



NSW Government Human Service Agency compliance with the Carers (Recognition) Act

2018-19 Summary Report



For more information on this report, the NSW Carers Strategy 2014-19 or the NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 please contact the Department of Communities and Justice at facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/carers or email CarerStr@facs.nsw.gov.au

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1 Executive Summary

The NSW Government's vision for carers in NSW is that they are supported to participate fully in their own social and economic life. Supporting carers is the responsibility of the community and all levels of government.

The NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 (the Act) was introduced to formally recognise the significant contribution carers make to the people they care for and the community. It provides clear legislative recognition of carers as well as placing obligations on human services agencies to:

- ensure that all of their staff take action to reflect the principles of the NSW Carers Charter
- report on their compliance with the Act in their annual report.

A 2016 review of the Act found that annual reporting is an appropriate mechanism to ensure that the key agencies providing services take responsibility for complying with the Act. This can be seen through Recommendation 2 of the review:

FACS makes arrangements with human service agencies to collate and publish their reports on compliance with the Act (as included in their annual reports). FACS will then provide an annual collated report to the Minister.

The Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ, formerly the Department of Family and Community Services) presents this Summary Report in accordance with the review's recommendation. The report summarises information published by human service agencies in their annual reports about compliance with the Act in the reporting year 2018/19.

A detailed collation of all activities reported by these agencies in 2018/19 annual reports is available in **Appendix A**. This report, including the appendix, will be published on the website <https://www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/carers/carers-act>

This report includes a snapshot of examples of good practice reported in 2018/19 annual reporting by ten NSW Government agencies and departments, and 87 local government areas. There has been a promising range of activities reported in 2018/19 in relation to establishing new projects or expanding existing services to better support carers. There has been an increase in reporting of activities by local government.

It is important to note that this process of reporting relies on human service agencies to capture and publish the activities they have put in place to support carers. It may not be reflective of the breadth of activity being implemented across NSW.

DCJ will continue to work with human service agencies to increase the quality of future reporting on compliance with the Act. This includes an increased focus on consultation and liaison with carers, the area where human service agencies have continued to report the least activity.

2 Background

2.1 NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010

The objects of the Act, are to:

- Enact a Carers Charter that recognises the role and contribution of carers to our community and to the people they care for.
- Increase awareness of the valuable contribution that carers make to our community.

The Act places specific obligations on NSW public sector agencies which includes government departments and local councils, to:

- take reasonable steps to ensure that staff are aware of and understand the NSW Carers Charter
- consult with carers or organisations that represent carers when developing policies that impact on carers
- have regard to the Carers Charter when developing their human resource policies.

The NSW Carers Charter includes 13 principles that affirm the valuable contribution that carers make and provides guidance to agencies on issues of significance for carers. It outlines how carers in NSW should be treated and what must also be considered when developing policies that impact on carers.

2.2 NSW Human Service Agency obligations under the Act

The Act places additional obligations on human service agencies to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the agency, members of staff and agents of the agency take action to reflect the principles of the NSW Carers Charter.

Human service agencies are also required to prepare a report on their compliance with the Act annually to be included in the agency's annual report. This process of annual reporting is an important part of monitoring how the Act is being implemented across NSW.

DCJ is responsible for leading the implementation of the Act throughout the NSW public sector. A range of resources are available on the [DJC website](#) to help guide and support human service agencies in fulfilling these obligations. This includes Implementation Guidelines and an annual reporting template.

2.2.1 Human services agency definition

Human services agencies are defined by the Act as being any public service agency that provides services directed at carers or persons being cared for by carers.

Carers are defined in Section 5 of the Act as a person who provides ongoing personal care, support and assistance to any other individual who needs it. The person needs it as they have a disability, medical condition, mental illness or are frail and aged.

Under the Act, 'human services agencies' are those 'public service agencies' that provide either or both of:

- services directed at persons with disability, a medical condition, a mental illness or are frail and aged
- services directed at people who are carers of the above listed categories of persons.

2.3 Recommendations for the 2016 Statutory Review of the Act

The report of the 2016 statutory review of the Act included 10 recommendations focused on improving outcomes for carers via increased education about the Act. As well as other legal and policy initiatives to support carers in NSW.

The review found that annual reports are an appropriate mechanism for human service agencies, and other key agencies who provide services to carers, to report on their service provision to carers.

It also found that there is limited awareness of the activities undertaken by human services agencies under the Act.

It is recommended that to raise the profile of compliance activities, DCJ should collate and publish agency compliance statements on its website for easier access and provide a report to the Minister (Recommendation 2).



3 Examples of good practice

Human service agencies are able to use an annual reporting template that is simple and broad, provided on the DCJ website. This gives them the opportunity to report on many aspects of their service and the actions they might have undertaken to support carers and to meet their obligations under the Act.

It allows agencies to report on strategies to support carers with particular focus on the following three areas:

- **Initiatives to support carers** – including education strategies to inform staff and raise awareness about carers, the NSW Carers Charter or to improve the way they interact with carers.
- **Consultation and liaison with carers** - on any policy issues that affect them.
- **Human resources policies and practice** - how the agency supports staff who are carers, including human resource policies and practice.

DCJ undertook a **desktop review** of the information provided by ten NSW Government agencies and departments and 87 local government areas in their reporting on compliance with the Act in their annual reports.

The review revealed a range of activity to support carers across NSW and found:

- A major increase in the number of councils that have reported activity in supporting carers, from 25 in 2016/17 to 66 in 2017/18 and 87 in 2018/19.
- An increase in initiatives for carers from a culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) background within Local Government Areas (LGA) across Sydney Metropolitan area.
- Acknowledgement and support aimed exclusively for carers through initiatives such as improving carers own health and wellbeing.
- Increased opportunities for carers to inform, empower and educate them in their caring role.

3.1 Examples of good practice

A snapshot of good practice examples have been included in this report across the three focus areas.

It is important to note that the examples do not reflect the breadth of activity across all human service agencies but rather what has been reported and collated through the desktop review of Annual Reports. It is possible that some agencies are active in carer support but have not reported this in their Annual Report.

DCJ is progressively implementing the recommendations of the 2016 Act review. This includes supporting improved compliance by updating Act implementation guidelines and resources as well as improving information about compliance reporting requirements.

3.1.1 Initiatives to support carers

3.1.1.1 NSW Ministry of Health - Patient Administration System (PAS) and Electronic Record

In 2019, a key highlight for the Ministry of Health was the roll out of the NSW Health Patient Administration System. This new electronic medical record will now display when a patient has a carer or is a carer. NSW Health states that:

“It will ensure that carer information is consistent, prints onto inpatient, outpatient and emergency department documents.”

An advantage of this initiative is that it will be an opportunity to help identify hidden carers living in NSW. The pilot program was trialled in Southern NSW, Murrumbidgee, Far West and Western NSW local health districts. This will be progressively implemented across NSW Health.

This initiative relates to Carer Charter principles:

1c. Carers' unique knowledge and experience should be acknowledged and recognised.

4a. The choices, views and needs of carers and of the people they care for should be taken into account in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services provided to the people they care for.

3.1.1.2 NSW Ministry of Health – Precious Michelle training video

The Mid North Coast Local Health District released an award winning video called “Precious Michelle”. This educational video focused on one family’s’ journey of caring for someone with mental health needs. It highlighted the importance of involving consumers and carers throughout the assessment process and care planning. This training video will be used as a national training tool and has the potential to reach carers across Australia. It was nominated for an award at the National Suicide Prevention Conference.

This initiative relates to Carer Charter principles:

1c. Carers' unique knowledge and experience should be acknowledged and recognised.

1d. The relationship between carers and the people they care for should be respected.

4a. The choices, views and needs of carers and of the people they care for should be taken into account in the assessment, planning, delivery and review of services provided to the people they care for.

3.1.1.3 NSW Ministry of Health - Improving access to Generic Family and Carer Supports via grants

In 2018/2019, the Ministry of Health provided grants to the value of \$5,198,641 to support carer programs in mental health. Funding grants issued by Department of Health involving carers include:

- \$801,200 to Aftercare service;
- \$814,100 to Centacare Wilcannia-Forbes;
- \$808,600 to Mission Australia;
- \$1,619,800 to Uniting Recovery- Parramatta Mission;
- \$21,341 to Mental Health Australia; and
- \$2,508,900 to Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW.

Funding was also granted to carers in palliative care including \$80,000 to the Cancer Council, \$80,000 to Carers NSW and \$80,000 to Palliative Care NSW.

This initiative relates to Carer Charter principles:

4b. Carers should be referred to, and assisted to access, appropriate supports and services.

3.1.1.4 FACS - Carers NSW Carers + Employers Program

In 2018, FACS funded and supported Carers NSW to pioneer and deliver the Carers + Employers project. This is the first initiative in Australia to formally accredit carer-friendly employers. This initiative forms part of the NSW Carer's Strategy 2014-2019 and the subsequent strategy that is to be launched in 2020. It aims to establish a network of employers to champion improved employment outcomes and conditions for carers. It involves an accreditation program to make employers more inclusive of carers at work and defining best practice standards for supporting carers in the workplace. FACS has submitted for Level 1 Active accreditation.

This initiative relates to Carer Charter principles:

2a. Carers should be supported to enjoy optimum health and well-being and to participate in family, social and community life, employment and education.

2.c Carers should be supported to balance their caring role with other roles, such as work and education.

3.1.1.5 Service NSW - Cost of Living education sessions with CALD carers

In 2018, Service NSW rolled out their Cost of Living Program which helps NSW residents find and access over 70 rebates and savings offered across NSW agencies. Through this program, savings can be made on power bills, utilities, health, transport, sport and recreation. Service NSW worked in partnership with Multicultural NSW and delivered *Cost of Living* presentations to carers in various CALD communities including Serbian and Croatian, Tibetan, Chinese and Spanish communities.

This initiative relates to Carer Charter principles:

2a. Carers should be supported to enjoy optimum health and well-being and to participate in family, social and community life, employment and education.

4b. Carers should be referred to, and assisted to access, appropriate supports and services.

3.1.1.6 Local Government Council initiatives

2018-19 Annual reports show a range of innovative supports by local Councils to support carers. Some examples include:

- Waverly Council offer carers "Carer Parking Permits" which provides discounted parking to carers providing daily support to their loved ones.
- Hunters Hill Council offered quiet times at community events and festivals to benefit carers and carer recipients such as Moocaboola festival.
- Campbelltown council also adopted the free quiet hour sessions at major events with over 830 people with a disability and their carers attending over three events.
- Canterbury-Bankstown Council delivered a unique campaign assisting carers through their "#NotYourSpace" project. This campaign aimed to raise awareness and discourage motorists from occupying disabled parking spots.

- Wollongong City Council demonstrated respect and recognition of carers by putting on a community awareness event “*Same, same but different*”. The panel featured lived experiences of people with a disability and their carers by sharing stories about dating, family dynamics and mental health.
- Ku-ring-gai council introduced a Dementia Café that is based at the Ku-ring-gai Fitness and Aquatic Centre.
- Bellingen Council held a series of Wellbeing and Enablement workshops dedicated to carers.
- Randwick Council held Art therapy and exercises classes to improve the health and wellbeing of carers.
- Georges River Council provided \$13,880 in grant funding to support carers from a Chinese background across three programs.
- Canterbury –Bankstown council supported Macedonian carers by delivering a Carer Connection project via the Macedonian Australian Welfare Association.

Councils also continue to use existing services in innovative ways to support and include carers, such as:

- Thirteen councils continued to support service provision for carers by offering access to local respite care, giving carers a break.
- Four councils including Griffith, Hornsby, Randwick and Strathfield, offer Library delivery services to persons including carers in LGA's.
- Community Transport operated across 11 councils in rural and regional areas including Armidale, Cabonne, Carrathool, Leeton, Mudgee, Murrumbidgee, Snowy Monaro, Snowy Valley's, Upper Lachlan, Warrumbungle and Wollongong.

This initiative relates to Carer Charter principles:

1c. Carers' unique knowledge and experience should be acknowledged and recognised

1d. The relationship between carers and the people they care for should be respected.

2a. Carers should be supported to enjoy optimum health and well-being and to participate in family, social and community life, employment and education.

3a. The diverse needs of carers should be acknowledged and recognised in policy, programs and service delivery, taking into consideration culture and language, age, disability, religion, socio-economic status, place of residence, gender identity and sexual orientation.

3c. The additional challenges faced by carers who live in rural and remote areas should be acknowledged and recognised.

4b. Carers should be referred to, and assisted to access, appropriate supports and services.

3.1.2 Consultation and liaison with carers

3.1.2.1 FACS – Carers Strategy Project Management Group

Underpinning the review of the 2014-2019 Carer Strategy and the development of the next Carers Strategy for 2020-2030, is a governance group involving a range of carers. This includes the Project Management Group and Aboriginal Working Group. During 2018/19 FACS met with both groups regularly, working towards the co-design of the upcoming Strategy that is to be launched in 2020. Both groups have a strong representation from a diverse range of carers, including CALD and Aboriginal carers who provide advice, feedback and contribute to decision making.

This initiative relates to Carer Charter principles:

1c. Carers' unique knowledge and experience should be acknowledged and recognised.

3b. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values, heritage and concepts of caring should be respected and valued.

3.1.2.2 FACS – Carers Advisory Council

The Carers Advisory Council (CAC) was established under the Act to advance the interests of carers in NSW and to advise on legislation, policy and other matters that impact carers. DCJ continues to provide secretariat support to the Council. The majority of the Council members are carers including young carers and carers from CALD and Aboriginal backgrounds. Council met throughout 2018/19, provided advice on a number of matters and held a ‘conversation with carers’ in Mudgee.

This initiative relates to Carer Charter principles:

1c. Carers’ unique knowledge and experience should be acknowledged and recognised.

3b. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander values, heritage and concepts of caring should be respected and valued.

3.1.2.3 Local Government Areas - Ongoing consultation with carers

From the desktop review eleven councils reported that they engaged carers to be part of the development and planning process of their Disability Inclusion Action Plans (DIAP). Gunnedah and Canterbury- Bankstown Councils continued to engage carers in their consultations since completion of their DIAPs.

