficial for both paid and volunteer workers at all levels, as well as family and friends who are unpaid carers providing support to someone in their home.

The scope of the training focuses on knowledge and practical skills required to deliver services and improve outcomes for your clients, for example:

- › Embedding wellness, person and family centred capacity building and restorative care approach;
- › Responding to changing service delivery models and changing populations;
- › Providing first response to client or workplace incidents.

Our online workshops for professionals include:

- › Conversations with Family Carers;
- › Engaging with Family Carers;
- › Mental Health First Aid Training for Workforces;
- › Mind your Boundaries;
- › Self-care for Workers.

In 2021, our training program for service providers will continue to expand with plans to launch first aid and CPR training courses.

To register your interest in service provider training or to find out more, visit www.carersvictoria.org.au/serviceprovider

Workshops for Carers

From March 2020, all our workshops were held online in response to COVID-19. Our regular workshops included:

- › Older Person with Care Needs:
 - Advance Care Planning and understanding medical treatment decisions;
 - My Aged Care series;
 - Powers of Attorney.
- › Disability / NDIS:
 - The NDIS: An Introduction;
 - Supported Decision-Making;
 - Guardianship and Administration.
- › Mental Health:
 - Mental Health First Aid for Carers;
 - Mental Health and NDIS;
- › Carer Support Groups
 - Carer Support Group Facilitator Training.

Caring for Older Persons Series

This is a free specialist education series for people who provide unpaid care for an older person with care needs living in their own home. The person being cared for is generally over 65 (or over 55 if Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander background). Participants for this series may include the person's partner, child, grandchild, friend, or neighbour.

Presented by a specialist in the area, each workshop covers a specific issue relating to the health and wellbeing of older persons:

- › Contenance;
- › Falls Prevention;
- › Managing Sleep and Fatigue;
- › Practical Tips about Dementia;
- › Skin Health for Seniors;
- › Managing Holiday Stress.

Participants can register for a single topic or for as many sessions as they wish.

“The presenters from various workshops I have attended since April, have been friendly, welcoming through zoom, and very knowledgeable.”

Emily, Workshop Participant

Listen to your Art

This popular workshop series is a chance for carers to relax, connect and unleash their creativity. Meeting once a week for three weeks, each member of the art group creates decorative art on ceramic tiles, which can be used as coasters, tile house numbers or pieces of art. All materials required for the art group are delivered to the participant's house prior to commencement.

Places for this series fill fast so get your registration in quickly!

Mental Health First Aid

This new topic provides skills and knowledge required to help a person who is experiencing a mental health issue or crisis. Explore Mental Health First Aid through the unique lens of either a carer or as someone who may face mental health issues in the workplace.

To find out what's on and to register for a workshop, visit www.carersvictoria.org.au/workshops





truly
incredible
care

MICHAEL'S STORY

28 year-old Michael Casha, a busy marketing professional for a major bank, has been a carer for his brother David for as long as he can remember.



David is 30 years old. He was diagnosed with cerebral palsy when he was only five and has been a wheelchair user ever since. He requires daily assistance with the majority of tasks, including getting in and out of bed, eating, drinking, showering and travelling.

Despite this, Michael describes his brother David as having a positive energy that can “light up any room.”

“David is my best friend! He’s literally the star of every party he goes to – he laughs, smiles and generally loves people and brings joy to everyone else’s lives,” Michael said.

Michael’s role as an unpaid carer has significantly evolved since he became an adult. When he was young, he couldn’t always physically help out, but as he got older, he started to take on a lot more responsibility to help out his parents who look after David full time. For example, Michael now speaks on behalf of David with medical professionals and deals with David’s paperwork.

Things have become trickier since the COVID-19 pandemic started. When restrictions were put in place, Michael and the family had to take a few additional steps to look after David’s health. This included preparing extra gloves and masks when carers came in and spending more time with David as he has found it difficult adapting to socialising online. One of the biggest setbacks has been the reduction in David’s time in day services. In order to keep David safe, the family has had to minimise David’s social exposure which has taken a toll on David as well as increasing the demands on his family.

“During the pandemic, Carers Victoria has done an excellent job at keeping us informed of the available support and useful updates via online hubs and webinars,” Michael said.

