

CARERS VICTORIA CARER KIT

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 info, call our Advisory Line on 1800 242 636 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,
PO Box 2204, Footscray VIC 3011
Carer Advisory Line 1800 242 636
F 03 9396 9555 TTY 03 9396 9587
www.carersvictoria.org.au
ABN 12 533 636 427 ARBN 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 5pm Monday to Friday (except Public Holidays). To access this service please call our freecall number 1800 242 636. 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. A membership application form is enclosed. Membership is free for carers and I encourage you to join and support us in making a difference for caring families.

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 "Scott Walker".

Scott Walker
Chief Executive Officer
Carers Victoria

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 for carers, former carers and Carer Support Groups. Interested persons and organisations are also welcome to join.

MEMBER BENEFITS

Carers Victoria members receive:

- Three Carers News e-magazines annually;
- Monthly Voice e-newsletter;
- Voting rights at our Annual General Meeting;
- Invitations to special events and member forums;
- Member offers; and
- Carer member Hoyts Cinema deal.

Go to our website for more information or to complete a membership form:

carersvictoria.org.au/get-involved/membership

EVERYTHING CARERS A WEBSITE FOR VICTORIAN CARERS

Everything Carers is a website that aims to give Victorian carers everything they need to sustain their caring role.

At Everything Carers we are bringing together local caring news, information about peer support groups, local service providers and information and advice about the topics carers need to know about. These include the NDIS, reforms to the aged care and mental health systems, advice on returning to work after caring and how to cope with some of the difficult situations carers encounter.

For all this and more, go to: everythingcarers.org.au

MY AGED CARE

My Aged Care is an Australian Government website and phone line to help people find the government subsidised aged care services that may be 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:

myagedcare.gov.au/talking-to-my-aged-care-for-someone

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 and managing the scheme, and put you in touch with the right people. This service is available to caring families in all regions of Victoria.

To find out more:

everythingcarers.org.au/ndishelp

Carers Victoria Advisory Line 1800 242 636

NDIS Australia on 1800 800 110

NDIS CARERS ONLINE

Join over 1300 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.

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 to a family member or friend who has a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, terminal illness, addiction or is an older person 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 operate 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.”



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.

Did you know help is just a phone call away?

Contact the Carer Advisory Line on 1800 242 636

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:

- Support services;
- Counselling;
- Funding opportunities;
- Carer education; and
- Respite services.

The Carer Advisory Line is available Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5.00pm.

You can also find helpful information on our website: 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, over the telephone, via video or somewhere near you.

Counsellors offer individual, family and group sessions.

Our counselling program offers up to six sessions which are confidential.

Please discuss the option of accessing counselling in your preferred language with our counsellors.

Find out more by contacting our Carer Advisory Line 1800 242 636.

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.

Through our Education Services you will gain practical advice about your caring role.

To see the latest sessions available, visit:

carersvictoria.org.au

Carers Victoria also offers online learning modules. These modules cover topics such as:

- The importance of taking a break;
- How to access respite; and
- Talking with professionals.

You can access online learning modules via

[everythingcarers.org.au/
resources/learn-online-now/](http://everythingcarers.org.au/resources/learn-online-now/)

TAKING A BREAK: RESPITE 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, recreation-based activities and assistance with special equipment.

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 call 1800 059 059.

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 not involved with you, 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 out more by contacting our Carer Advisory Line 1800 242 636.

CARERS IN VICTORIA – THE FACTS

WHO ARE CARERS?

A carer is someone who provides unpaid assistance for family members or friends 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?

More than 12.5% (736,600) 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.

More than 292,100 Victorians with a severe or profound disability are assisted by family members or friends. This is 94% of all those needing assistance.

CARERS ARE DIVERSE

- Carers are of all ages, but are most likely to be aged 35–54.
- More than 10% of all carers are under the age of 25.
- More than 20% of people aged 75 years or older are carers.
- Sixty-six per cent (66%) of all primary carers are women.
- Fifty-six percent (56%) of primary carers are reliant on a government pension or allowance as their main source of income.
- Only 37% 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.

About care situations

Forty-nine percent (49%) of carers take on a caring role because they believe they can provide better care than available services.

