



Factsheet

Characteristics of the care sector



10.6%



Carers represents 10.6 per cent of the Australian population¹ and it is estimated that there are around:

320,000 carers in **Western Australia**.

Social benefits?

Carers are vital to maintaining quality of life for people who require support by enabling them to remain in their own homes for as long as possible, to participate in community life and to receive person-centred care.

Enabling people to be a part of community life and to maintain some independence (e.g. residing in their own home) is critical for good mental health and can positively impact physical health.

Economic benefits

Caregiving reduces the demand for, and dependence on, paid care and the health and community services sector. In 2020, the estimated replacement value for the 2.2 billion hours of informal care that Australian carers provide, was \$77.9 billion per year².

Risk factors

Carers are at greater risk (compared to the rest of the population) of becoming socially isolated, anxious and stressed. This is due to the added pressure that caring responsibilities place on individuals who subsequently have less time to participate in the community.

Carers are also likely to have reduced opportunities for employment and education on account of:

- the lack of alternative or suitable care arrangements
- concern for the person they care for
- difficulties in arranging flexible work or study hours
- lack of awareness of, or capacity to, negotiate their employment and study rights
- loss of skills or lack of opportunities to develop skills
- the financial cost of care.

Accordingly, carers have a lower workforce participation rate than non-carers, and young carers have lower education participation and attainment rates than their non-carer peers.

This can lead to poorer outcomes for carers, the people they care for and their families. Almost one-quarter of carers have an income that is below the poverty line. Many carers are unable to accumulate sufficient superannuation for retirement.

¹ Australian Government. Department of Social Services. Supporting Carers.

² (Deloitte Access Economics, 2020)





How can I get help?

Carers provide unpaid personal care, support and household assistance to a family member or friend needing help with daily life. If you are a carer, there are a number of supports and services available.

Carer Gateway is an Australian Government initiative providing a mix of free online, telephone and in-person supports, services and advice, for family carers in Australia. Carer Gateway in-person services are being delivered throughout the states and territories by a network of Carer Gateway Service Providers. In Western Australia, **Carers WA** is leading the delivery of these in-person services in partnership with a range of other organisations.

Carers WA has a dedicated Carer Gateway team who can be reached Monday to Friday 8.00am to 5.00pm (phone: 1800 422 737).

Carers WA also offer a range of innovative programs and services aimed at providing practical and emotional support. The organisation is open Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm (phone: 1300 227 377).

Crisis Care is a 24-hour Western Australian Government telephone service for people needing urgent assistance (phone: 1800 199 008, TTY: 9325 1232).

Department of Social Services provides information about disability and carers.

Services Australia provides information about payments and services if you provide temporary or ongoing care.

Department of Communities

5 Newman Court, Fremantle WA 6160
Postal address: Locked Bag 5000, Fremantle WA 6959

Telephone: 1800 176 888
Email: enquiries@communities.wa.gov.au
Website: www.communities.wa.gov.au

Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS)
Telephone: 13 14 50

If you are deaf, or have a hearing or speech impairment, contact us through the National Relay Service.

For more information visit: Communications.gov.au/accesshub/nrs

This publication is available in other formats upon request.



Support and resources for carers

<https://www.wa.gov.au/organisation/department-of-communities/support-carers>