



# NATIONAL CARERS WEEK 2020

11th – 17th October

## Anyone anytime, can become a carer

There are approximately 904,000 carers in NSW and over 2.7 million unpaid carers in Australia providing unpaid care and support to a family member or friend with a disability, mental illness, drug and alcohol dependencies, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail. Anyone, at any time, can become a carer.

This year National Carers Week, dedicated to acknowledging and celebrating carers in Australia, runs from Sunday 11th to Saturday October 17th. National Carers Week is about recognising and celebrating the outstanding contribution unpaid carers make to our nation. Carers are as diverse as their caring roles.

**Caring can be physically and emotionally draining and many carers put their own needs last. If you are a carer, it is especially important to keep yourself healthy and make your own wellbeing a priority.**

According to Carers NSW, some stress is normal, but when stress reaches significant levels it can affect your health and wellbeing.

### The physical and emotional demands of caring

Carers are particularly vulnerable to stress because of the demands of caring. The greater the physical and emotional demands of your caring role, the more likely you are to feel stress.

### Lack of choice

Many carers feel they have little or no choice in taking on caring. You may sometimes feel trapped and resentful.

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### The Australian Government's Carer Recognition Act 2010

The national Carer Recognition Act 2010 came into effect back on the 18 November 2010. The aim of the Act is to increase recognition and awareness of carers and to acknowledge the valuable contribution our fabulous carers make to Australian society.

It establishes who is a carer and sets up reporting and consultation arrangements for certain public service agencies. The Act also contains the Statement for Australia's Carers which sets out ten principles to guide how public service agencies and associated providers should treat and consider carers in policy development and program and service delivery.

The Act complements the carer recognition legislation that already exists in some states and territories. For example, in NSW the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 was assented to on 19 May 2010. The NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 is similar to the national legislation, but applies to NSW.

### Interested in learning more?

Visit <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/C2010A00123> to read the Act and [https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05\\_2016/carers\\_recognition\\_act\\_2010\\_guidelines\\_april\\_2016.pdf](https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2016/carers_recognition_act_2010_guidelines_april_2016.pdf) to read the guidelines.



## The Byron carer

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[www.byronrespite.com.au](http://www.byronrespite.com.au)

Byron Shire Respite Service is located at the Brunswick Valley Community Centre, South Beach Rd, Brunswick Heads.

**Our incorporated non-government community based organisation is managed by a local committee and covers the shires of Byron, Ballina and Lismore.**

### NDIS Registered Provider

Respite care is delivered through our Flexible Respite, Day Respite and Social Support projects, with a person centred enablement approach across the respite continuum.

Telephone Janine on: (02) 6685 1629 or Peter on: (02) 6685 1921

Website: [www.byronrespite.com.au](http://www.byronrespite.com.au)  
Email: [service@byronrespite.com.au](mailto:service@byronrespite.com.au)



Byron Shire Respite Service acknowledge and pay respect to the Arakwal people of the Bundjalung nation, the traditional owners of the land on which we live and care – and pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging.

Byron Shire Respite Service Inc. is supported by the Australian Government Department of Health. Visit [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

Although funding for the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP) has been provided by the Australian Government, the material contained herein does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Australian Government.



◀ Continued from overleaf

### Conflict and frustration

Relationships can change under the pressures of illness and adversity. This may lead to increased levels of conflict and frustration in your family. You may even be caring for someone with whom you have always had a difficult relationship.

### Lack of support

According to Carers NSW, many carers feel alone and unsupported. You may find it hard to access services and supports that meet the needs of you and your family. You may also wish that friends and family members would help out more.

### Social isolation

Carers can become socially isolated because of their caring role. You may have to give up your job, or it might be harder to leave the house to visit friends and do the activities you enjoy.

### Effects of stress

When you feel stressed your body reacts in the same way as it does to a threat. Your heartbeat, breathing rate and blood pressure all increase. The longer you feel stressed, the greater the impacts on your body.

This may eventually lead to stress related illnesses such as heart disease, high blood pressure, mental health problems, decreased immunity or chronic fatigue.

This means it is important to learn ways to manage stress in order to look after your health and wellbeing.

### Find out more

Talk to your doctor if you feel that stress is affecting your physical or mental health.

### Managing stress

The term 'stress management' means identifying what is causing stress in your life, then considering how stress is affecting you and what you can do about it. You can then plan ways to defuse tension or respond more effectively to difficult situations.

### Identify situations that stress you

We can't always put a stop to all of the stresses in our lives, but it's

important to learn to recognise the signs that you are feeling stressed. This way you can identify stresses you can address before it becomes overwhelming.