Canterbury-Bankstown Council held additional consultations with carers when building an inclusive/all-abilities local playground called “Livvi’s Place Playspace”. Through this engagement with carers, a need for a fully accessible ‘Changing Places’ toilet amenity was identified. A Changing Places accessible facility provides an adult change table and hoist to enable carers to attend to the toileting needs of both adults and children with high physical support needs that cannot be accommodated in a standard accessible facility. The ‘Changing Places’ toilet was included to match the all-inclusive design of the playground.

This initiative relates to Carer Charter principle:

1c. Carers’ unique knowledge and experience should be acknowledged and recognised.

3.1.3 Human resources policies and practice

3.1.3.1 Local Government Areas

Overall there has been a notable increase in LGA’s reporting against the key focus area of Human Resources Policies and Practice. In 2016/2017, 20 councils reported activity under Human Resources policies and procedures for carers. In 2018/19 55 councils reported some form of Human Resource activity for carers. This figure has more than doubled in a timeframe of two years (based on reporting in Annual reports).

Popular forms of practice in making councils a more carer-friendly workplace include access to carers leave, flexible working arrangements, job sharing, access to Employee Assistance Program and consideration of carer’s individual circumstances. An example of carers being supported in the workplace in 2018/19 was recorded by Randwick council where 5192 hours in carers leave hours was accessed by employees.

This initiative relates to Carer Charter principles:

1a. NSW recognises the valuable social and economic contribution that carers make to the community.

2b. Carers should be supported to balance their caring role with other roles, such as work and education.

4 Strategies to support future reporting

In 2020/21, DCJ will update Act implementation resources and work more actively to support and encourage reporting by human service agencies and best practice in carer support across public sector agencies.



Appendix: A

Human service agency support for carers as detailed in 2018/19 Annual Reports

Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC)

Initiatives to support carers

- The NSW *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* (the Act) was introduced to formally recognise the significant contribution carers make to the people they care for and the community, by enacting the NSW Carers Charter and establishing the Carers Advisory Council. The Act requires public sector agencies to take reasonable steps to ensure that staff are aware of and understand the NSW Carers Charter, consult with carers or organisations that represent carers when developing policies that impact on carers, and have regard to the Carers Charter when developing their human resource policies.
- The Act also places additional obligations on human service agencies, of which the Commission is deemed to be one. In addition to their obligations as public sector agencies, human service agencies must ensure that the principles of the Carers Charter are reflected in their core work and are required to report annually on their compliance with the Act. The Commission report on compliance is:
 - Education strategies: Staff at the Commission are expected to comply with the Commission's Code of Conduct, which is covered in staff induction training. The Commission's Code reflects the core principles and values outlined in the Carers Charter around integrity, diversity and service. In addition, promotional material is posted around the Commission office as appropriate.
 - Consultation and liaison with carers: Policies that were reviewed and updated in 2018-19 were internally focused and did not directly affect carers.

Human resources policies and practice

- Staff carer support: As outlined earlier, Commission staff have access to flexible working arrangements and these can be utilised by staff who are carers, particularly for children and elderly parents. The Commission's Employee Assistance Provider provides confidential advice and support to staff and members of their family.

iCare

Initiatives to support carers

- This year the Quality of Life Fund was launched. The Fund will invest in and partner with organisations over the next two and a half years to create new services and support systems to improve quality of life for the seriously injured, their families and carers.
- icare provides information about major plans and services to individuals, families, carers and service providers. Other information is released via the icare website; including policies, resources, factsheets, pamphlets, reports, plans, papers, newsletters and statistical information.

- Two investment grants were dedicated to carers in the 2018 – 2019 period. I-care worked in partnership with Carers NSW to deliver:

Partner	Investment	2018 2019 Latest Review	Nature of work
Carers NSW	Adult Caring Coaching	\$170, 088	Provision of support services to children, siblings and family carers of severely injured people, to increase their resilience, knowledge, connections and wellbeing.
Carers NSW	Adult Caring Coaching	\$49, 737	Provision of support services to children, siblings and family carers of severely injured people, to increase their resilience, knowledge, connections and wellbeing.

- iCare continues to value the importance of families and carers and is committed to their better recognition and support for all carers. In the past year, their support for carers has been demonstrated through the following initiatives:
 - Supporting employees who are carers with Carers Leave if required.
 - Displaying the NSW Carers Charter in all icare offices.
 - Providing mentoring and support for families of people who are seriously injured in a workplace or motor vehicle accident, or after the diagnosis of a work-related dust disease via the WeCare program, developed in partnership with Carers NSW.
 - Funding service development initiatives which support families and carers of participants, including The Carers Way Ahead, an online program that provides training in managing challenging behaviours.
 - Ongoing consultation with participants, families and carers to co-design new processes, policies and services through representation on service development working groups and advisory committees.

Human resources policies and practice

- iCare continues to provide support to permanent employees who are carers by providing Carer's Leave which can be used in circumstances where someone they care for becomes ill or injured.

NSW Department of Education

Initiatives to support carers

- In 2019, NSW Education made progress with improving services and their accessibility for students, staff, parents and carers with disability:
 - We launched a new innovation program, which will provide funding to improve the learning and wellbeing of students with disability.
 - Students moving from a mainstream primary school to a support class in high school can now apply in Year 5, so they know what school they will attend earlier and have more planning time.
 - The Integrated Funding Support program no longer requires a new application when students transition from primary to secondary school.
 - NSW Education introduced an online complaints form and are piloting a Facebook virtual assistant to enable parents and carers to provide feedback and make a complaint. School websites have a direct link to information on the main Education website about complaints, compliments or suggestions. Back-to-school resources include more information about contacting the department about an issue or concern.

- The action plan to implement the *NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* also reflects the principles of the NSW Carers Charter in business activities. There is a dedicated page on our internal website with information, online resources and useful links, including to Carers NSW, for staff who are carers or who work with people who have carer responsibilities.
- The Student Engagement and Interagency Partnerships team leads work around support for young carers at school, which is an element of the NSW Carers Strategy 2020-2030. NSW Education are updating the resource – Being a Carer, Being a Student, and Being a Kid – in consultation with Carers NSW. The revised resource will be available through the department website in Term 1 2020. Young Carers NSW regularly presents at inductions for school counselling staff to raise awareness about young carers and provide resources for support.

Consultation with carers

- The department developed the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2016-2020 in consultation with a range of stakeholders, including employees with disability, disability groups, parents and carers, and principal representatives.

Human resources policies and practice

- The NSW Government committed to making all roles flexible on the basis of ‘if not, why not’ by 2019. Flexible work has been identified as a key enabler for meeting the Premier’s Priority to drive public sector diversity. We offer a wide range of flexible work practices to help staff balance their work and other responsibilities more effectively. This is also an important means to address work-life balance for staff with carer responsibilities, as well as work-related adjustment needs for staff with disability.
- The Department recognise that diversity encompasses the richness of our backgrounds and includes factors such as gender, age, culture, disability, carer responsibilities, marital status, gender identity and sexual orientation, educational level, life experience, geographic location and socioeconomic background.
- They provide a number of flexible working options that staff with carer responsibilities are able to access, including part-time work, job sharing, leave without pay and varying flexible hour arrangements. In 2019, 56,316 employees took short-term leave for family and community responsibilities.
- Staff members with carer responsibilities can also access the Employee Assistance Program, an independent, confidential and free professional counselling service to support the health and wellbeing of employees. We continue to consider options to enhance support to carers by continuously re-evaluating our human resources policies and practices to ensure they remain aligned with the *NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*.

NSW Department of Family and Community Services

Initiatives to support carers

- NSW Carers Strategy 2014 – 2019 is a five year plan to improve the position of carers in NSW. Over its lifetime FACS has been the lead agency for the Strategy and has led its implementation in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Carers NSW. A review of the Strategy has been commissioned and will be overseen by a working group that includes carer representatives to ensure that the carer perspective is central to reviewing the progress achieved over the past five years.
- The Carers Team commenced the co-design of the next Carers Strategy in 2018–19, in preparation for its launch in 2020. NSW Carers Strategy is a five-year plan to improve the position of carers in NSW. The new Strategy will include practical and innovative solutions that meet the needs and aspirations of carers in NSW, building off the strengths and achievements of the first Carers Strategy 2014–19. It will also focus more closely on carer groups that have specific needs and challenges that are not met by the service system.

- FACS extended Ability Links funding throughout 2018–19 to manage gaps and risks in the first year of full scheme NDIS. It is expected that the community linkage function delivered by Linkers will be encompassed within the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) Program funded under the NDIS. Since the beginning of the program, Linkers have supported thousands of people with disability, their families and carers with over 196,000 occasions of service and an estimated 1,575,000 community connections to 30 June 2019.
- On 15 December 2018, the Premier announced the appointment (from July 2019) of the state's first Ageing and Disability Commissioner, whose role is to better protect adults with disability and older people from abuse, neglect and exploitation in home and community settings. The *Ageing and Disability Commissioner Act 2019*, which established the office of the Commissioner, was passed by Parliament on 20 June 2019 and came into force on 1 July 2019.
- The NSW Companion Card program continues to support people with lifelong disability to participate in the community through free access to venues and events for a companion. At 30 June 2019, there were more than 31,000 Companion Card holders and 1,100 affiliate businesses in NSW.
- The Carers + Employers Project was launched in Carers Week 2018. This Carers Strategy project aims to establish a network of employers committed to champion better employment outcomes for carers. This includes establishing an accreditation program supporting workplaces across NSW to become more carer-friendly and inclusive, and is powered by a network of employers to champion improved outcomes for carers. This program defines best-practice standards for supporting staff with caring responsibilities, and is the first initiative in Australia to formally accredit carer-friendly employers. FACS has submitted for Level 1 Active accreditation.
- FACS developed an awareness campaign video for human service agencies to highlight how employers can support carers in the workplace and the resources available on the FACS 'care for a carer' website. The video was launched at the Carers NSW 2018 Biennial Carers Conference. FACS created a video of NSW Carer of the Year 2018 to improve awareness of the carer experience.
- Through the Carers Investment Program, the NSW Government is reinvesting \$5.6 million over three years for innovative projects that will improve the wellbeing of carers in NSW. Funding commenced in 2018–19 and is focused on 14 projects that are evidence-based and aligned with carer priorities as identified in the NSW Carers Strategy 2014–19, the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* and other relevant reforms in the sector. A diverse range of projects is funded, such as online peer support, support for carers to re-engage with paid work, social respite, capacity building of carers to provide care at home following hospitalisation, and projects that focus on young carers, CALD carers and Aboriginal carers. A key project includes the establishment of a Centre for Research at the University of Technology.
- A review of the Carers Recognition Act was concluded in 2016 and the final report included 10 recommendations. FACS continued to implement these recommendations in 2018–19, including increasing awareness of the NSW Carers Charter through an easy to read version of the Carers Charter and an Aboriginal-designed version of the Charter.
- FACS is working with Carers NSW to implement Recommendation One: to facilitate access for carers about carer protections in other legislation and complaints mechanisms. This is being progressed through the establishment of a Carers Rights and Complaints Network with representation from a number of relevant organisations that are working together to develop improved information and understanding about carers.
- Those providing foster, relative and kin care for children and young people may also be carers as defined by the Act; that is when they are caring for children and young people with disability, medical conditions and mental illness. The following initiatives contribute to supporting those in this dual caring role:
 - introducing My Forever Family NSW to recruit, support and train carers;
 - introducing a My Forever Family NSW Annual Carer Survey to measure carer, guardian and adoptive parent views, including satisfaction with the My Forever Family NSW and NGO and FACS services; and
 - establishing Carer Reference Groups (CRGs) in each district through My Forever Family NSW to help carers have a voice and promote participation in the out-of-home care system in NSW.

- The Aboriginal Housing Office held consultations to support Aboriginal carers during 2018–19 through Services Our Way. Services Our Way provides culturally appropriate service coordination, support and capacity building for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and families experiencing vulnerability, empowering them to improve their wellbeing and achieve their goals. This includes carers.
- Carers Week, is an annual national awareness week held in the third week of October. During Carers Week in October 2018, FACS arranged the following:
 - An awareness campaign that involved a carer video being played in GP waiting rooms across NSW. The video was shown every 30 minutes in 542 medical centres and 1,751 GP waiting rooms. Carer brochures were made available in these waiting rooms from August to November 2018 that included information to enable carers to reach out for support. This campaign potentially reached 1.3 million people.
 - NSW Carers Awards were presented at the Carers NSW Biennial Carers Conference. These awards recognised individuals and organisations across the state. Awards were presented to 11 individuals and one organisation at a dinner on 11 October 2018.
 - FACS funded Carers NSW to administer the Carers Week grants program in 2018, with grants of up to \$300 supporting 400 events across NSW. These events allowed carers to come together, connect and also to reach out to other carers.
 - A successful FACS-funded Carers NSW 2018 Biennial Conference was held on 11–12 October 2018 in Sydney. The conference, which was attended by carers, government representatives, NGO representatives and academics, aims to contribute to the carer research evidence base.
 - FACS ran a plenary session at the Carers NSW conference about the Carers Investment Program and also co-presented a paper with Carers NSW about the Carers Rights and Complaints Network project. The Carers Advisory Council also presented a session at the conference.
 - The FACS Inclusion and Early Intervention Directorate held a successful staff event in October 2018 to highlight both Carers Week and Mental Health Month. Invited speakers included a young carer who spoke about his caring role.
 - FACS created a video of NSW Carer of the Year 2018 Ivy Lau to improve awareness of the carer experience.
- During the 2018 – 2019 financial period, the following funding grants were put towards research and development:

Project Name	2018 2019 Funding	Project Status
NSW Carers Advisory Council: Understanding the social and emotional needs of carers (final report)	\$40,000	Completed
Recruitment Research with Aboriginal people: Attitudes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in becoming carers	\$45,000	In progress
Carers Investment Program: Carers in the Balance: Research on work and education options for carers	\$117,058	In progress
Carers Investment Program: Impact and Rollout of NDIS	\$148,570	In progress
Carers Investment Program: Centre for Carers Research	\$626,800	In progress

- FACS Disability Inclusion continued to lead a number of policy issues which support people with disability and their carers. This work includes:
 - Liveable Communities grants;
 - providing guidance to government and councils on disability inclusion action planning; and
 - continuing to work with Local Government to implement 'Lift & Change' accessible adult changing facilities.

