



Introduction to the National Carer Strategy

The National Carer Strategy (the Strategy) sets out a national agenda to support Australia's unpaid carers to improve and maintain their wellbeing, to empower carers with the tools, skills and knowledge they need to reach their goals and aspirations, and to better balance their lives with their caring role.

The Strategy is set out in 5 parts to explain what it wants to achieve and why.



The Strategy articulates the Australian Government's commitment to continuous improvement and growth in support for carers. It will set the direction and course for our collective efforts to drive positive change for carers.

Building on existing measures, the Strategy will be implemented through a series of actions over time to address the day-to-day impacts of providing care to others.

The experiences and perspective of carers will inform the development of action plans, and an outcomes framework. This will set the pathway for future actions to be delivered over the life of the Strategy.

Progress in delivering these actions will be monitored and reported based on the outcomes framework to ensure visibility of the benefits to unpaid carers across the country.



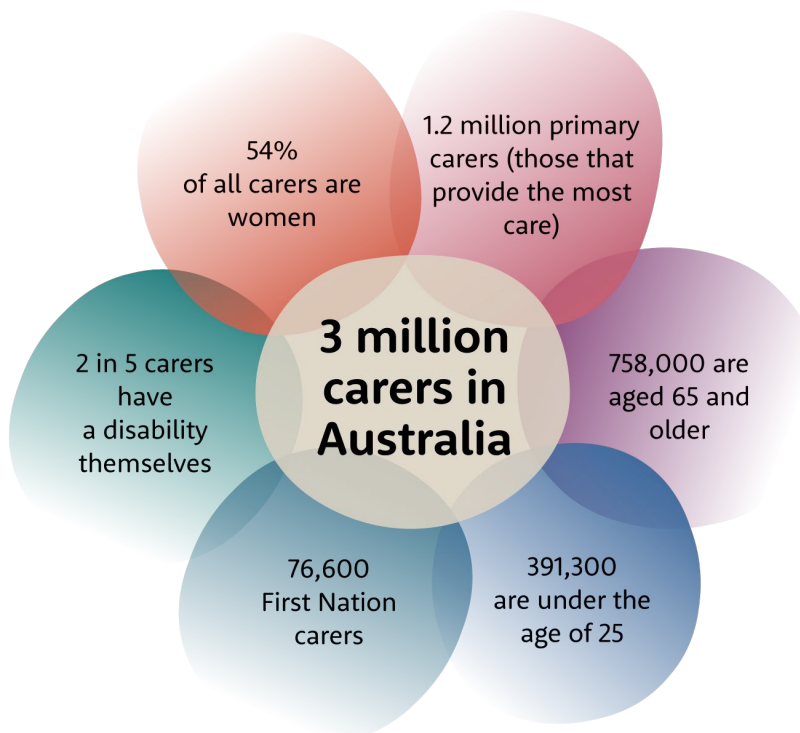
Development of the Strategy

The Strategy was built on a strong evidence base. To ensure it reflects the experiences and perspectives of Australia's carers we undertook a campaign to hear what carers thought:

- the Minister appointed an Advisory Committee of lived experience carers
- we released a discussion paper and questionnaire and received over 750 submissions
- we held over 100 in-person and online consultations across the country in metropolitan, regional and remote locations, including focused consultations with carers from diverse communities such as LGBTQIA+, culturally and linguistically diverse carers, First Nations carers, and young carers
- more than 1800 carers shared their perspectives to inform the development of the Strategy
- we commissioned the Australian Institute of Family Studies to investigate what the research could tell us about carers
- we studied the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs Inquiry into the recognition of unpaid carers to gain a better understanding of the carer landscape

What we know about carers

The [Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers \(SDAC\)](#) found:





Carers are diverse

The SDAC further revealed that in 2022, of primary carers, living in households:

3.4% described their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian, bisexual or who used a different term such as asexual, pansexual or queer (LGBTQIA+)

12.7% primarily spoke a language other than English at home

29.9% were born overseas

24.2% lived in an area of most socio-economic disadvantage (ABS, 2022)

There are significant information gaps about the actual number of carers in Australia and we need a more inclusive demographic picture of the full carer landscape.

