

FAST FACTS

ON DISABILITY, MENTAL HEALTH AND CARERS



The Economic Cost of Caring¹

The annual 'replacement value' of informal care in Australia is **estimated to exceed \$60.3 billion each year**

The opportunity cost of time devoted to informal care, measured as reduction in paid employment due to caring, is equivalent to **\$6.5 billion**

Carers provide **1.9 billion hours** of care each year

The **rate of full-time employment among primary carers is 19.2%**

While the Australian average is 42.0%

Mental Health Carers

The estimated number of people in the ACT with mental health needs in the past 12 months ACT was **78,100**²

Carers for a person with a mental illness are at **particular risk for developing mental health disorders**³

Mental health carers expend on average **104 hours** per week caring⁴

Carers of People with a Disability

There are **61,123** people in the ACT with a disability⁵

Currently **80%** of care for people with a disability is provided by family or friends **rather than formal services**⁶

Who cares in Australia?

307,700 carers are aged under 24⁷

77,900 carers are under the age of 15⁸

Over 1.5 million carers are of working age (18-64)⁹

668,900 carers are over 65 years of age¹⁰

31,600 Indigenous carers are over the age of 15¹¹

620,000 carers were born outside Australia¹²

366,700 carers were born in non-English speaking countries¹³

Carer Income Support¹⁴

Carer Payment: available if a person is caring for a child aged less than 16 who has a severe disability or medical condition, or if caring for someone over 16 who has a severe disability or medical condition, or who is frail aged. Subject to income and asset tests. Rate per fortnight for **\$888.30** (single)* and **\$1339.20** (couple combined)*

Carer Allowance: Not subject to income and asset tests. Paid at a rate of **\$124.70** per fortnight

*includes Maximum Pension Supplement and Energy Supplement

DID YOU KNOW?

- There are around **48,850** carers in the ACT¹⁵
- There are nearly **2.86 million** carers in Australia¹⁶
- Two fifths or 40% of carers are primary carers – this means they provide the majority of help and support for the person they care for¹⁷
- 71% of all carers live with one or more people they care for¹⁸
- Over two-thirds of primary carers are women and most care for a close relative such as their partner, their parents or their children¹⁹
- Over half of primary carers say their main source of income is a government pension or allowance²⁰
- Carers have the lowest wellbeing yet researched by Australian Unity²¹
- One study found that 18% of carers only had face to face social contact once every three months or less often²²
- The same study found that many carers experience financial hardship²³
- Carers have a higher rate of disability and/or long-term health conditions than people who are not carers²⁴
- Regardless of the place of death, it is estimated that up to 90% of people in the terminal phase of a life threatening illness spend the majority of their time at home supported by a carer²⁵
- Caring can bring a carer closer to the person to whom they provide the most care²⁶

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