Consultation with carers

- The NSW Ministerial Advisory Council on Ageing, the NSW Carers Council and the Disability Council of NSW were consulted regarding the establishment of the Commission.
- FACS provided secretariat support to the Carers Advisory Council, which was established under the Act to advance the interests of carers in NSW and advice on legislation, policy and other matters relating to carers.
- The Council provides advice and submissions to the NSW Government, including promoting the implementation of the Act, the development of the Australian Government's Integrated Carer Support Service, and the impact of the NDIS on carers. In addition, the Council identified a number of priorities for 2018–19, including:
 - having conversations with a wide range of carers to gain a deeper understanding of the concerns of hard-to-reach carers, including Aboriginal and CALD carers;
 - understanding, and identifying solutions to address, the social and emotional health needs of carers; and
 - providing advice on the NDIS to ensure it is responsive to carers – particularly for carers who are not eligible for specialist support.
- The Council met throughout 2018–19 and held the first of a series of regional conversations with carers in Mudgee.
- Underpinning the development of the Strategy is a governance structure involving a range of carers, including the Project Management Group and an Aboriginal Working Group. Both groups have strong representation from a diverse range of carers, including CALD and Aboriginal carers who provide advice, feedback and contribute to decision making.
- FACS introduced a specific question regarding caring responsibilities in the 2018 People Matter Employee Survey. It confirmed that 6.5 per cent of staff share caring responsibilities and 31.3 per cent are acting as the principal carer for someone who needs support due to disability, chronic illness, mental illness, dementia or frail age. The question was included again for 2019.
- Supporting carers of social housing tenants- As part of the Communities Plus relocations program, each tenant's needs are assessed prior to making new accommodation offers. This includes consideration to mobility needs and any modifications required, in consultation with carers and medical health professionals.

Human resources policies and practice

- FACS recognises the valuable contribution that carers make to society, and is the public sector agency responsible for implementing and reviewing the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* (the Act). During 2018–19, FACS continued to ensure staff awareness and understanding of the NSW Carers Charter by:
 - Continuing to embed flexible work practices to assist employees who are also carers, including providing flexible work hours, part-time work and personal/carers leave.
 - Providing a dedicated carers page on the FACS intranet, including information about the Act and how employees with carer responsibilities can be supported at work.
 - Promoting the National Carers Week campaign across FACS to acknowledge and thank carers in the workplace as well as the broader community.
 - Continuing to participate in the NSW Public Service Commission's work on developing and promoting a flexible working strategy for the sector.
 - Supporting carers by providing Specialist Helpline services as part of the FACS Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
 - Continuing to support a FACS Flexible Work Practices Working Group, whose role includes reviewing flexible work role design, building manager capability and related behavioural change initiatives, designing flexible work metrics and developing communication and change strategies.
 - Consulting and engaging with employees with carer responsibilities on policy development and review under the FACS People Policy Development Consultation Framework.

NSW Department of Finance, Services and Innovations (DFSI)

Initiatives to support carers

- In conjunction with the Diversity Advisory Council, eight Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) continued to increase awareness and made a positive contribution to DFSI's culture in partnership with the DFSI Ambassador Network. The ERG includes carers as part of their focus group.

Human resources policies and practice

- DFSI offers flexible work arrangements and support for staff to balance work and caring responsibilities. This includes online child and elder care kits available to all staff. Both kits provide useful information and links to a range of websites offering specialist help for carers.

NSW Department of Justice

Initiatives to support carers

- Best Employment Ltd was granted \$30, 106 for their Water Safety Fund (WSF) for the Platypus Paddlers Water-Safe Program: The program aimed to increase swim-safe skills for infants and toddlers, and encourage parents and carers to play an active role in and around the water, delivered at community aquatic centres in Inverell and Ashford, NSW.

NSW Trustee and Guardian:

- NSW Trustee and Guardian Newsletter advised guardians about the changes to carer programs including the departure of Carers Commonwealth Respite Service and the transition to the Carer Gateway program. The newsletter included information about new programs and services within Carer Gateway program and contact details.
- Committed and fulfilled outcomes in the NSW Carers Strategy 2014 – 2019 through increasing uptake of *Taking Care of Business* handbooks for Aboriginal communities.
- The legislative framework for NSWTG makes it mandatory to consider the views of those involved in the lives of people under a financial management or guardianship order when making decisions.
- This enshrines the role of carers in all decision-making processes for substitute decision-making. The involvement of carers in the decision-making process is reinforced through our decision-making framework.

NSW Ombudsman:

- Participated in community events to promote the rights of people with disability and their carers and to increase awareness about how to make a complaint they hosted a stall at the 2018 Carers Day Out.
- Over the past year, The Ombudsman provided 'Speak Up' training to family members and other carers and 'The rights stuff – tips for solving problems and making complaints' training to users of community services and their carers.
- A Deputy Ombudsman presented at the 2018 Carers NSW Conference on the topic of 'Lessons learnt by the NSW Ombudsman on improving the handling of complaints by carers about disability and mainstream services'.
- During 2018–19, they maintained contact with peak carers organisations via their existing consultative platform and through their core business work in overseeing the provision of community services. They worked with Carers NSW to promote their services to young people who are carers and participated in the Carers Rights and Complaints Network and helped to resolve complaints from carers.

Consultation with carers

NSW Trustee and Guardian:

- Recognises carers as key stakeholders. NSW TG operates in a complex environment. This means they have a broad and diverse range of stakeholders. This includes stakeholders at all levels of government, advocacy groups, service groups and the community including family members, carers, health professionals and service providers involved with people under a financial management or guardianship order.
- NSW Trustee and Guardian maintains information on the intranet for all staff on the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*.

Human resources policies and practice

- The Department of Justice is very supportive of staff with Carer's responsibility. The Department maintains two intranet pages providing information relating to Carers including:
 - The workforce diversity Carers intranet page, details a range of information including access to the department's current flexible working hour agreements and the Carers' Charter. In addition, there are a range of links to resources issued by the Department of Family and Community Services.
 - The Pay and Conditions intranet pages detail information specifically related to Carers' leave.
- Strategies designed to support Carers under the Carer Recognition Act (2010) include:
 - The Staff with Disability Network which has extended an invitation to all Carers to be members of this important departmental network.
 - The department will be launching a single Flex Agreement in late 2018, for staff who work under Flexible working arrangements. This provides a positive outcome for all staff, including those with Carer's responsibilities. The single Flex Agreement will provide consistent working conditions, while still allowing for existing operational differences particular to certain areas of work.
 - The department is in the process of reviewing all Flexible Work Practices Policy and Guidelines and aim to have an updated document available to all staff in late 2018.

NSW Ombudsman:

- Through the *Government Sector Employment Act 2013*, makes diversity a priority area for all public sector agencies. A key goal is for all public sector agencies to reflect the diversity of the wider community, also providing flexibility to diverse groups including employment of mature workers, young people and carers.
- Provided information to staff about the Carers (Recognition) Act and the NSW Carers Charter is displayed in the office. We promoted a range of policies that support staff who are carers, including flexible working hours, working from home, and leave for carer responsibilities. We consulted broadly on policies affecting staff to ensure that issues of importance to staff with carer responsibilities are appropriately considered.

NSW Ministry of Health

Initiatives to support carers

- The 2019 NSW Health Carers Program State-wide Workshop was held in April 2019 and showcased a range of initiatives which support the vision of the *NSW Health Recognition and Support for Carers: Key Directions 2018-2020*. The Key Directives ensure that NSW Health and its employees recognise the important role of carers and respond to their needs, so that carers feel valued, respected, engaged and supported in the NSW public health system.
- In 2018-19, the NSW Ministry of Health set out to define an innovative system-level strategy for patient and carer experience. The Emergency Department Patient Experience initiative was originally

implemented into emergency departments at Liverpool, Lismore, Blacktown and Nepean hospitals. Four key strategies were rolled out to help patients, carers and their families feel more welcome, safe, cared-for and empowered including:

- patient experience managers;
 - enhancing the waiting room facilities;
 - multilingual digital patient information; and
 - patient experience development for staff.
- Key highlights for carers include a NSW Health patient administration system and electronic Medical Record to record and display when a patient has a carer or is a carer. These changes will ensure that carer information is consistent, prints onto inpatient, outpatient and emergency department documents, and is available for use by NSW Health clinicians. The changes were tested in Southern NSW, Murrumbidgee, and the Far West and Western NSW local health districts. They are being progressively implemented across NSW Health.
 - Created an interactive *Consumer Enablement Guide for Clinicians* to provide information, tools and resources to help consumers, carers and communities manage their own health and wellbeing.
 - Delivery of pilot program service called LikeMind for adults with mental health concerns, as well as their families and carers. It brings together clinical and psychosocial services, including mental health, drug and alcohol, primary health and social services in collaboration with local health districts and non-government organisations to provide seamless person-centred care.
 - In 2018-19, the Bureau of Health Information continued to manage and expand the NSW Patient Survey Program, asking almost 300,000 patients about their time in the NSW health system.
 - The NSW Government committed \$20 million to improve the therapeutic environment of acute mental health units. The NSW Ministry of Health worked collaboratively with peak consumer and carer organisations to ensure investment targeted the development of welcoming environments that were trauma-informed and would foster hope and safety. Funding was approved for all districts and networks to co-design projects with consumers and carers to improve care experiences and outcomes. Many of these projects were delivered in 2018-19.
 - The *NSW Health Literacy Framework* released in April 2019 is a call to action for NSW Health. It aims to help all patients, their families and carers as active partners in their healthcare. Staff communicate with patients, families and carers in ways they understand.
 - The *NSW Strategic Framework and Workforce Plan for Mental Health 2018-2022* (The Framework and Workforce Plan) was released in August 2018. It demonstrates how the vision of *Living Well: A Strategic Plan for Mental Health in NSW 2014-2024* will be delivered and outlines approaches to embed the NSW Health values of collaboration, openness, respect and empowerment in practice, to build a health system where consumers are able to access and receive high-quality care. Achieving the objectives will drive improvements in health outcomes for mental health consumers and carers, and deliver more efficient and effective care.
 - Recruited eight carer peer workers to use their lived experience of caring, and their peer work skills, to improve the delivery of mental health drug and alcohol services. The carer peer workers provide representative input through collaborative policy development, committee activities, research, education and training within a non-clinical role.
 - Created an interactive *Consumer Enablement Guide for Clinicians* to provide information, tools and resources to help consumers, carers and communities manage their own health and wellbeing.
 - Introduced The Sydney Children's Hospital Network app where approximately used by 7300 parents and carers.

Local Health Districts:

- Illawarra Shoalhaven area introduced a My Care Board for use in hospital inpatient wards in support of the clinical handover process. The new tool aims to facilitate better communication among consumers, carers and clinical teams to improve communication.

- Illawarra Shoalhaven developed the District's first *Consumer Engagement Framework*, to provide better opportunities to connect with all patients, consumers, clients and carers.
- In the mid North Coast, the mental health and multi-media teams produced the video *Precious Michelle*, which focuses on one family's journey and the importance of involving consumers and carers in assessment and care planning. This video will be used as a national training tool and has been nominated for an award as part of the National Suicide Prevention Conference.
- The Nepean area developed and launched a NSW first Mental Health Consumer and Carer Council Charter.
- In the Nepean area, to best address local and individual health needs, they redesigned models of care to keep consumers and carers at the core of decision-making. A NSW first saw the introduction of a Mental Health Consumer and Carer Council Charter, making consumers and carers true partners in mental health care delivery.
- The Northern Sydney area launched the second *Carers Strategy 2018-2023* that will see initiatives such as a patient's status as a carer being listed on their medical records.
- Central Coast Health district- The district created a Manager of Diversity and Inclusion role that will work within the Consumer and Carer Engagement team and broader Clinical Safety, Quality and Governance directorate. The role will support the district to develop and implement strategic plans and activities that focus on consumers and carers who are from CALD backgrounds.
- St Vincent's Hospital Network introduced a bilingual counsellor who provides culturally sensitive and appropriate mental health support to Mandarin-speaking clients and provides more accessible support for the Mandarin-speaking population. The service includes; individual case management, carer support and promotion of mental health information in the Chinese community.
- South East Sydney introduced Effective and Efficient Use of Professional Interpreters in Clinical Care Project provided resources to promote interpreter services for staff within the district. The project also targeted patients, carers and families with promotional posters and banners displayed throughout facilities conveying the message that interpreter services are available, free and confidential. The project also produced a training video for Junior Medical Officers that promoted the use of interpreters. This video is used in training programs and orientation for new medical staff.
- Far West Local District implemented the Clinical Excellence Commission's Last Days of Life Toolkit in Broken Hill Health Service. This has provided standardised paperwork and language for identifying, discussing and implementing care in the last days of life. With an aim of increasing staff confidence and capacity in discussing end of life issues with patients, carers and colleagues.
- Funding grants issued by Department of Health involving carers:

Funding Grant to whom	Amount	Purpose
Aftercare service	\$801 200	NSW Family and Carer Mental Health program
Centacare Wilcannia-Forbes service	\$814 100	NSW Family and Carer Mental Health Program
Mission Australia	\$808 600	NSW Family and Carer Mental Health Program
Uniting Recovery – Parramatta Mission	\$1,619,800	NSW Family and Carer Mental Health Program
Schizophrenia Fellowship of NSW	\$2,508, 900	NSW Family and Carer Mental Health Program
Cancer Council	\$80, 000	Palliative care carers
Carers NSW	\$80, 000	Palliative carer carers
Mental Health Australia	\$21, 341	National Mental Health Consumer Carer forum
Palliative Care NSW	\$80, 000	Palliative care carers

Consultation with carers

- Feedback from patients, their families and their carers about their healthcare experiences is actively encouraged and more work underway to strengthen feedback processes. Complaints are entered on the Incident Information system.
- Reducing seclusion and restraint in mental health facilities is a safety and quality priority for NSW Health. A key foundation of NSW Health's implementation plan for this is to work in collaboration with mental health consumers, carers and families, to bring the contributions of people with lived experience of mental health issues together with the skills of mental health clinicians, and offer opportunities to further improve the quality of mental health services.
- The NSW Government committed \$20 million to improve the therapeutic environment of acute mental health units. The NSW Ministry of Health worked collaboratively with peak consumer and carer organisations to ensure investment targeted the development of welcoming environments that were trauma-informed and would foster hope and safety. Funding was approved for all districts and networks to co-design projects with consumers and carers to improve care experiences and outcomes.