Michael is incredibly proud to be a carer. “Being an unpaid carer means I’m helping someone I absolutely love and I find it important to have a recognised name for what we as carers do. I grew up as a young carer while going to school, without even realising it until years later. That only changed when I met someone else who was in the same position as me.”

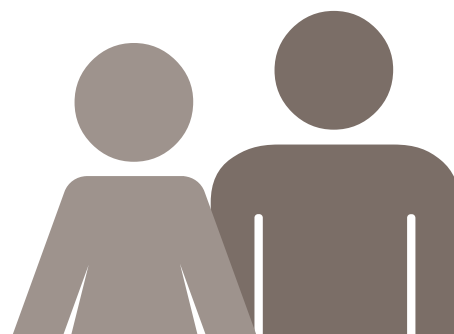
Michael believes that the impact on young, unpaid carers isn’t always understood. “A lot of young carers tend to be more mature than people their age because of the responsibilities that fall upon them. They essentially have to grow up quicker than a normal child and are forced to face difficult things that others wouldn’t have to.”

“I cannot stress enough the importance of having a support network! Knowing the role I have been playing was shared by over 750,000 other young people and many more adults in Victoria alone, was a much-needed source of relief – it removes the isolation that caring can bring.

“Knowing you’re not the only one and having people you can speak to who you know will understand, makes an immeasurable impact.”

Pledge your support for carers like Michael by visiting <https://trulyincrediblecare.carersvictoria.org.au>

Financial Report



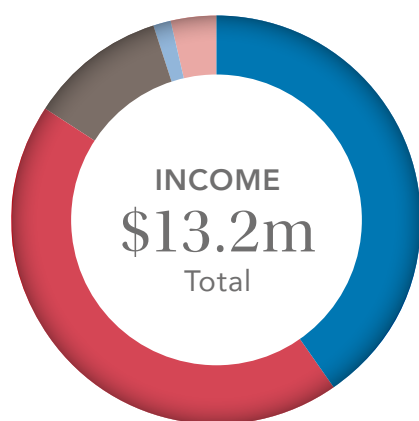
The landscape for providing support for carers shifted significantly in 2020. Approximately 40% of our funding to deliver several programs and services for the Federal Government ceased in May 2020 when the Carer Gateway was launched.

Under the Carer Gateway, Carers Victoria now provides services to carers in the Melbourne Western Metropolitan area. The funding for this is considerably less than the funding we'd received previously.

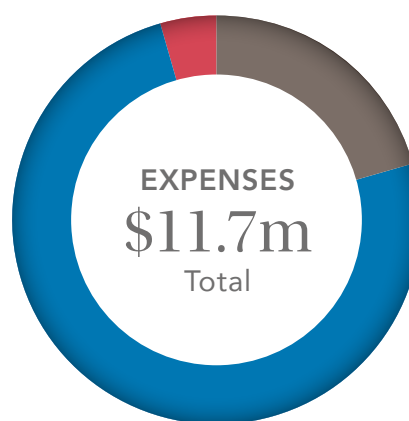
Forecasting this change, we planned our response accordingly, which involved a restructure of the organisation to ensure our on-going sustainability.

As the operating results reveal, we are in a very sound financial position.

Please note that as these results are for the calendar year 2020, they are not audited. As is our usual practice, all of our results and reporting will be audited following the close of the financial year on 30 June 2021.



- State Government Grants **\$5.3m**
- Federal Government Grants **\$5.8m**
- Projects **\$1.4m**
- Donations/Sponsorships **\$188k**
- Other Income **\$461k**



- Staffing Costs **\$7.4m**
- State and Federal Brokerage **\$2.7m**
- Other Expenditure **\$1.6m**

Community Groups, Partnerships and Sponsorships

Carers Victoria values our collaborative partnerships which enhance our ability to understand, influence and affect change for carers.