Thirty-five percent (35%) of primary carers spend on average 40 hours or more per week providing care.

Key issues

Many people with a caring role do not identify as carers, and so do not access information, services and supports.

Compared to paid care workers, carers are disadvantaged regarding health and safety, holidays, work, leisure and financial security.

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.

It is anticipated that, in the coming decades, there will be a major decrease in the availability of carers proportional to people needing care.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012) Disability, Ageing and Carers, Victoria: Summary of Findings, 2012 (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.

TIPS FOR CARERS

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

Sometimes carers need help too

When you look after someone you can sometimes forget about your own health and wellbeing.

The Carer Advisory Line connects carers to a range of services including:

- Information and referral,
- Support and counselling,
- Carer education, and
- Local services.

Call our advisory line to find out how we can help

1800 242 636



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:

providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/victorian-charter-supporting-people-care-relationships-word

The Victorian charter supporting
people in care relationships
Carers Recognition Act 2012



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.

LGBTI CARERS

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

We recognise that LGBTI 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 LGBTI communities.

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

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

For more information, go to:

 @LGBTIcarers

 /LGBTICarersVic

carersvictoria.org.au/how-we-help/LGBTI-carers

CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE (CALD) 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 to help better understand our supports and information then this can be arranged.

carersvictoria.org.au/how-we-help/cald-carers

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 condition 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 condition 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.

HELP IS OUT THERE

Call 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

carersvictoria.org.au/how-we-help/young-carers

"I have extra stuff to do around the house and have to help my brother with autism a lot more. Sometimes it means I can't do things with my friends. But I have met other young carers through some Carers Victoria activities."

Adam - age 12

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CARERS

Are you providing care or support to someone who has a disability, a mental health issue, is frail aged or has a chronic health condition?

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.



carersvictoria.org.au/how-we-help/ATSI

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

CARER HEALTH AND WELLBEING

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

Our Education Services team runs workshops and educational programs to help you enhance your knowledge about how to best support your health and wellbeing, and the person you are caring for. For more information, go to:

carersvictoria.org.au/how-we-help/education

LEARN AT YOUR OWN PACE: ELEARNING

Carers Victoria's eLearning modules combine our expertise and experience with new technologies to create an easily accessible service to carers.

Access the eLearning modules to help you explore your caring role:

everythingcarers.org.au/resources/learn-online-now/

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!

Better Life Mobile ABN 47607567671 uses part of Telstra's 4G and 3G Mobile Network.

Partner code: CARERS

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

**Video MMS allocation measured in units. Each unit is a maximum of 40 seconds long.*

PLANS		Better Life Mobile
\$109 12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 500MB data per month• - video MMS*	
\$18 per month	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2GB data• 15 video MMS*	
\$25 per month	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4GB data• 30 video MMS*	
\$29 per month	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10GB data• 60 video MMS*	
\$35 per month	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 16GB data• Unlimited video MMS*	
\$39 per month	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 22GB data• Unlimited video MMS*	

VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT CARER CARD PROGRAM

The Victorian Government Carer Card program provides eligible unpaid primary carers with access to a wide range of discounts, incentives, specials and deals created especially for them.

Carers will enjoy discounts on food and drink, homewares, travel and entertainment.

The Carer Card is your ticket to a whole range of fantastic products, goods and services, and experiences.

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



NO INTEREST LOAN SCHEME

Carers Victoria has been approved as a Good Shepherd Microfinance No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS) community program provider.



NILS gives Australians on low incomes access to fair and safe credit to purchase important items, from home appliances to medical treatment.

NILS loans of up to \$1200 are usually available for the purchase of household items. You can also apply for a NILS loan to pay for essential items like medical aids.

For more information, go to: carersvictoria.org.au/how-we-help/nils or call Carers Victoria to inquire about a NILS loan today.

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 call 000 or go to an emergency department at a hospital.

CALL 1300 606 024 FOR NURSE-ON-CALL

For more information, go to: health.vic.gov.au/primary-and-community-health/primary-care/nurse-on-call

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

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 242 636
E reception@carersvictoria.org.au

 @CarersVictoria

 /CarersVictoria

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