Human Resources policies and practices

- To achieve this and meet the objectives of the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* (NSW), NSW Health continues to deliver projects, initiatives and information that: inform and guide our employees to recognise and support carers; value and engage with carers as partners in care and support employees who have caring responsibilities.

SERVICE NSW

Initiatives to support carers

- In 2018, Service NSW rolled out their Cost of Living Program. Service NSW worked in partnership with Multicultural NSW and delivered Cost of Living presentations to carers in various CALD communities including the Serbian and Croatian, and Tibetan, Chinese and Spanish communities.
- Service NSW acknowledges people with disabilities as customers living in the community and developed a Service NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2018-2021. Some programs that were delivered to the community that would assist carers of persons with a disability include:
 - An accessibility review of their Mobile Service Centres was conducted in May 2019 to further enhance dignified access to the buses for all team members and customers with disability. The recommendations from this review are being used to improve access to the Mobile Service Centres.

STATE INSURANCE REGULATORY AUTHORITY (SIRA)

Initiatives to support carers

- SIRA's role as a human service agency:
 - The State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA) provides services for carers and people being cared for by carers. SIRA's services include information and advice about injury compensation and rehabilitation and dispute resolution services for people injured in motor vehicle or workplace accidents. This includes people who have acquired disability, their families and carers. As a result, SIRA meets the definition of a human service agency under the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*.
 - Under section 8 of the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*, a human service agency must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the agency, and the members of staff and agents of the agency, take action to reflect the principles of the NSW Carers Charter. A human service agency must prepare a report on its compliance with the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* in each reporting period.

The report must be included in the agency's annual report for the reporting period.

- SIRA recognises the valuable social and economic contribution that carers make to the community.
- As SIRA reviews and updates its guidelines and public information, SIRA is working to recognise the unique knowledge and experience of carers and to ensure the relationship between carers and the people they care for is respected.
- In stewarding injury insurance systems and providing advice to Government, SIRA takes the view that the health, wellbeing and community participation of carers should be supported so that carers can balance their caring role with other roles, such as work and education.
- As an employer, regulator and service provider, SIRA is committed to being an inclusive organisation that is welcoming and supportive of diversity.
- SIRA ensures its organisation and work reflect the principles of the NSW Carers Charter by:
 - seeking feedback from carers' associations when developing guidelines or principles for the insurers SIRA regulates related to treatment and care for injured people;
 - providing customer services that recognise that the customer may be the injured person's carer;
 - supporting flexible work arrangements and providing specific carer and family support programs; and
 - maintaining support for a carers employee resource group and having carers as a focus of our internal Diversity Advisory Council.

Consultation with carers

- SIRA seeks feedback from carers' associations when developing guidelines or principles for the insurers SIRA regulates related to treatment and care for injured people.

Human resources policies and practices

- SIRA supports flexible work arrangements and provides specific carer and family support programs.

TAFE NSW

Initiatives to support carers

- TAFE NSW provides flexible delivery and assessment options to allow students to study and undertake assessment at a time and place to suit their personal circumstances.
- TAFE NSW makes personal, career and study counselling services available to students, including those with carers and those who are carers. TAFE NSW employs specialist staff where required, to identify and provide for the needs of students including referral to TAFE NSW and external services and resources.
- TAFE NSW promoted the availability of the Commonwealth Government's *Young Carer Bursary Program* on websites, the intranet and social media. The aim of the bursary program is to support young carers to remain in or return to education or training, leading to improved employment opportunities.

Human resources policies and practice

- TAFE NSW offers flexible work arrangements to help staff balance work and carer responsibilities. Flexible work options include permanent and temporary part-time work, job sharing, leave without pay, flexible working hours, personal Carer's leave and short-term leave to attend to family and community responsibilities. We provide information to carers about the flexible arrangements available in response to inquiries. At the end of 2019, TAFE will launch its "Working Flexibly" program to include tools and resources and capability build to ensure it is embedded in the organisation.

- During 2018–19, up to 3,858 TAFE NSW staff (70 per cent of whom were female staff) accessed flexible work options. These include up to 2,676 staff taking short-term absences to meet family and community responsibilities.
- Staff with Carer responsibilities were able to access the TAFE NSW Employee Assistance Program, an independent, confidential and free professional counselling service to support the health and wellbeing of employees, flexible and family-friendly work practices.
- TAFE NSW supports employees who are carers through existing human resource policies including sick leave, FACS leave, leave without pay and permanent part-time work policies.
- One of the options included in Working Flexibly will be a Transition to Retirement program that supports older workers who want to remain working but in a more flexible capacity. Employees can apply for Transition to Retirement for the purpose of carer responsibilities.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Armidale Regional Council

Initiatives to help carers

- Under *Armidale's delivery program 2017-2021 and operational program 2018-2019*, council continue to provide community transport from Guyra to Armidale via the Home Support Services bus each Friday with the assistance of volunteer drivers and carers.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council has a Flexible Working Arrangements Policy in place which provides for flexibility in handling work and family responsibilities. Council also utilises its Consultative committee as a consulting mechanism with employees during the development of HR operational policies and procedures.
- All employees are eligible for Carer's Leave and Employee Assistance Program. The Councillors Facilities and Expenses Policy makes provision for carer's and child care expenses.

Ballina Council

Initiatives to help carers

- Council's Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) has been prepared to meet the requirements of the NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014. The DIAP has been developed by listening to people with disabilities, their families, carers and local organisations who work with people with disabilities. This involved community consultation with neighbouring councils via a survey.
- Councillors who are the principal carer of a child or other elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family member will be entitled to reimbursement of carer's expenses up to a maximum of \$2,000 per annum for attendance at official business, plus reasonable travel from the principal place of residence.
- Council commits to enabling people from diverse backgrounds, underrepresented groups, those in carer roles and those with special needs to serve as a Councillor.

Comments

- Council is not considered a 'human service agency' under the Carers Recognition Act 2010.

Balranald Shire Council

Initiatives to help carers

- Council owns a fully accredited 15 bed aged care facility, the Bidgee Haven Retirement Hostel.

Human resources policies and practice

- In accordance with Carers Recognition Act 2010 (CR Act), s 8(2) Council meets all its obligations under the Carers Recognition Act.

Bayside Council

Consultation with carers

- Council adopted the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) in July 2017 after extensive community engagement with people with disability, carers and families as well as Council staff. Council undertook extensive consultation with people with disability, carers, older people, service providers, researchers and other key stakeholders. Council officers also sought direct input from key representatives from culturally and linguistically diverse, and Indigenous communities to ensure specific issues impacting these communities were identified. Opportunities for involvement included:
 - Attendance at forums held in Botany and Mascot;
 - Participating in an online survey on Council's Have Your Say page or a hard copy version of the same survey (169) responses;
 - Face-to-face and telephone interviews;
 - Small group discussions with existing community groups;
 - Service provider forum; and
 - Internal survey of Council staff - (110) responses

Human resources policies and practice

- Council provides new employees, through its induction process, information about available work practices that may assist them with carer responsibilities.
- For staff who are carers, assistance is provided through the Local Government (State) Award, Council provides a range of flexible work patterns to enable staff with carer's responsibilities to better manage work and carers responsibilities, including full-time, part-time and casual work; flexible working hours; and rostered day off systems. Council also considers requests for flexibility to substantive working arrangements for carer's responsibilities on an individual basis taking into account operational requirements.
- Council promotes R U OK Day every year, focusing on the mental health of staff by reminding them of the four action steps to start a conversation.
- Council also provides an Employee Assistance Program offering confidential counselling for work-related or personal problems.

Bellingen Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council has actively acknowledged and recognised the role of carers in the Bellingen Shire Community through its services provided by the Dorrigo Support Centre in providing six Wellbeing and Enablement Workshops “New Year, Knew You” throughout 2018 – 2019 on the Dorrigo Plateau. Carers were invited to participate in time-limited periodic breaks away with the service which gives them time to recharge from their caring role.
- The NSW Carers Charter is displayed at the Dorrigo Support Centre and staff are aware of and practice its principles. All carers and clients are treated with the respect and dignity as defined by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Blacktown City Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council offer flexible working conditions to employees including carers leave to care for family members and relatives, an employee assistance program and onsite counselling support services.

Bland Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- *Delivery program 2018 – 2022* in place to provide services to the frail, aged, disabled and their carers.

Consultation with carers

- People with disabilities and their carers encouraged to provide feedback to Council in the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council has met its obligations under the Carers Recognition Act 2010 as outlined by the Australian Government. The obligations being:
 - Having an understanding of the Statements for Australian Carers;
 - Raising awareness among employees and contractors on the purpose of the Act;
 - Ensure staff and contractors have an understanding of the obligations associated with the Act; and
 - Consider the needs of carers.

Blayney Shire Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Councillors who are the principal carer of a child or other elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family member shall be entitled to reimbursement of carer’s expenses up to a maximum of \$1,000 per annum for attendance at Council and Committee meetings and other official civic functions.

Blue Mountains City Council

Consultation with carers

- During May and June 2019, members of the community living with disability and/or mental illness (including parents and carers) were invited to share their experiences through a survey, focus groups and personal interviews. Council wanted to gain a better understanding of their needs and priorities, to help develop local solutions to make life easier.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council acknowledge that for people to bring their best to work requires a balance of both personal and work commitments. Council provides a range of options to support staff in finding this balance, including Carers leave for staff who care for family members and relatives.

Bogan Shire Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council adopted a Carer's Leave Policy in March 2013 with a revised version adopted in June 2019.

Bourke Shire Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council is not a Human Service Agency under the Act; however Council has formulated a policy on obligations under the *NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*. All Employees have the same rights, choices and opportunities. Allowance is also made to refund Councillors expenses involved in the provision of care for an immediate family member to allow the Council to undertake their civic duty.

Broken Hill City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council encourages young people to take up careers in local government, attracting and retaining mature aged workers with valuable experience and skills and engaging with under-utilised sections of the labour market such as women with young children, carers, people with disabilities, Indigenous people and people from culturally diverse backgrounds will assist to strengthen the organisation's ability to meet its future workforce needs.
- Council auspices several carer programs and activities to support carers in their caring role. Council maintains a record of staff who identify as 'carers' as defined under the Act and are considerate of the impact this may have on their work life.
- The Workplace Consultative Committee are kept up to date on changes in legislation impacting carers and the role of the organisation in supporting those staff. Further information on carer activities and education is frequently distributed throughout the Council and to various community stakeholders.

Burwood Council

Initiatives to support carers

- As part of Burwood Council's Disability and Inclusion Plan:
 - They have engaged carers through arranging A Good Life workshop was held twice in 2018 with the aim of drawing in more families who are experiencing difficulties in accessing services.
 - Council initiated partnership projects with disability groups such as Ability Links and Ethnic Community Services Cooperative to hold various information sessions for those families/persons who are yet to access services from the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Byron Shire Council

Consultation with carers

- Council wanted to co-create a community that is accessible and inclusive to everyone and created an Access Consultative Working Group (ACWG). The ACWG includes people living with disability as well as service providers and Council representatives. The group provides a link between the community and Council for issues relating to disability access and inclusion, involving people with disability, their families and carers in decision-making processes and planning.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council continued to ensure compliance with EEO based recruitment and selection, targeted training and development, merit based transfers, non-discriminatory employment and employment separation and supporting flexibility for employees who have family and carer responsibilities.
- Council has continued to raise awareness of the Carers (Recognition) Act and NSW Carers Charter by displaying materials throughout its worksites and distribution of information in staff newsletters, memos and emails.
- Council provides support to carers through its Employee Assistance Program which provides employees with access to up to five free counselling sessions per year.
- Council is committed to implementing contemporary workforce management policies that promote and encourage flexibility and ensuring employees who are carers are provided with appropriate workplace support and flexibility.
- In 2018/19, Council relaxed the documentation requirements for employees applying for carer's leave and staff can now access up to three days consecutive carer's leave without needing to provide medical documentation.

Cabonne Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council understands that a carer's input is integral to ensuring both independence and quality of life to those utilising Council's services. Carers are acknowledged as individuals and the relationship with those they are caring for is both respected and supported. This is taken into consideration with all carer interactions by Community Transport, Home and Community Care, and Children's Services.
- Council's services are provided in a manner which is both sensitive and understanding to the role and needs of the carer. All staff providing services have an awareness of the Statement for Australian Carers, and this is taken into consideration when developing, implementing and reviewing services.
- During 2018/2019 Council granted carers leave to staff members on numerous occasions throughout the past year and has provided some flexibility for staff members with ongoing caring responsibilities.

Camden Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council supports the NSW Companions card and accepts the card at its venues.
- In recognising the important role played by carers Council hosted a range of activities during Carers Week including a series of Carers Cafés; creating opportunities for carers to meet and engage with services for information and support.
- Carers Count gift packages were also distributed across the Camden LGA providing vouchers to leisure centres, movies and well-being resources and information.
- Council has developed a Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017 – 2021. The Plan describes Council's priorities for improving the accessibility and appropriateness of the information, services and facilities available for people with disabilities and their carers under the four focus areas.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council is committed to supporting employees with carer responsibilities. Council's Induction Program promotes employees' leave provision options including Carers Leave.
- Council complies with the NSW Local Government (State) Award, which includes various leave provisions for employees including 'Carers Leave'. Where employees have requested flexible working arrangements due to carer's responsibilities, Council has worked with them to accommodate their requirements.
- Council continues to ensure that policies remain supportive for all employees, particularly those with carer's responsibilities.