- › Ageing and Independent Living
- › Carer Gateway Australia
- › Commercial Passenger Vehicle Victoria Disability and Accessibility Transport Forum
- › Commonwealth Department of Health CHSP Community Care Advisory Committee
- › Deakin University Research Centre
- › DHHS Carer and Consumer Guidelines Working Group
- › DHHS Disability Act (2006) Review Advisory Group
- › Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria aged care and health policy sub committees
- › Family Planning NSW NDIA parent and carer project key stakeholder advisory group
- › Gay and Lesbian Foundation of Australia-VALID: LGBTIQ disability self-advocacy project advisory committee meeting
- › Health Literacy Alliance (HealthWest)
- › Human Services and Health Partnership Implementation Committee Victoria National Network of Carer Associations
- › LGBTI Suicide Prevention Taskforce
- › Melbourne Academic Centre for Health Primary Care Committee
- › Melbourne Ageing Research collaboration research project advisory group
- › Melbourne Disability Institute Victorian NDIS plan utilisation project advisory group
- › Mental Health Victoria: Victorian Mental Health Policy Network
- › Monash University Research Centre
- › Multicultural Centre for Women's Health - Hand in Hand Project Advisory Group
- › National Ageing Research Institute
- › National Disability Services Research Group
- › National LGBTI Carer Services Network
- › National LGBTI Health Alliance – LGBTI Ageing & Aged Care Advisory Committee
- › National Policy Advisory Group
- › NDIS and Cultural Diversity Network
- › North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network
- › Office of the Public Advocate Policy and Research Advisory Group
- › State Trustees Australia Foundation
- › Tandem (Mental Health Carers) members meetings
- › Val's – Aged Care Service Providers Network
- › VCOSS Peak and State-wide organisations Networks Forum
- › Victorian Carers Services Network
- › Victorian Electoral Commission Electoral Access Advisory Group
- › Victorian Government Elder Abuse Advisory and Safeguarding Group
- › Victorian Government NDIS Implementation Taskforce and ITF working groups
- › Victoria Police Disability Portfolio Reference Group
- › Victoria Police Seniors Portfolio Reference Group

Sponsorships:

- › Melbourne Queer Film Festival
- › Midsumma Festival

Thank you to the following supporters and volunteers:

- › Brian and Tiziana McKenzie
- › City of Hume
- › City of Kingston
- › City of Greater Dandenong
- › City of Manningham
- › City of Melton
- › Odonate Foundation
- › Palva Pilcova
- › Rotary Club of Mount Eliza
- › Sandra and Dario Lucignani
- › Sue Fincham
- › Stephen Alomes
- › Veronica Hassing

Become a member of Carers Victoria

Join our community and help us make a difference in the lives of Victorian carers.

We invite you to join Carers Victoria's free membership program. Membership is open to carers, former carers and supporters.

Membership benefits include:

- › **Exclusive invitations to events** including our popular Mingle events, carer workshops and programs specifically designed for carers.
- › **Championing for real change** through consultations, focus groups and research.
- › **Staying informed** with our monthly eBulletin 'The Voice' jam-packed with important carer issues, events and stories.
- › **Special member offers** including Hoyts movie tickets and discounts.

Visit our website or contact us on 1800 514 845 to become a member today.



Show you care for truly incredible carers



Pledge support for Carers Victoria so we can continue to help carers provide truly incredible care

Unpaid carers give so much and ask so little in return. Our world is a better place because of these silent heroes, and they deserve support. *Truly Incredible Care* aims to raise awareness about the enormous contribution that carers make to our community and to thank them for the truly incredible care they provide.

Show carers you care. Pledge your support for Carers Victoria today <https://trulyincrediblecare.carersvictoria.org.au>

Help support carer services and programs

While much of our work is funded by government grants, there are significant gaps. The generous gifts we receive from many of our members help contribute to the cost of important services and programs.

Please consider making a donation to Carers Victoria today via our website.

Donations of \$2 and over are tax deductible.



Level 1, 37 Albert Street
(PO Box 2204)
Footscray VIC 3011

T: 1800 514 845

E: reception@carersvictoria.org.au

Social Media: @CarersVictoria

www.carersvictoria.org.au

© Carers Victoria 2021

This work is copyright. Apart from any use as permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, all other rights are reserved.

Carers Victoria Inc. (Carers Victoria) is incorporated under the Association Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic).

Carers Victoria is supported by the Victorian Government and the Australian Department of Social Services.

ABN 12 533 636 427

ACN 143 579 257



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

truly incredible care