Read over the list of some of the symptoms of stress below and learn to recognise when you are becoming stressed:

### Physical symptoms

- Having trouble sleeping, tiredness and fatigue
- Headaches and muscle tension
- Racing heart or sweating with no obvious cause
- Overeating or loss of appetite, weight loss or gain.

### Psychological symptoms

- Feeling tense, impatient, resentful or irritable
- Lack of self-esteem
- Forgetfulness and indecision
- Feeling depressed, helpless, anxious or guilty
- Feeling negative about things
- Withdrawing from other people or from activities you normally enjoy
- Misuse of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or gambling.

### Ways of dealing with stress

Below are some suggestions for ways of managing stress. Managing your stress calls for work towards change – changing the source of the stress as well as your reaction to it.

### Change what you can

You may not be able to significantly change the demands of your caring role, but you can look creatively at small changes which might help. For instance, you could ask friends and family to help out.

### Accept what you can't change

Focus on what you can do to make a difference and identify and accept the things you can't change. Stress can sometimes be reduced

## Keep healthy Eat well and exercise regularly



- Get a good night's sleep. ● Don't drink coffee or tea in the evening and explore ways to wind down before bed.
  - Meditation, listening to music or reading can help if you have difficulty falling asleep.
- Find out what relaxes you and take regular time out to recharge.
  - Try to do something that you enjoy every day and spend time with people who make you feel good about yourself.
  - Take a stroll when you start to feel stressed – it can help restore your perspective
  - Talk with family and friends about how you feel.
  - Let off steam and encourage them to do the same.
  - It may also help to talk with a professional counsellor
    - Practice relaxation techniques.
  - Close your eyes and breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose and out through your mouth. Repeat ten times. This is a way of switching off, even if just for a few moments. Ask for and accept help!

### Build resilience

Try to nurture traits that are common in people who respond well to change and adversity:

- look at the funny side of things
  - build self-esteem
- and believe in your ability to cope
  - focus on good outcomes and experiences
  - accept unpleasantness, learn from it and move on

by changing how you react to it.

### Identify your strengths and weaknesses

You may be very good at mediating arguments or at switching off worries and thinking about something else. Someone else in your family may be good at finding practical solutions to problems. Build coping strategies around the strengths in your family.

### Learn skills to help you manage

Learn as much as you can about the condition of the person you are caring for and about techniques that can help you to manage your caring role better.

### Good planning can help you to balance your caring responsibilities better with the rest of your life.

Visit: <http://www.carersnsw.org.au> to read the original transcript of this article and find out more.



### Carer counselling

Caring can be a rewarding experience but it can also be challenging. Talking to a trained professional who understands your situation can help you address the challenges you face.

Throughout the caring journey, many carers experience a range of emotions including anger, depression, anxiety, loneliness, loss and grief. Family and friends can provide an important informal support network, however by accessing professional support through counselling you will learn new strategies to help you:

- Deal with overwhelming and confusing feelings
- Better understand your experiences as a carer
- Work out your own needs and develop ways to solve problems
- Manage conflict, stress and other emotional factors
- Learn and apply healthy communication boundaries
- Build resilience and cope with change
- Improve your mental, emotional and physical wellbeing
- Cope with grief and loss and learn how to re-build when your caring role ends
- Identify support systems and be connected to services.

Counselling through Carer Gateway Carer Counselling is now provided through Carer Gateway by calling 1800 422 737 or visiting [www.carergateway.gov.au](http://www.carergateway.gov.au)

### Payments for Carers

The Australian Government provides a range of benefits, payments and concessions to eligible carers.

This includes the Carer Payment (income support payment for people whose caring responsibilities prevent them from undertaking substantial paid employment) and Carer Allowance (income supplement for people who provide daily care and attention at home to a person with disability or a severe medical condition).

Carers receiving the Carer Payment are also entitled to a Pensioner Concession Card (PCC) which allows them to receive various benefits from the Commonwealth and State governments.

For more information, visit the Department of Human Services website at: <https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au>

# Need support?

- **Carer Gateway** telephone: 1800 422 737 for information about planned & emergency respite & other carer supports. [www.carergateway.gov.au](http://www.carergateway.gov.au)
- **Australian Government Department of Health** For more information about COVID-19 call the Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080 or [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)
- **My Aged Care** telephone: 1800 200 422 for information about the Australian Government's aged care system and services. [www.myagedcare.gov.au](http://www.myagedcare.gov.au)

**If you require emergency respite, please call the Carer Gateway: 1800 422 737**

- **Telephone Janine at Byron Shire Respite Service to discuss your role as a carer.** telephone: (02) 6685 1629
- **National Dementia Helpline** telephone: 1800 100 500
- **Carers Counselling Service** telephone: (02) 6628 6416
- **Carers NSW** telephone: 1800 242 636
- **Sandra Kimball Counselling** telephone: 0458 175 962
- **National Continence Helpline** telephone: 1800 330 066
- **NSW Elder Abuse Helpline** telephone: 1800 628 221