Campbelltown City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Under the Disability Inclusion Action Report, council had huge community success with the trialling and adoption of free Quiet Hour sessions at our major festivals, with over 830 people with disability and their carers over our three events.

Canterbury – Bankstown Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Partnering with Family and Community Services, Council acquired a portable accessible change room to not only use at Council events, but also hire out to community groups. The Marveloo is a purpose-built adult change facility featuring an overhead ceiling hoist, height adjustable adult change table, a fully accessible toilet, curtains for extra privacy, access ramp and automatic door, heating and cooling, and an external sun shade. This makes our events a more welcoming and accessible destination for community members living with a disability and their carers.
- Family Planning NSW delivered a project Sexuality and intellectual disability: free training for disability workers, parents and carers. Brief description of project included: To provide disability sector workers, parents and carers with strategies and resources on providing sexuality and relationships education to people with an intellectual disability.

- Macedonian Australian Welfare Association delivered a Carers Connection project. Purpose of project was to engage with Macedonian carers to contribute to building of a stronger community by increasing their capacity to live healthier lives.
- International Day of People with Disability Gala held for people with disability, their families and carers. Over 150 people attended.
- Mental Health Month Film Festival 2018 – Four films were shown throughout October catering to varying demographics of young people, CALD, seniors and carers. Approximately 50 people attended in total.
- Support provided for the delivery of mental health sessions for Vietnamese carers. 30 people attended.
- Motorists who illegally use parking spaces allocated for people living with disability and their carers is a problem throughout the world. This includes Canterbury-Bankstown where the issue is exacerbated by the City's cultural and linguistic diversity. In an effort to raise awareness about the issue and discourage motorists from doing the wrong thing, Council rolled out *#NotYourSpace Campaign*.

Consultation with carers

- Council design staff worked closely with principal, educators, parents and carers, and alongside many special-needs students from the Caroline Chisholm School and the broader Trilogy Schools Group to consult for Variety Livvi's Place Playspace. Through this engagement, the need for a 'Changing Places' toilet amenity was identified. This was subsequently delivered prior to the playground which was also an all-abilities/ inclusive design. Their feedback indicated that Council listened to their needs and responded accordingly.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council continues to offer a confidential counselling and referral service to provide support to staff and their immediate families. The EAP is integral to supporting all people-related, business-as-usual and change management activities, and provides crises management support, developmental/ coaching services, career support, conflict resolution, manager support and carer support.

Carrathool Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- The Multi Service Outlet (Aged and Disability Service) provides a wide variety of services to all the Carrathool Shire Council community members. Services cater for those who are frail, aged, people with disabilities and their carers who may need additional support to assist them to live comfortably in their own homes. Short term care packages are available for people needing help to recover and maintain independence after being in hospital. 195 hours in flexible respite to carers.
- Carrathool Shire Council is considered to be a human service agency' as a provider of services for carers and people being cared for by carers through the provision of Home and Community Care Services (HACC), Community Transport and Respite activities.

Central Coast Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Develop and implement consistent policy for compliance with Companion Card use at Council facilities and events. This involved new Companion Card promotional material distributed to all Council point of sale locations, i.e.: pools, leisure centres, stadiums, theatres and gallery. Confirmation received from all business units that Companion Card is promoted and accepted at these venues.

Human resources policies and practice

- As part of council action plan, Review and update all relevant Central Coast Council People and Culture policies to ensure inclusive employment practices that consider all types of disabilities, e.g. leave policies, including sick and carers, general work conditions policies and work from home policy.

Central Darling Shire Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Should a Councillor be responsible for any carer arrangements including children, elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate members of the Councillors family, in order to allow the Councillor to fulfil their Council business obligations, Council will be responsible for the reimbursement of additional expenses incurred by the Councillor whilst on official Council duties upon the production of the necessary receipt and completion of the expenses claim form submitted to the General Manager.

City of Parramatta Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Support is delivered to 85 carers via the Community Services Program, including CALD carers. An increase of from 47 from last financial year. This includes early intervention support, one on one informal counselling, referral to local services, carer support groups, access to flexible respite, and sharing of information through literature and education sessions that is also culturally appropriate.
- Bus trips and morning teas, a luncheon was held during Carers Week.
- Social Lunch program for people that have dementia; a volunteer is matched with a person to have lunch with, this gives relief to carers that their loved one is being checked on as well as socialising whilst having a meal.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council provides a range of flexible work arrangements to enable staff with carer's responsibilities to better manage work and carers responsibilities, including full-time, part-time and casual work; flexible working hours; and rostered day off systems.
- Council also considers requests for flexibility to substantive working arrangements for carers responsibilities on an individual basis taking into account operations requirements.

City of Ryde Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Social inclusion was in the spotlight once more with a series of community events, including UR Included, celebrating Social Inclusion Week. *UR Included* is a celebration of the creativity, diversity and inclusiveness in our community. Together we said '*UR Included*' by showcasing the achievements of people with disability, their carers, families and support services.

Comments

- Council does not provide services directed at carers and/or people being cared for by carers.

City of Sydney Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Awarded a Festival and event sponsorship grant to Carers NSW Limited for Carers Day Out 2017 – 2019 for \$15,000.
- The City was a member of Australian Network on Disability, the Diversity Council Australia, Pride in Diversity and Carer's NSW.
- The City also established a network of trained Peer Support employees to provide initial support and information to employees who may be experiencing an issue which is impacting on their mental health and wellbeing. This Peer Support Network includes employees with specific skills and lived experience in disability; LGBTQI; aged care and carers responsibilities; multicultural; migrants; refugees; Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders; domestic violence; drugs and alcohol and family breakdown.

Human resources policies and practice

- The City is committed to supporting people with carer responsibilities. The City's goal is to respond to the diverse and changing needs of employees who are carers by providing a flexible and inclusive workplace that is supportive of individual life situations. In 2018/19 initiatives to address the City's obligations under the Carers (Recognition) Act included:
 - Support for workplace flexibility taking into consideration the needs of employees with carer responsibilities.
- Building a 'care aware' workplace at the City through:
 - Embedding employee capabilities that provide common language and understanding of the behaviours, skills and knowledge expected of everyone at the City, including ensuring an inclusive, respectful and collaborative workplace.
 - Ongoing promotion of a carers toolkit to enable managers and employees to understand issues and find solutions.
 - Updating internal policies and procedures during the review cycle to ensure the needs of employees with carer responsibilities are addressed.

Clarence Valley Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council, through its Care & Support Services provides information, support, direct services and advocacy for people who care for family members with a disability, chronic illness or are frail aged.
- Care & Support also have a range of aged care services that may be of assistance to working carers who are responsible for their parents or older family members.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council has Flexible Working Arrangements policy to support staff and to provide flexibility in handling work and family responsibilities.
- All employees are eligible for Carer's Leave and the Sick, Carers, Health and Wellbeing Leave Protocol was updated and adopted in October 2018 to meet all Award requirements.
- Council has an Employee Assistance Program for all staff to access and its use is encouraged through the regular HR Bulletin. Partners and carers are also eligible to use this service. Staff are encouraged to contact Care & Support Services for any information about services that may be required in their caring role.

Cobar Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council's EEO plan identifies key actions to be undertaken to address the organisations EEO responsibilities. The plan aims to eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination in employment, promotion, training and transfers on the grounds of race, sex, age, pregnancy, sexual preference, disability, marital status, political opinion, social origin or religion, past convictions and carers' responsibility.
- Council commits to participation and access by enabling people from diverse backgrounds, underrepresented groups, those in carer roles and those with special needs to serve as a Councillor.

Coffs Harbour City Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council has worked to increase employment opportunities for people with a disability including the implementation of new flexible work arrangements that support employment of people with a disability and carers of people with a disability.

Comments

- Coffs Harbour City Council has not engaged in activities that require reporting under the terms of the Carers Recognition Act.

Coolamon Shire Council

Consultation with carers

- Council consults with carers when developing or evaluating policies, programs and services directed to carers or the persons for whom they care.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council has met its obligations under the *Carers Recognition Act 2010* by ensuring that:
 - Council employees and agents have an awareness and understanding of the Statement for Australia's Carers;
 - Council's human resources policies are developed having a regard to the Statement for Australia's Carers; and
 - Council employees and agents have taken action to reflect the principles of the Statement for Australia's Carers in the development, implementation, provision of and evaluation of policies, programs and services direct to carers or the persons for whom they care.

Coonamble Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- The Rights of Carers are incorporated in Council's Disability Action Plan.
- Councillors may be reimbursed for the reasonable cost of carer arrangements, including childcare expenses and the care of elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family members of Councillors, to allow Councillors to undertake their Council business obligations (including attending Council or Committee meetings), subject to a limit of \$50 per Councillor per month.

Human resources policies and procedures

- Managers are reminded of their obligations under this Act, and to include appropriate reference to carers when reviewing policies.

Cowra Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Under the Community Strategic Plan 2017 – 2036, Cowra Premiere Cinema continues to offer free entry to carers and Companion Card holders.

Comments

- Council is not a public sector agency as it does not provide services directed at carers or persons being cared for by Carers.

Cumberland Council

Human resources policies and practice

- During the course of the year, a diversity survey was conducted to provide Council with a snapshot of the composition of their workforce in terms of age, gender, employment status, carers' responsibilities, identified ethnicity, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander status, and languages spoken, as well as disability and requirements for workplace adjustment. This data was collected to ensure that the development of employment related policies and the package of employment conditions is developed and reviewed in a manner which takes into account the specific needs of our workforce. The data showed that the workforce is highly diverse, reflecting the composition of our community, which also provides benefits to our customers.
- Council has various policies and guidelines in place to support staff who are carers. These include:
 - Carers Charter
 - Carers Guidelines
 - Flexible working arrangements
 - Purchased Leave Guidelines
 - Job Share Guidelines
 - Carers Networks have been launched for staff that are carers
 - Carers Resources (internal) website for staff
 - Employee Assistant Program (EAP) available for all staff
 - Health and Wellbeing Activities Program available for all staff.

Edward River Shire Council

Comments

- Council is not considered to be a 'human service agency' under the CR Act.

Eurobodalla Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council will undertake actions to increase awareness of the *NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* in the 2018/19 to ensure that its obligations are met.
- As part of Eurobodalla's Community Action Plan they have begun discussions with the Parkinson's Support group to establish an art class for people with Parkinson's and their carers.
- Under Eurobodalla's Action Plan, Additional direct support staff have been recruited to meet increased demand for service as on average over 1,500 direct services are provided to NDIS participants by Community Care staff each month, plus more than 500 services arranged each month from third party providers.
- Council provides a wide range of services for people with a disability, frail older people, and their carers. In delivering those services Council:
 - Ensures home visits are done when carers are available;
 - Provides carers with respite to attend events/info sessions;
 - Provides client handbooks;

- Regularly renews care plans as directed by the client; and
- Meets with families/care recipients and carers to develop a work/care plan that includes goals and aspirations that will help sustain the carer in their caring role.
- Attaches the 'Charter of Rights and Responsibilities for Community Care' to client hand books.

Human resources policies and practice

- The policies and codes of practice that guide the way that Council staff work, have been developed to optimise flexibility of working hours while ensuring services to the community are of appropriate timeliness and quality.
- Council has a formal Flexible Work Agreement ratified by relevant unions, which allows greater flexibility in terms of starting and finishing times as well as allowing for the accrual of credits due to extra hours worked above standard hours. Staff, including those with carer responsibilities, can then access these credits throughout the year further enhancing flexibility.

Fairfield City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Supported Carers Week event in partnership with community and health organisations such as Anglicare, Parramatta Mission, Transcultural Mental Health and Carers NSW. Approximately 200 carers from diverse backgrounds supported their loved ones with disabilities and enjoyed a program of music and multicultural dancing.
- Held Carers Week Event - A carer's event in partnership with the local community organisations to celebrate the contribution of carers in our community, which included a formal dinner and entertainment.
- Celebrated International Day of People with Disabilities an event for carers and people with disability. Over 200 people from diverse backgrounds attended the event that included presentations and entertainment from carer's groups and the people they care for.
- Held information sessions provided for carers and people with disability about changes impacting on their lives, including language-specific sessions for CALD groups.
- Offered free access to the leisure centre to carers of people in receipt of the Disability Support Pension when they are supporting a person with a disability.
- Provided information regarding services and programs to assist carers at meetings for families and carers, network meetings and events.

Consultation with Carers

- Engaged carers in the development of the Strategy on Ageing for Fairfield City 2018–2022 and Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Human resources policies and practice

- The following policies and programs enable staff to request council support in achieving a work/life balance that enables fulfilment of caring responsibilities outside of their employment:
 - Flexible Working Arrangements Policy – Subject to operational requirements;
 - Appropriate Workplace Behaviour Policy;
 - Employee Assistance Program;

- Diversity Management – Equal Employment Opportunity Plan 2017-2020 articulating future actions that support the objectives of Carers Recognition Act and NSW Carers Charter; and
- Delivered an educational module through the Learning Management System, which included information on the NSW Carers Charter and Council support for employees who provide care for individuals with disability, illness or are frail aged.
- Provided training to ensure employee awareness of carer recognition support.

Georges River Council

Initiatives to support carers

- There were 3 main community grants that funded and supported carers in the George's River area:
 - Can Revive, \$7900 spent on self-management of diet and exercise program for Chinese cancer survivors and carers.
 - Chinese Parents Association-Children With Disabilities Inc, \$4480 Career and Leisure Learning Skill (CALLS) Training Program for CALD people with disabilities, their carers and the community.
 - Sutherland Shire Carer Support Services, \$1500 for RCP Program targeting female Chinese carers.
- Council information sessions in partnership with community groups, including the Chinese Disability Support Group, Post School Expo and an NDIS workshops. These sessions give people with disability and their families the opportunity to meet local disability service providers and learn about available services in our area.
- Our Community Development team facilitates and supports programs for seniors, people with disability, people with mental illness and other members of the community who may be cared for by carers.

