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ACT BUDGET A HUGE DISAPPOINTMENT FOR CARERS

The lack of funding for the ACT Carers Strategy in the 2021-22 Budget is a huge disappointment to the 50,000 unpaid family and friend carers in the ACT community and puts its continued implementation at risk. The ACT Carers Strategy provides the framework to recognise carers and the role they play in the community and sets out the actions to achieving a Canberra that Cares for Carers. Unpaid carers save the government an estimated \$77.9 billion annually across Australia in replacement care. Whilst caring provides many rewards, it comes at a cost to the health and wellbeing of the carer

“Despite being committed to by Labor and the Greens in the Parliamentary and Governing Agreement we continue to await funding to fulfil this commitment and the broader commitment that the Government made to carers through the ACT Carer Strategy” said Lisa Kelly, CEO of Carers ACT.

“Every day more than 50,000 family and friend carers in the ACT provide daily support and assistance to people with disabilities, chronic health, and mental health conditions, are frail aged or require palliative care. Every day they face challenges and difficult choices as they navigate their way through complex systems, family and work obligations, financial pressures, and the constant worry about the future. They do so with minimal support and recognition. Carers have some of the worst health outcomes and lowest wellbeing of any group in the community. An investment in carers is essential as it is an investment in the health, wellbeing, and economic outcomes of the community.” Ms Kelly stated.

As we prepare to celebrate and recognise the role of carers during National Carers Week from 10-16 October it is time to fulfil our commitment to carers in the same way that they fulfil the commitments they make every day to the people they provide care to. “During Carers Week Carers ACT will be strongly urging the ACT government to fulfil their commitment to supporting the 50,000 carers in the ACT community by announcing funding to support the implementation of the ACT Carers Strategy in its entirety,” said Ms. Kelly.

“This year, more than ever, we need to acknowledge the role carers have played during the COVID-19 pandemic. Carers have risen to the challenge and have kept some of the most vulnerable people in our community alive and safe. This often came at the expense of carers’ economic stability, health, and wellbeing. Carers have made sacrifices that exceed what was required from an average person, and they have lived with a constant fear and anxiety often without complaint” Ms. Kelly commented. “The time to show our support is now”.

-statement ends-

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