

# FAST FACTS

## ON DISABILITY, MENTAL HEALTH AND CARERS

### The Economic Cost of Caring<sup>1</sup>

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

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

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

The **rate of full-time employment among primary carers is 19.2%** While the Australian average is 42.0%

### Mental Health Carers

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

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

Mental health carers expend on average **104 hours** per week caring<sup>4</sup>

### Carers of People with a Disability

There are **61,123** people in the ACT with a disability<sup>5</sup>

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

### Who cares in Australia?

307,700 carers are aged under 24<sup>7</sup>

77,900 carers are under the age of 15<sup>8</sup>

Over 1.5 million carers are of working age (18-64)<sup>9</sup>

668,900 carers are over 65 years of age<sup>10</sup>

31,600 Indigenous carers are over the age of 15<sup>11</sup>

620,000 carers were born outside Australia<sup>12</sup>

366,700 carers were born in non-English speaking countries<sup>13</sup>

### Carer Income Support<sup>14</sup>

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

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

\*includes Maximum Pension Supplement and Energy Supplement

### DID YOU KNOW?

- There are around **48,850** carers in the ACT<sup>15</sup>
- There are nearly **2.86 million** carers in Australia<sup>16</sup>
- Two fifths or 40% of carers are primary carers – this means they provide the majority of help and support for the person they care for<sup>17</sup>
- 71% of all carers live with one or more people they care for<sup>18</sup>
- Over two-thirds of primary carers are women and most care for a close relative such as their partner, their parents or their children<sup>19</sup>
- Over half of primary carers say their main source of income is a government pension or allowance<sup>20</sup>
- Carers have the lowest wellbeing yet researched by Australian Unity<sup>21</sup>
- One study found that 18% of carers only had face to face social contact once every three months or less often<sup>22</sup>
- The same study found that many carers experience financial hardship<sup>23</sup>
- Carers have a higher rate of disability and/or long-term health conditions than people who are not carers<sup>24</sup>
- Regardless of the place of death, it is estimated that up to 90% of people in the terminal phase of a life threatening illness spend the majority of their time at home supported by a carer<sup>25</sup>
- Caring can bring a carer closer to the person to whom they provide the most care<sup>26</sup>

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