Human Resources policies and practice

- The team complies with the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* and associated Guidelines and adhere to the principles contained therein.

Glen Innes Severn Council

Initiatives to support carers

- The Rights of Carers are incorporated in Council's Disability Action Plan.

Human Resources policies and practice

- Managers were reminded of their obligations under this Act, and to include appropriate reference to Carers when reviewing policies.

Goulburn Mulwaree Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Goulburn respite service provides centre based day care programs at the Goulburn Community Centre, 155 Auburn St, Goulburn, three days per week and the Brewer Centre in Marulan, one day per week. The service is for people who are frail aged, people with disabilities and their carers.

Programs are designed to enable them to remain independent and living in their own homes in the Goulburn Mulwaree Local Government area. This program is funded by the Australian Government, My Aged Care – Commonwealth Home Support Programme.

- Goulburn Neighbourhood Aid primarily involves the co-ordination of volunteers to supply a range of services that provide socialisation, companionship and practical support and assistance to frail aged people, people with a disability and their carers, to enable them to remain independent in their own homes, in the Goulburn Mulwaree Local Government area.
- Goulburn Mulwaree Social Support Services, endeavour to ensure that services are available to people who meet the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and My Aged Care – Commonwealth Home Support Programme guidelines. They can be frail aged people, people with a disability and their carers living within the Goulburn Mulwaree Local Government area without discrimination. People are not excluded from access to the services on the grounds of their gender, marital status, religious or cultural beliefs, political affiliation, particular disability, ethnic background, age, sexual preference, ability to pay, geographical location or circumstances of their carer.

Greater Hume Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Under the implementation of the *Greater Hume Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)*, GHC Policies and procedures reflect the needs of PwD/Carers and Customer Service Staff are aware of the resources needed to respond to PwD/Carers.
- Promotion of the NSW Carers Charter and Carers Rights to GHSC staff.

Griffith City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Griffith City Council has provided the following Home and Community Care services in relation to providing information, support and advocacy for people who care for family members with a disability, chronic illness or are frail aged. These services are:
 - Council provides home delivery of library material for those unable to attend the Griffith City Library;
 - Council staff are encouraged to volunteer during work hours to deliver meals on wheels to residents in need;
 - Free Wide Angle Film Festival held for carers and people living with a disability;
 - Funding provided to Aged Support Services to enable social outings and support group gatherings for the frail aged and carers of people with dementia; and
 - Support provided to various groups through the Senior Citizens Working Group Meetings.

Consultation with carers

- The Disability Inclusion Action Plan was developed by listening to people with disabilities, their families, carers and local organisations who work with people with disability.

Gunnedah Shire Council

Consultation with carers

- Whilst developing the *Disability Inclusion Plan 2017 – 2021*, the consultation process highlighted the barriers that still remain for people with disability and their carers when accessing information and services, and when getting around our community, and based on the feedback and ideas received, the Plan sets out strategies to address those barriers. Council's Access Working Group will support the implementation of the Plan, and Council looks forward to continuing our conversations with the community, and in particular, people with disability and their carers, in order to maximize the potential that this Plan provides.

Human Resources policies and practice

- Council human resource and equal employment opportunity policies fully reflect the principles embedded in the Carers Recognition Act 2010.
- Under some circumstances, flexible working hours have been granted to staff which enables these employees to perform their caring role. Council has a carer's leave available for employees who are unable to attend work because of their caring role. If an employee has exhausted all sick leave when performing their caring role, other leave may be used to continue in their caring role.
- Under some circumstances, flexible working hours have been granted to staff which enables these employees to perform their caring role. Staff also have access to carer's leave to look after persons they care for once their sick leave has been exhausted.

Gwydir Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) services celebrated Carers week by taking all the carers to a luncheon at the local "Okiedokie" Café in Warialda.
- Naroo Frail Aged Care facility recognises family and carers on a monthly basis by holding a BBQ each month to celebrate the resident's birthdays and inviting them to attend.
- Work has commenced on implementation of Dementia Friendly communities within the shire and the first step is organising a dementia alliance group which is made up of people in the community who are interested in helping to make their community or town more dementia-friendly. It is essential that the alliance includes people with dementia alongside their carers and family members of people with dementia.
- Staff awareness and education is available through various programs such as Dementia Australia and Golden Carers. Staff also have access to webinars providing information and education on programs such as the new Integrated Carer Support Service Model.

Consultation with carers

- The relationship between carers and the persons for whom they care is recognised and respected within the Gwydir Shire. Carers are considered to be partners with all other care providers in the provision of care and are treated with dignity and respect.
- Gwydir Shire acknowledges the important role carers play within the community and aims to provide timely and appropriate support. Aged Care within the Gwydir Shire involve carers in the ongoing health management by way of inclusion in Case Conferences and being consulted about new program proposals that are directed to carers or the person they care for.
- Gwydir Shire seeks input and feedback from consumers and their carers and has access to various methods for raising and resolving complaints. This feedback is actively reviewed and the service is improved as appropriate.

Hawkesbury City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- As part of Hawkesbury City Council operation plan for 2017 – 2036 they are committed to providing financial support to community groups, events and activities including Carers day.
- Financial and in-kind assistance provide to support Carers Day.
- Council delivered subsidised lawn mowing and garden maintenance services to aged people and people with disabilities and their carers in the Hawkesbury and Penrith local government areas. The service aims to support older people and younger people with a disability to maintain their independence so they can live in their own homes.

Human Resources policies and practice

- Introduction of flexible work procedures and options in order to attract and retain work employees with carer responsibilities by offering flexible work options across the organisation where possible.
- Council was assessed as a human service agency under the Common Care Standards Review process under Department of Health and Ageing. All service provision was deemed compliant against *Carers Recognition Act 2010*.

Hornsby Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council also provides a Home Library Service to residents of Hornsby Shire who have difficulty visiting the libraries, including carers, delivering items and exchanging them on a regular basis. In 2018/19, 2,462 home library visits were made.
- Council's Community Services Branch identifies and provides referrals to a comprehensive range of community support services and programs, indirectly supporting carers within the Hornsby Shire community.
- During the year, a Community Connections Hot Desk was operating weekly at Hornsby Library. The Hot Desk is a referral and information service with a diverse range of scheduled topics and service providers, connecting the community to local services.
- Council promotes R U OK Day every year, focusing on the mental health of staff by reminding them of the four action steps to start a conversation.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council supports staff who are carers in a number of ways and continues to comply with the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* through its Sick and Carers Leave Policy and flexible work practices. Employees are afforded access to flexible work practices to accommodate any carer's responsibilities through:
 - the use of flex time, including flexible start and finish times, and a nine day fortnight;
 - access to annual, long service, and carers leave as well as leave without pay where necessary;
 - part time work; and
 - health and well-being leave.
- Every carer's circumstances are considered individually to ensure that their needs are recognised.
- Council also provides an Employee Assistance Program offering confidential counselling for work-related or personal problems.
- The NSW Carers Charter is available on Council's intranet.

Hunters Hill Council

Initiatives to support carers

- The 'chill out' inclusion tent was run successfully at Carols in the Park and Moocooboola events in 2018. There was a variety of free wonderful performances on the day, a visit from Santa and a spectacular fireworks display. Both events were promoted as inclusive events and in collaboration with key disability support organisations: NDIS/Uniting and Ability Links. The latter group promoted the event through links member and carer networks.

Consultation with carers

- *Disability Inclusion Action Plan* - Our Council has undertaken this plan jointly with City of Ryde and Lane Cove councils in 2017. The aim of the plan is to make Hunters Hill Municipality a more accessible and inclusive community for all. The plan has been implemented with the assistance of carers, service providers, the general community and council staff. Council has progressed actions outlined in the plan, recognising that improved access and inclusive practices will benefit all residents and visitors including people with disability, families with young children, older people and those experiencing temporary injury or illness. The plan will continue to be implemented over the coming year.

Inner West Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council provides assistance to staff who are carers in a variety of ways. This is via flexible access to a variety of leave entitlements and rostered days, including at short notice, in particular, to accommodate requests for carers leave. In cases where staff have exhausted their leave entitlements, we refer to relevant provisions of the Local Government Award and applicable enterprise agreements, and may grant additional paid time off work on a case by case basis.
- Council endeavours to accommodate free and confidential access to our Employee Assistance Service provider which includes counselling services.

Kempsey Shire Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council has considered its obligations under the *NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* with regards to carers or persons being cared for by carers and supports employees with caring responsibilities. These obligations are recognised in Council's Condition of Employment policy and leave procedure 2013, and communicated in Council's employee induction program.
- Council has adopted procedures and practices that will assist in becoming an attractive employer with variable and flexible work arrangements for parents/carers.

Kiama Municipal Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Blue Haven Care saw a return of funding in 2018/19 for the Illawarra Carer Respite Program.

Ku-ring-gai Municipal Council

Initiatives to support carers

- To celebrate Carer's Week and to recognise the contribution Carer's make to our community, Ku-ring-gai Council and Ability Links put on a Carer's Pamper Day. The day included free massages, manicures, facials and lunch. We also had a crèche to look after dependants so that carer's could relax and enjoy their day.
- Ku-ring-gai local government area has a higher than average percentage of people living with dementia. People living with dementia and their carer's often experience social isolation and do not reach out and get the support they need. To help prevent people living with Dementia from experiencing social isolation, a Dementia Café was started with Council, Rotary and Kuring-gai Neighbour Aid. The Dementia Café is run from the Ku-ring-gai Fitness and Aquatic Centre. The café includes coffee, socialising, a functional exercise class and a presentation each week.

Kyogle Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan establishes objectives, actions, targets and performance indicators which are focussed on eliminating and ensuring the absence of discrimination in employment on the grounds of age, race, sex, marital status, parenthood, carers' responsibilities, physical or mental impairment, and, religious or political affiliation, while promoting equal employment for women, members of racial minorities and physically handicapped persons.

Comments

- Kyogle Council does not provide services directed at carers and/or people being cared for by carers.

Lachlan Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- To improve well-being of carers, council applied for funding under the Disability Inclusion Action Plan to offer respite care for carers in Condobolin and Lake Cargelligo.

Lane Cove Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Ongoing projects include providing activities for Carers Week.
- Lane Cove North is now proudly home to the first Everyone Can Play in NSW playspace in Sydney with the official opening of Mindarie Park in February 2019. Located on the corner of Mindarie Street and Kullah Parade, the new fenced playspace includes a range of swings, natural-looking play materials and equipment that is suitable for people of all abilities to enjoy. Under the Everyone Can Play in NSW guidelines, the area has been designed to cater for all people, including disabled and able-bodied children and their carers.

Human resources policies and practice

- Ongoing facilitation of flexible work arrangements for employees who have Carer's responsibilities to ensure their service continuation, superannuation and career prospects are not adversely impacted due to these responsibilities.
- Council will pay for the reasonable cost of carer arrangements, including care of elderly and the disabled of immediate family members of the Councillors, where there is no other suitable carer available during the time when a councillor is required to attend a Council endorsed Meeting.

Lake Macquarie City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- A highlight of council included: The Me2 Program provides opportunities for people with a disability to build networks and skills. This year, Council hosted 32 free activities for 910 participants, who were accompanied by 250 carers, teachers and support workers.
- Under the Disability Inclusion Plan, Council purchased an aquatic floating wheelchair to be stored onsite at Belmont Baths. Developed a condition of use checklist for users and carers, as the chair will be used independently by carers.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council continued to support carers through initiatives under the Carers' Leave provisions of our 2018 Enterprise Agreement. Increased access to extended leave recognises the additional responsibilities of carers within the community and our workplace.

Leeton Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Under *Carers Recognition Act 2010*:
 - Leeton Shire benefits from Home and Community Care Services delivered through Temora Shire Council's Pinnacle program.
 - Leeton Shire also benefits from Community Transport Services delivered through Narrandera Shire Council.

Liverpool City Council

Consultation with carers

- Recruitment was undertaken for the Liverpool Access Committee members. This process included people with disability, their families and carers, and organisations who work with people with disability to ensure this group has a voice in the Liverpool community. This group discusses issues of access, inclusion and disability support in Liverpool.

Liverpool Plains Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council provides support to Carers through its Commonwealth Home Support Program, Community Transport and Childcare services.

Consultation with carers

- Council recognises that carers make a valuable contribution to our community and that the health and wellbeing of carers is important. Council consults with bodies representing carers when developing policies and programs that can impact carers.

Human resources policies and practices

- Council also ensures that staff have an awareness and understanding of the NSW Carers Charter.
- Council includes carer awareness as part of its induction package for all new employees. Employees are encouraged to speak with their direct supervisor in the first instance regarding any personal circumstances and any requirement for flexible work arrangements.

Lockhart Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Under Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan, Council strategy is inclusive of people with a disability, their families and carers through the following actions:
 - Participate in a collective approach within Lockhart Shire's disability sector to improve the understanding, access and operation of the sector.
 - Work with community partners to lobby government and to seek funding to support people with disabilities to reach their full potential and to lead fulfilling lives.
 - Work in partnership with community organisations to improve opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in education, training and employment.
 - Work with partners to identify opportunities to support the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Maitland City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council has worked in partnership with various service providers to encourage and support initiatives that promote inclusion awareness in the LGA. There were 14 initiatives encouraged or delivered, including coordination and review of the Aged Persons, Younger Persons with a Disability and Carers forum, a regular forum for service providers, stakeholders, and citizens.
- Continued very successful Conversations: Art & Dementia with up to 60 separate free sessions presented across 2018/19. The program intention is to improve well-being and quality of life for people living with memory loss and their carers through engagement with the visual arts and sensory experiences.
- Council continues to provide accessibility information for each flagship event on relevant webpages, in addition to integrating inclusion into the event planning process. This enables people with disability, their families and carers to plan their day in advance and know they will be included in the celebrations.
- Council now accepts the Companion Card for their ticketed flagship event Bitter & Twisted Boutique Beer Festival and are currently working on formalising this with the NSW Government Companion Card Program.