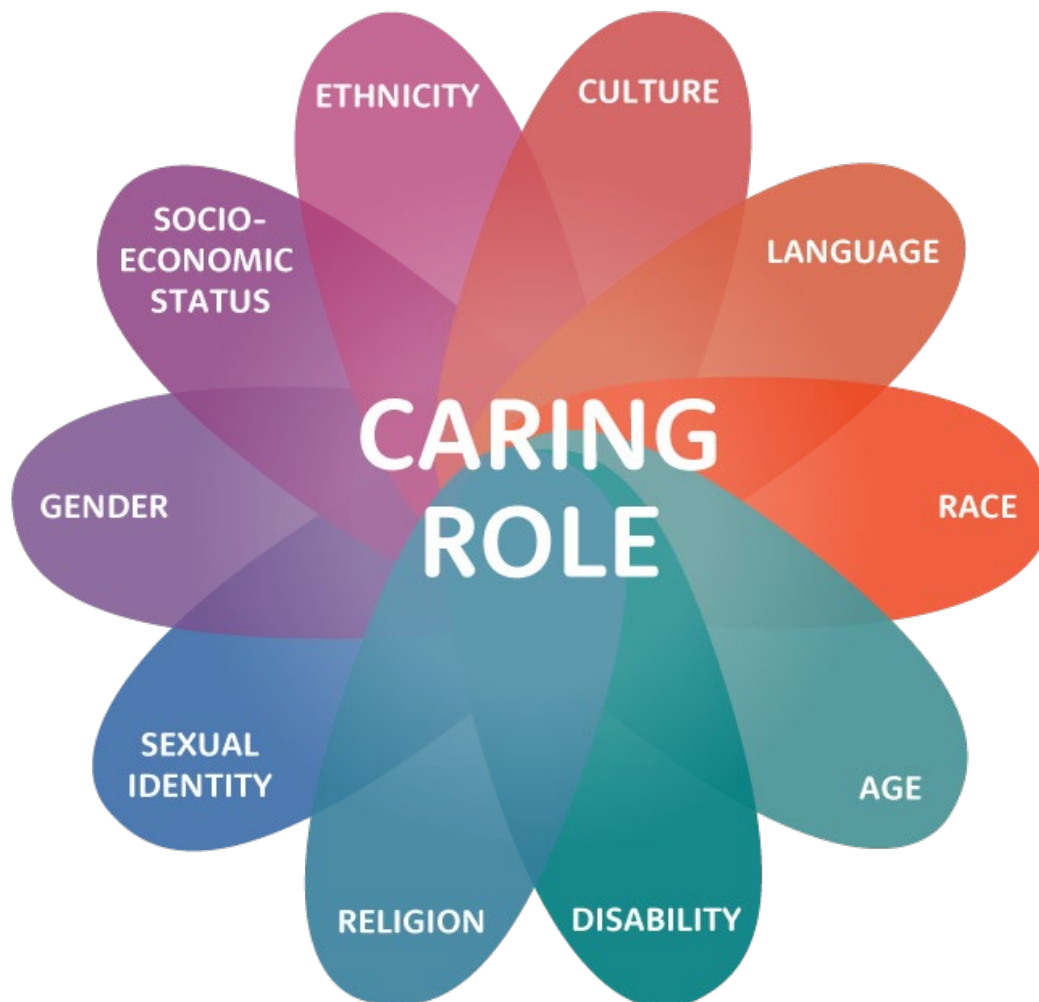
The Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS, 2024) identified that carers from First Nations, culturally and linguistically diverse communities and LGBTQIA+ are particularly under recognised and under identified in data collections.

Some people who provide care do not always identify themselves as carers. These 'hidden' carers may not be aware of, or seek, support services. AIFS notes that 'existing data on unpaid care may significantly under-estimate the size of the cohort.' There is also a gap in data for carers of people who are affected by trauma, such as veterans, refugees, and first responders (e.g. police, paramedics).



Intersectionality of carers

The intersectionality of unpaid carers must be acknowledged. The additional barriers, challenges and discrimination carers experience is increased for those with overlapping identities such as ethnicity, culture, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability and socioeconomic status.





Vision



An Australian community in which all carers are recognised, valued, and empowered with the support they need to participate fully in society and fulfil their caring role.



How will we achieve our vision?

In developing and progressing actions to achieve this vision we will be guided by a set of principles which reflect what we have heard is important to carers.

The principles will underpin the design, development, and implementation of actions.

National Carer Strategy Principles

	Carer-centred:	The lived experience of carers will be included in the co-design and co-production of policies, supports and services for carers. Carers' lived experience will be included in evaluation processes.
	Evidence-informed:	Carer policies, supports and services will be informed by evidence, and innovation will be used to address challenges experienced by carers.
	Accessible, equitable and inclusive:	Carer policies, supports and services will be inclusive and tailored to respond to the needs of all carers, at all stages of caring, recognising the diversity of carers and the importance of cultural and psychological safety.
	Supporting agency:	The design of policies, supports and services for carers will enable choices that suit them.
	Transparent and accountable:	Federal government departments will be transparent in their processes to better recognise and value carers and will report on their progress.



Outcomes

- Carers are identified, recognised, and valued.
- Carers are empowered to fulfil their caring role, whilst still pursuing other aspects of their lives.
- Carers' health, safety, wellbeing and financial security are supported.

Priority focus areas

- The community, government and those who provide paid care and support recognise and value carers' contributions and expertise and carers are supported to self-identify early.
- Carers can access supports, services and programs at the right time, right place and in the right way across the caring continuum.
- Carers are able to develop the knowledge and skills they need to fulfill their caring role.
- Carers can access, pursue and maintain employment and education, including to improve financial well-being for themselves and those they care for.
- Carers have access to supports that safeguard their psychological, physical and social wellbeing.
- Build the evidence base on carers to better understand who carers are, what are their experiences, what works for them and why.

Next steps to delivering outcomes

Over the life of the Strategy, we will continue to identify opportunities for improvement, plan how we will address issues, implement actions and ensure their success in improving the lives of carers.

Action Plans

A series of actions plans will be developed. In the first two years the Strategy will:

- deliver an outcomes framework
- deliver the first action plan
- work with stakeholders to implement initial actions

As outcomes of other reforms become realised, new priority areas for carers might emerge. Throughout the life of the Strategy we will measure and evaluate the impact of actions put in place. This will inform development of future action plans to achieve the Strategy vision.

Final review

We will undertake a final review and evaluation to assess the impact and effectiveness of the Strategy.