### Aids:

- **Byron Ballina Home Maintenance and Modification Service 1/65 Centennial Circuit, Byron Bay** telephone: (02) 6685 7312
- **Lismore Home Maintenance and Modification Service 43 Habib Dr, South Lismore** telephone: (02) 6622 2323
- **Bright Sky Cards for Continence Aids Payment Scheme (CAPS)** telephone: 1300 886 601

### Need Transport?

- **Byron Shire Respite Service** can assist with transport to medical appointments. Telephone Janine: (02) 6685 1629
- **Byron Shire Limousines** telephone: (02) 6685 5008 Travel for medical appointments free with travel voucher or for Veteran and Widow Gold Card holders
- **Brunswick Limousines** telephone David on: 0412 855 747
- **Tweed Byron Ballina Community Transport** telephone: 1300 875 895 Tweed Byron Ballina Community Transport provide transport to medical appointments, weekly & fortnightly shopping outings & monthly social outings. The service is funded to support older people living at home independently or have a permanent disability or Indigenous Australians aged over 50 years. Phone Kathryn in the Byron office on: 1300 875 895 for transport to medical appointments or Amanda for any shopping bus or social bus enquiries.

## Byron Shire Respite Service - Day Program Timetable



Lunch, morning and afternoon tea is provided. The cost for the day including transport is \$22.00 (Fees subject to change).

monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday
10am – 2:30pm centre-based day respite <i>dementia friendly</i>	10am – 3pm centre-based day respite <i>dementia friendly</i>	10am – 3pm Bus Outings <i>shopping days</i>	10am – 3pm centre-based activities for older people	10am – 3pm centre-based day respite <i>dementia friendly</i>
<b>For more information, please contact centre on 02) 6685 1921 Email: <a href="mailto:service@byronrespite.com.au">service@byronrespite.com.au</a></b>				

## Charter of aged care rights

Consumers receiving Australian Government funded aged care services have the right to be properly looked after, treated well and given high quality care and services. The rights of consumers are protected by a Charter of Aged Care Rights.

You have the right to:

- safe and high quality care and services
- to be treated with dignity and respect
- have your identity, culture and diversity valued and supported
- live without abuse and neglect
- be informed about your care and services in a way you understand
- access all information about yourself, including information about your rights, care and services
- have control over and make choices about your care, and personal and social life, including where the choices involve personal risk
- have control over, and make decisions about, the personal aspects of your daily life, financial affairs and possessions
- your independence
- to be listened to and understood
- have a person of your choice, including an aged care advocate, support you or speak on your behalf
- complain free from reprisal, and to have my complaints dealt with fairly and properly.

## Make a difference for local carers

It is our role as a community to do the best we can to support people living with dementia or disability to live well for as long as possible. One way you as a carer can help our community is to join the Byron Shire Respite Service's Management Committee as the Carer Representative.

The role of the Management Committee includes setting Byron Shire Respite Service's strategic directions, establishing fundamental values and principles, ensuring our financial viability and meeting all legal obligations. Everything the Committee does supports our vision, purpose and aims.

The Committee currently includes volunteers, members of staff and an external representative. We meet quarterly and hold an annual general meeting each November.



You may know Kerry, Emma, Skye and Karen in their role as care workers. These dedicated staff volunteer their time to lend their expertise to varying roles on the Committee.

Past members of the Committee included Carmel Lancaster who acted as Workplace Health and Safety Representative, Sue Nakkan, Staff Representative and Michele Toovey who acted as Association Secretary for 16 years.

Whilst our wonderful care workers do their best to represent the needs of our clients and carers, having a carer or client on the



## 20 minutes could save your life

**The BreastScreen NSW mobile screening bus is visiting locations across the Northern Rivers over the coming months.**

A breast screen, also known as a mammogram, is an x-ray of the breasts. The screen only takes 20 minutes to complete. Mammograms can detect very small breast cancers before they can be seen or felt. The program targets women aged 50–74 years. If you are aged 40 to 49 or over 75 speak to your doctor first to see if screening is a priority for you.

The Breast Screen bus will visit Brunswick Heads from 4th of November – 10th November.

**To book your free breast screen, either on the bus or at the Lismore or Tweed Heads clinics, telephone 13 20 50.**

Committee has the benefit of providing lived experience, bringing a wider point of view and providing fresh ideas which can only enhance our decision making when setting the strategic direction for our service and improving the quality of our support.

The role of Carer Representative is currently vacant and your input would be invaluable to the organisation, our clients and community.

For more details about the role of the Management Committee and Carer Representative, please ring Management Committee President, Hanne Brown on 0400 202 861.