Mid Coast Council

Initiatives to support carers

- MidCoast Council delivers services for older people, people with disability and their carers through MidCoast Assist and, as such, is considered a human services agency for the purposes of the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*. Actions taken include:
 - Both MidCoast Assist Ageing and Disability Services routinely and regularly consult with individual carers at intake stage and throughout the program for clients. This is reflected in the forms, processes and file notes maintained by MidCoast Assist.
 - MidCoast Assist refer carers to available supports within the community and online.
 - Trialling the extension of some centre-based activities to enable more free time for carers.
 - Involving carers in activities where appropriate and acknowledging their support, particularly in Carers Week.
 - MidCoast Assist has supported carers under stress to access support services through Commonwealth Respite Carelink Centre, including making referrals on their behalf. We also support carers that are becoming reliant on services being provided through their partner's home care package to access and register with My Aged Care to ensure they can also receive appropriate individual supports.

Consultation with carers

- MidCoast Assist liaises with community carers groups in the local area relating to Ageing and Disability.

Human resources policies and procedures

- During the reporting period Council has worked to ensure that service delivery activities and policies and procedures reflect the principles of the NSW Carers Charter.
- MidCoast Assist has developed a Carers Recognition Policy which has been approved by Council. MidCoast Assist has made this policy available to all staff.

Mid-Western Regional Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Mudgee offers Community Transport for the region's elderly and those living with disability. It is particularly vital for the region given the lack of affordable and suitable public transport options.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council continued to offer assistance with flexible working arrangements for employees with family and carer's responsibilities whilst ensuring we continue to meet our operational, customer and employee requirements.

Mosman Council

Comments

- Mosman Council receives no funding for any of its programs and therefore has no reporting obligations under s 8(2) of the *Carers Recognition Act 2010*.

Murray River Council

Human resources policies and practice

- *Carers Recognition Act 2010* was adopted by council.

Murrumbidgee Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Murrumbidgee Council and the Berrigan and District Home and Community Support Services are funded by the Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP). The programme provides support for people aged 65 years and over, or 50 years and over for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, who need support to remain living independently at home. Carers of these clients also benefit from services provided through the CHSP. Services provided include:
 - Community Transport
 - Meals on Wheels
 - Home modifications and maintenance
 - Respite Day Care
 - Social Support.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council's EEO plan identifies key actions to be undertaken to address the organisation's EEO responsibilities. The plan aims to eliminate and ensure the absence of discrimination in employment, promotion, training and transfers on the grounds of race, sex, age, pregnancy, sexual preference, disability, marital status, political opinion, social origin or religion, past convictions and carers' responsibility.

Nambucca Valley Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Continued to provide flexible work practices including part-time work, flexible hours and nine-day fortnight, which enhance their ability to support employees with carer and family responsibilities.
- The Nambucca Shire Council has work practices which provide for carer's leave and flexible leave for people requiring long-term recovery or rehabilitation.

Narrabri Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Theatre Staff have investigated charges for Cinema entry, to include carers of disabled and elderly patrons. ADFAS and Narrabri Eisteddfod provided assistance to hire The Crossing Theatre more economically for these groups.
- Council will meet the reasonable expenses for the care of a dependent of the Councillor requiring full-time care, actually and necessarily incurred by a councillor whilst attending Council and Committee Meetings, and Council workshops.

Comments

- *Carers Recognition Act 2010* not applicable to Narrabri Shire council.

Narrandera Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- A small program for respite care is provided, primarily for the benefit of carers of frail aged people or people with a disability. It allows the carer to have some time out to attend to personal matters.

Human resources policies and practice

- Compliance with the NSW Carers Recognition Act 2010 Act establishes obligations for public sector agencies and additional obligations for human service agencies. For Council this means ensuring that its staff and agents such as volunteers have an awareness and understanding of the NSW Carers Charter.
- Narrandera Shire Council has a number of policies in place to support carers and these are detailed below:
 - **Carers Leave Policy** - an employee may access accrued sick leave to provide care and support to an eligible class of person as defined in the Local Government State Award.

- **Equal Employment Opportunity Policy** - provides fairness, giving equal opportunity to all applicants for employment regardless of their personal situation.
- **Job Sharing Policy** - job sharing or flexible working arrangements is an employment arrangement where typically two people are retained on a part-time or reduced-time basis to perform a job normally fulfilled by one person working full-time, giving carers the opportunity to work part-time to allow them to attend to the needs of their dependents or the people they care for whilst being able to work.
- **Leave Without Pay Policy** - leave without pay may be granted at the discretion of the General Manager when annual leave and long service leave accruals have been exhausted.
- **Parental Leave Policy** - provides employees with assistance to remain in the workforce after the birth of a child and to ensure Council abides by all of the statutory requirements relating to the granting of maternity or paternity leave.
- **Part Time Employment Policy** - Council will consider requests for transfer from full-time to part-time employment, providing there is no change in the nature of the position. Council shall also have regard to balancing efficiency and work organisation concerns against the merits of the employee's request for transfer from full-time to part-time employment and vice versa. Where an employee requests such a transfer Council should have regard to anti-discrimination legislation and its own operational requirements. The consultative committee shall be informed of such transfer. This policy provides the opportunity for a carer to request a more flexible work arrangement.
- **Purchased Leave Policy** - Council is committed to considering a range of flexible work arrangements aimed at improving work/life balance for staff. Purchased leave is one such option and this procedure establishes the basis for consideration of Purchased Leave requests and the parameters applicable to any subsequent arrangement.
- **Recruitment of Staff Policy** - the selection function is the process of choosing the best person for the vacant position. This process includes the short listing of applicants for interview, developing questions for the interview, interviewing of applicants and selecting who should be offered the position based on merit.
- **Sick Leave and Carer's Leave Policy** - allows staff to care for their dependants in accordance with the Local Government State Award.
- **Working From Home Policy** - Council acknowledges that working from home arrangements may be appropriate for certain positions and in certain circumstances.
- **Employee Assistance Program** - Council's Employee Assistance Program Policy provides confidential and professional assistance for employees and their family who are experiencing difficulties of a personal or work-related nature.

Narromine Shire Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council is not a Human Service Agency under the Act; however Council has formulated a policy on our obligations under the *NSW Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*. Council value the diversity of their employees and promote inclusive human resource practices. Council also recognises the importance of flexible work arrangements. All employees have the same rights, choices and opportunities. Allowance is also made to refund Councillors expenses involved in the provision of care for an immediate family member to allow the Councillor to undertake their civic duty.

Northern Beaches Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council produces a monthly Disability Newsletter with a circulation of over 1,400, and the Northern Beaches Seniors Directory, with 8,000 copies distributed in 2018/19.
- Council community development staff were available to provide information and referral to carers, taking over 300 calls annually in relation to services for seniors and people with disability.
- Council's Meals on Wheels service supports carers in their role by providing nutritional and affordable meal options as well as coordinating community restaurants in three different locations across the Northern Beaches.
- Council coordinates a calendar of events for National Carers Week, including funding a key event and working with other key local services to coordinate activities.
- Council ran a successful Express Yourself Expo for Seniors Festival in February 2019 which included activities and stalls of interest to carers of people who are frail and/or aged.
- Council's comprehensive directory for seniors and carers on the Northern Beaches, identifying local services, supports and activities, was updated and is available on Council's website.
- An online disability services hub has been added to Council's webpage as well as a new Inclusion Award category established for the Northern Beaches Local Business Awards for 2019. This award encourages local businesses to take active steps in making their businesses accessible and inclusive.
- Council employs a Community Development Officer who liaises with the community and provides current information for people with disability, their families and carers. This includes a monthly Disability E-Newsletter, information and referral over phone and email, and regular updating of the Local Information Network of Community Services (LINCS).

Human resources policies and practice

- Council has developed a Culture, Values and Behaviours Program, as well as a Diversity and Inclusion Policy to ensure that our employees are valued and respected for their diverse backgrounds, experiences and perspectives. A Working from Home policy provides flexibility for employees to balance their work and personal responsibilities. There are also a number of other flexible working options available to employees, including employees with carer responsibilities. These include part-time work, job sharing, working from home and flexible working hours.

North Sydney Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Carers and people being cared for are supported through service provision offered through the community centres. This includes information and advice that is being provided to carers and people requiring assistance by Council's Access and Inclusion Coordinator.
- The Crows Nest Centre provides in-home support to people requiring additional assistance to enable them to remain living at home.

Oberon Council

Consultation with carers

- Oberon's Disability Inclusion Action Plan was informed by a Community Survey and many conversations with people with disability, their families and carers, and Council staff.

Penrith City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- The two day Nepean Disability Expo held in September 2018 provided a fantastic opportunity for local people with disability to find out about the latest products, services, technology, aids and equipment. It also provided an opportunity for product and service providers to connect with each other; and more importantly, to connect with people with disability, their families and carers.
- International Day of People with Disability, celebrated in December, also provided opportunities for service providers to gather alongside people with disability, their families and carers at the Council-lead event in The Mondo civic space.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council

Initiatives to support carers

- As part of Council Disability Inclusion Action Plan, Autism & Emergency Evacuation workshops were held at Glasshouse, with Emergency Services and people living with autism and their carers with 22 attendees.
- Council advocated to State and Federal Government for increased services for people with disability and their carers in Port Macquarie and Hastings area.

Human resources policies and practice

- Ongoing provision of flexible work practices for employees with carer and family responsibilities, including part time work, purchased leave, flexible hours and work from home.
- Carer's Leave Procedure reviewed and adopted June 2018. New Flexible Working Arrangements Policy is currently in draft, with consultation with staff expected during 2019/20.

Comments

- Port Macquarie-Hastings Council is not considered to be a 'human service agency' under the Act (i.e. a council that provides services directed at carers and/or people being cared for by carers).

Port Stephens Council

Comments

- Council does not provide services directed at carers and/or people being cared for by carers and is therefore not considered to be a 'human services agency' as defined by the Carers Recognition Act.

Randwick City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- In 2018-19, Council implemented the following key programs and activities:

Program name	Description	Target group	Attendance number
Safe TALK Suicide Prevention awareness training	Safe TALK – Suicide Prevention Awareness Training Seminars held in partnership with Lifeline involved suicide prevention training for carers who care for someone with a mental illness.	Carers of people with a mental illness	120
National Disability Insurance Scheme	National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) information sessions held in partnership with St Paul Societies' Local Area NDIS Coordinators. The sessions provided an overview of the NDIS and the role of the Local NDIS Area Coordinators.	People with disabilities and their carers	90
Seniors Wellbeing Project workshop	Held in partnership with Holdsworth Community, this workshop involves wellbeing exercise classes and activities for frail aged Seniors and Carers living in Randwick City and surrounding areas.	Older people and carers	30 per session
International Day of people with a disability	Disability Dance held in partnership with Holdsworth Community at Prince Henry Centre, Little Bay.	People with a disability and their carers	100
New Ways to Prevent and Treat Back Pain seminars	New Ways to Prevent and Treat Back Pain seminars held in partnership with Neuroscience Research Australia involved the latest finding and treatments to reduce back pain by targeting the brain, especially for those in chronic pain. The seminars were designed for older people and carers.	Older people and carers	200
Your Brain Matters presentations	Two Memory Information workshops were held at Margaret Martin Library, providing handy hints on how to slow down memory loss and early identification.	Older people and carers	80
Green Gym community program	40 Green Gym volunteers met every Friday morning to receive training and assist with bush care as a form of healthy exercise for older residents.	Older people and carers	40
Intergenerational sessions	Grand Parents Fun Day held at Prince Henry Nursing and Medical Museum, Little Bay involved in a range of intergenerational activities and was designed for grandparents and carers.	Grandparents and their carers living in the Southern Suburbs of Randwick City	300
Art 4 Connection workshops	Workshops explored the therapeutic benefits of Art Therapy in a friendly group setting, the workshops were especially designed for carers.	Carers	120
Legal Community information sessions	Legal Community Information Sessions held in partnership with the Seniors Rights Service, Legal Aid NS, Elder Abuse helpline, Kingsford Legal Centre and Aged Care Psychiatry Service. The session explored legal issues in acting older people and carers such as elder abuse.	Older people and carers	135

<p>Christmas celebration and information sessions</p>	<p>Christmas Celebration events and information sessions held in partnership with Ethnic Community Services Co-operative at Kensington Park Community Centre for seniors and carers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. These events targeted isolated Carers who do not typically access formal services.</p>	<p>Isolated older people and carers</p>	<p>300</p>
<p>Health talks</p>	<p>Randwick City Library ran health talks relating to the topics of osteoporosis, stress and anxiety. Aimed at seniors as well as carers, these sessions provided useful tips to improve individuals' quality of life.</p>	<p>Older people and carers</p>	<p>170</p>

- Home Library Service - Randwick City Library delivers books, DVDs and library resources to house-bound individuals, Diversional/Recreational Therapists and carers within the community.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council continues to comply with the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* through our sound Sick and Carers' Leave Policy and flexible work practices. Each carer's needs and circumstances are considered individually to ensure that special needs are taken into account. As a result, managers have the discretion to provide extra support and flexibility when needed.
- 5,192 hours of paid Carers Leave was accessed by Randwick employees in 2018-19. Throughout the year Council provided staff with support and information to assist in their caring responsibilities. Our monthly Life-Style Lunches for staff and our annual "All Stops to Randwick" event continue our focus on employee benefits and total wellbeing.

Shellharbour Council

Comments

- No longer applicable as Council exited out of direct service provision to carers on 31 October 2015.

Snowy Monaro Regional Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Community Transport continued to provide a high number of accessible transport trips to the frail, aged, younger people with disability and their carers residing throughout region. This essential service for the community supports those in need to access appointments and/or maintain social connections.

Consultation with carers

- Council has consulted with service recipients and their families/carers during the development of the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council's Equal Employment Opportunity Management Plan refers to a workplace that promotes equity referring specifically to Carers. Council's obligations under the Local Government (State) Award, with regard to carers' leave and flexible arrangements for staff, who are carers, is in accordance with the guidelines of the *Carers Recognition Act, 2010*.

Snowy Valleys Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Tumut Community Transport Service provides transport for people in their Communities, who are frail aged, people who have a disability, and for their carers.

Comments

- Council is not considered to be a 'human service agency' under the CR Act.

Strathfield Council

Initiatives to support carers

- The Home Library service continued to deliver library materials to housebound residents.
- Inclusion in programs for people with disability and their carers was encouraged through participation in the International Day for People with Disability and Carers Week.

Sutherland Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- We held a Carers Competition for residents to submit their stories of caring for another, to acknowledge the important contribution carers make to help strengthen our community.

Human resources policies and practice

- Sutherland Shire Council is committed to being a family-friendly employer and providing employees with opportunities for work/life balance. This is done by providing flexibility in employment practices and work arrangements so that employees can balance the demands of work and their personal life.
- Sutherland Shire Council is committed to flexible work options through providing: the use of flexi time, the ability to alter start and finish times, access to personal, annual, long service leave and leave without pay, the ability to work part-time or a compact week and the ability to work from home.

Temora Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Carers afternoon tea was held during National Carers Week - Friday 16th October 2018. 8 carers attended the event.

The Hills Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council's Hills Community Care provides a number of important services respite care to the aged or people with disabilities in the Hills Shire. Volunteers assist with Respite Care - providing care to the frail-aged or people with disabilities, allowing full-time carers to take a break.
- Members from The Friends of the Hills Library gave up one coffee per month over a two-year period to raise a total of \$4,000 to purchase a range of books, DVDs, music and other informative resources to support those with dementia, their family, friends and carers.

Tweeds Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council provides direct services, information, support and advocacy for people who care for family members with a disability, chronic illness or are frail aged through the My Aged Care, Regional Assessment Service and Commonwealth Home Support Program. As a registered NDIS provider we deliver support coordination and information sessions for NDIS participants and their carers.

Human resources policies and practice

- Council has a Flexible Working Arrangements policy in place that provides the opportunity for flexibility in handling work and family responsibilities. Council utilises its Consultative Committee as a consulting mechanism with employees during the development of human resources policies and offers flexible working as part of the recruitment process for all new positions.
- Employees are encouraged to speak with their direct supervisor in the first instance regarding their personal circumstances and the requirement for flexible working arrangements.

Upper Lachlan Council

Initiatives to support carers

- The Crookwell Neighbourhood Centre Inc. operates an In-Home Emergency Respite for Carers Program that may include people with a disability.
- Community transport is available for people identified through the HACC program or the Community Transport program (CTP). HACC targets all frail aged people, people with a permanent and functional disability and the carers of these groups. CTP targets groups who are rurally and socially isolated and spare seating is available to people outside the target groups at commercial rates.
- Under the Disability Inclusion Plan I 2017–2020, Council is working towards creating a Shire that provides equal opportunity for people with disability, their carers and families to use and enjoy the public spaces and opportunities our Shire has to offer.

Human resources policies and practice

- Enabling people from diverse backgrounds, underrepresented groups, those in carer roles and those with special needs to serve as a Councillor.
- Councillors who are the principal carer of a child or other elderly, disabled and/or sick immediate family member will be entitled to reimbursement of reasonable carer's expenses for attendance at official business, plus reasonable travel from the principal place of residence.

Upper Hunter Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Key challenges and opportunities include to provide support to increasing amount of carers in the community.
- Council produced a comprehensive directory for seniors and carers in the Upper Hunter Shire identifying local services, activities and facilities.
- As a continuation of Disability Inclusion Action Plan implementation, 2018/2019 has seen a focus on forming the Access and Inclusion Committee. Council operates a range of programs and projects supporting disability awareness, including facilitation of interagency for sector development and coordination of activities during Mental Health Awareness Month and International Day of People with Disability.

Uralla Shire Council

Consultation with carers

- Uralla Shire Council undertook internal consultation with staff and external consultation with local people with disability, their carers, and the services that support them. Good practice and priority areas for improvement were identified.

Human resource policies

- Uralla Shire Council recognises the contribution carers make to the Uralla Shire community. Council's policies take the *Carers Recognition Act 2010* into consideration when these policies are drafted, implemented and reviewed.
- Council employees are entitled to use any current or accrued sick leave entitlement to provide care and support to a person whose wellbeing is their responsibility. In cases which require long-term provision of care, the employee is encouraged to discuss arrangements with their supervisor or manager.

Wagga Wagga City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- \$3000 was spent on a Wagga Sensory Garden. Installation of an all-weather shed where the Clients and Carers can shelter and still enjoy the garden during hot or raining weather.

Consultation with carers

- The Wagga Access Reference Group is the primary community network that Council seeks input from on a continuous basis regarding all aspects of disability inclusion and participation. This reference group meet bi-monthly and a council representative is in attendance. This working group is made up of persons with disabilities, family members, carers, local business and agencies that work with people with disabilities.

Warren Shire Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Councillors can receive up to \$2000 per year in carer expenses to attend council or committee meetings.

Warrumbungle Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Warrumbungle Community Care (WCC) provides a range of services across the Shire to assist the frail aged, people with a disability and carers. Services include Community Transport, Meals on Wheels, Respite, Social Support and Home Maintenance. WCC is now an Authorised Home Care Package supplier, and Registered NDIS provider. These services support people to continue to live independently in their own homes. WCC provides services to almost 800 clients across the Shire. These services are provided by our dedicated team of six (6) staff and a team around 185 volunteers. In 2018/19 financial year Warrumbungle Community Care provided the following services:
 - 13,503 outputs for Meals on Wheels;
 - 8,953 hours of Social Support;
 - 2,032 hours of Home Maintenance;
 - 62 hours of Respite;
 - 10,302 Community Transport trips; and
 - 14,229 Taxi Vouchers.

Waverly Council

Initiatives to support carers

- A new Carers Parking Permit provides a discount to support people who rely on a carer for day-to-day support. A review resulted in the expansion of the eligibility criteria and a strategy to target promotions at key Council locations.
- Council's Grant Program provided approximately \$400,000 to community organisations to deliver core community services and innovative projects in the Waverley Local Government Area. The small grants supported inclusion of people with disability through programs such as Sculptures by the Sea – Tactile Tours, Soccajoeys Next Step and positive ageing initiatives for older people.

Human resources policies and practices

- Review and update flexible work place policy to meet the needs of a diverse workforce including primary carers, young people and ageing workforce.

Wentworth Shire Council

Comments

- Carers Recognition Act 2010 does not apply to Wentworth Shire Council.

Wollongong City Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Council put on an event, *Same Same but Different* that was co-presented by Council and The Disability Trust. The panel discussion featured the lived experiences of people with disability, parents and carers, and community service providers, sharing their stories about dating, identity family dynamics, mental health and prejudice.
- During 2018-19 Council provided approximately 40,725 hours of service for Social Connection Programs for Frail Aged People and Their Carers program and received an average of 42 new referrals each month. The demand for social support services continued to grow particularly for individual services, outings and flexible respite services for carers. A number of cottage respites for both the client and carer took place at a new cottage in Kiama and several new bus trips have commenced, outings for clients who have early stage dementia and a monthly outing for male clients to a destination of their choice.
- Community Transport volunteers are available for eligible older people and their carers and people that are transport disadvantaged in their own vehicles or Council's vehicles.
- Respite support given to eligible dementia client's carers by providing entry level care for dementia clients.
- An accessible viewing area was available to 129 people with a disability and their carers as part of Wollongong's Annual Australia Day celebration. CRAM Foundation sponsored this space.

Woollahra Council

Initiatives to support carers

- Community Grant - \$2000 - Sailability Rushcutters Bay - The 'Sailing Access' project engages people with a disability and their carers in sailing activities in Sydney Harbour. The project is accessed by people from across Sydney. Funding granted towards an application of antifoul paint to the two main boats used for taking out clients with disabilities.
- Holdsworth Community is a non-government incorporated association working for the community. Woollahra Council has had a longstanding partnership with Holdsworth to care for, connect and support families with young children, seniors, people living with a disability and their carers.

Yass Council

Human resources policies and practice

- Council continued to provide information to staff to ensure awareness of the Act and the Charter.
- As no staff identified themselves as Carers in accordance with the Act, no follow up consultation was required. Council was not required to adopt new policies or make any amendments to existing policies.

Appendix B:

Further information on defining a human service agency

Explanation of Terms

The *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* (NSW) sets out some basic definitions for terms that will assist government agencies in NSW to assess their respective obligations under this Act. These are:

- the definition of a “carer”;
- the definition of a “public service agency”; and
- the definition of a “human services agency”.

This document will seek to define and explain the meaning of each of these terms to provide NSW government agencies with clarity as to their meaning and allow them to better assess the applicability of these terms to the activities of their organisation.

The Definition of a “Carer”

The *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* defines a person to be a “carer” if they provide ongoing personal care, support and assistance to any other person who needs that assistance because they:

- have a disability within the meaning of the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014*,
- have a medical condition (including terminal or chronic illness);
- have a mental illness; or
- are frail and aged.

The *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* defines a carer as a person who provides ongoing personal care, support and assistance to any other individual who needs it because that other individual:

- (a) is a person with disability within the meaning of the *Disability Inclusion Act 2014*, or
- (b) has a medical condition (including a terminal or chronic illness), or
- (c) has a mental illness, or
- (d) is frail and aged.

A person is not a carer for the purposes of this Act in respect of care, support and assistance that a person provides:

- (a) under a contract of service or a contract for the provision of services, or
- (b) in the course of doing voluntary work for a charitable, welfare or community organisation, or
- (c) as part of the requirements of a course of education or training.

To avoid doubt, a person is not a carer of another person for the purposes of the Act merely because the person:

- (a) is the spouse or de facto partner of the person, or
- (b) is the parent, guardian, child or other relative of the other person, or
- (c) lives with the other person.

Definition of a “Disability”

The *Disability Inclusion Act 2014* defines a “disability”, in relation to a person, to be a long-term physical, psychiatric, intellectual or sensory impairment that, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder the person’s full and effective participation in the community on an equal basis with others.

The Definition of a “Public Service Agency”

The *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* defines a “public service agency” broadly to be any of a number of specified NSW government departments and agencies, including local councils. The NSW government bodies specified are:

- (a) a Division of the Government Service,
- (b) a local health district or statutory health corporation (within the meaning of the Health Services Act 1997),
- (c) the NSW Police Force,
- (d) a NSW Government agency or other authority of the State,
- (e) a local council,
- (f) a State owned corporation,
- (g) any other person or body that is prescribed by the regulations for the purposes of this definition.

The Definition of a “Human Services Agency”

The *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* establishes a special category within those NSW government bodies deemed to be “public service agencies”. The agencies within this category are deemed by the Act to be “human services agencies”. Government bodies deemed by the Act to be “human services agencies” have extra obligations imposed on them in addition the standard obligations imposed on all “public service agencies”.

“Human services agencies” are defined by the Act as being any “public service agency” that provides services directed at carers or persons being cared for by carers.

Thus, it can be said that under the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*, “human services agencies” are those “public service agencies” that provide either or both of:

- services directed at persons with disability, a medical condition, a mental illness or are frail and aged; or
- services directed at people who are carers of the above listed categories of persons.

Consequently, it is possible that a government body may be a “human services agency” under the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* without actually providing any services that are directed at carers themselves – all that is necessary is that they provide services directed at people who may be being assisted by carers.

Local Councils may be “Human Services Agencies”

Local councils in NSW are “public service agencies” under the Act. Thus, local councils in NSW, like other NSW government agencies, may be deemed to be “human services agencies” if they meet the criteria set by the Act.

The fact that a NSW government body has a Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) in place (as required by the Disability Inclusion Act 2014) will not of itself cause it to be classified as a “human services agency” under the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010*.

The same principle applies for some of the generally directed services or facilities NSW government bodies may provide. The mere fact that these services or facilities happen to be used by carers or persons with disability, a medical condition, a mental illness or persons who are carers or have special arrangements in place to make them more accessible to these groups of persons will not of itself cause the particular body to be classified as a “human services agency”. The services or facilities delivered by the government body must be specifically directed at one or more of these groups for it to be sufficient to cause the relevant body to be deemed a “human services agency”.

Examples of Activities Undertaken by Human Services Agencies

To assist NSW government agencies in determining whether or not they should be classified under the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* as a “human service agency”, a list of services commonly provided by government agencies directed at carers or those for whom they care for is provided below. If a government agency provides any one of these services it would be reasonable to conclude they the *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010* would deem them to be “human services agencies”. The list is as follows:

- **“meals on wheels” programs** – “meals on wheels” or similar style programs that prepare and deliver meals to people who because of frailty and age or disability, a chronic medical condition or mental illness are unable to prepare such meals for themselves.
- **leisure, socialisation and education services or centres** – services that provide targeted leisure, socialisation or education programs to older people with disability, a chronic medical condition or mental illness. These programs may include gentle exercise classes, social outings, musical or cultural performances, arts and craft classes and shared meals.
- **support services directed at those being cared for** – services that seek to improve the quality of life of older people with disability, medical condition or mental illness in their home environment or day to day life. Such services may include home visits, transport assistance, buddy programs, repairs and maintenance tasks and help with everyday tasks like shopping, cooking, financial management and writing.
- **support services targeting carers** – services that seek to provide relief and assistance for carers including respite care, counselling and help with day to day activities.
- **childcare centres and pre-schools that cater specifically for children who have a disability or other special needs** – councils or agencies may operate childcare centres or pre-schools that cater specifically for children with disabilities.
- **provision of specialist advice** – councils or government agencies may establish facilities or programs to provide carers or persons who have a disability or chronic medical condition or mental illness with specialist advice of a legal, financial and relationship nature.
- **employment services** – councils or government agencies may provide services directed at assisting carers or persons with a disability, medical condition or mental illness and aged persons find employment.
- **carer support groups** – councils or government agencies may manage and facilitate support groups for carers where they are able to receive emotional and practical support and network with other carers who may be experiencing similar issues and challenges in their role as a carer.

For more information visit
www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/carers

NSW Government Department of
Communities and Justice

Email CarerStr@facs.nsw.gov.au

