

Support Carers have accessed before registering with Carers SA

We asked Carers: Before you heard of Carers SA, who did you contact - apart from family or friends - when you wanted or needed support as a Carer.

- 146 comments received - 68 Carers stated that they actually had 'no one' to ask for help.
- Other Carers mentioned that only family or friends would help.
- Some Carers were in contact with other Carer support organisation or support services in the past, or had spoken to their GP or specific mental health services.
 - 53% of Carers stated they received services via the NDIS
 - 14% via Aged Care providers

However, when checking details closer, Carers often mis-interpreted services that the person receiving care received, as services provided 'for the Carer'.

- Some Carers disclosed that they were not in a position to engage help for themselves due to complex relationship dynamic and isolation. This can lead to difficult circumstances and negative impact on Carer wellbeing in general.

- *No one really. I was not even aware that there were services out there who look after Carers as a lot of services only really focus on who we are caring one.*
- *I tried everyone.... but*
- *It's an overwhelming situation for Carers.*

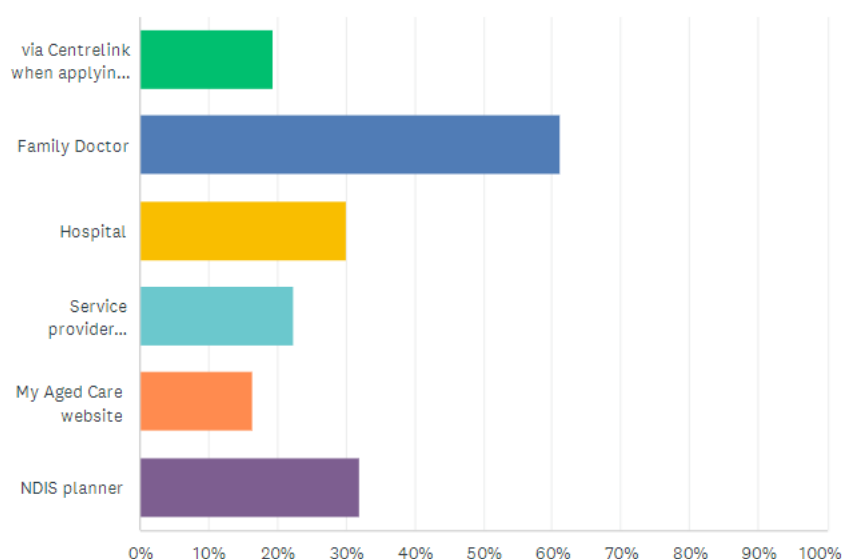
Carer Statements (3)

Carers suggested distribution of Carers SA information

Carers provided valuable suggestions of locations or services where information about services for Carers would be most strategically accessible for Carers.

The majority of Carers (61%) suggested the family doctor to be the best placed referral point to Carer services for Carers. Other locations mentioned were around health systems, hospital social workers, health services providers, GP clinics, service providers for the person providing care.

Many Carers also added Centrelink, My Aged Care and NDIS as a connection point to raise awareness of and referrals to Carer services.



Many Carers recalled that it was family, friends and other Carers who made them aware that Carer services were available. Others mentioned social media and general Internet searches provides that information.

Challenging Events for Carers

Only 4% of all interviewed Carers stated that they have not faced any challenges as a Carer in the past that they considered noteworthy.

A special thank you goes to the 143 Carers who commented or provided in-depth personal examples of challenging circumstances that stayed salient in their mind.

I couldn't just call someone and tell them that I was stressed out or whatever without worrying about that person causing trouble.

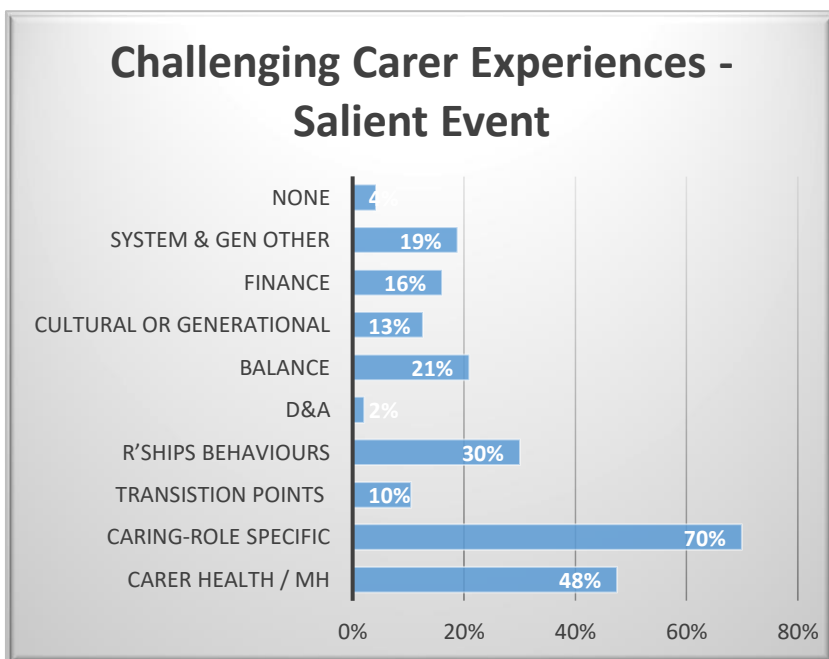
I didn't really want to tell people without them thinking [the person receiving care] was a bad person.

I actually went to see my doctor because I was getting quite bad anxiety and I got some medication.

Carer Statement

- For most, what triggered these challenging events was mainly related to the caring role itself (70%), were related to relationship dynamics incl challenging behaviours (30%) and to balancing competing life demands (21%).
- Nearly half of the Carers who shared past challenging events also noted that more than one contributing factor played a role.
- Some of these key factors for more than 48% of interviewed Carers included the Carers own health or mental health /wellbeing issues.
- 45% of Carers identified multiple contributing factors (3+) that triggered the challenging event.

The following graph provides an overview of the key triggers that generally contribute to challenging events or experiences for Carers:



Carer: *"I try not to think about it to be honest; I don't like complaining. There's been a [a huge amount]. I don't like to put blame on [person receiving care] it's the situation... It puts a lot of strain on your relationship with your partner, your kids and yourself. It's a fact of life. At the moment, it's about trying to look at ways to move forward; it is what it is. It's been hell and back."*

Feedback and Suggestions for Carers SA

An overwhelming majority of the interviewed Carers who had registered with Carers SA in early 2021, including those who have since accessed services via Carers SA, have rated their experience with us as highly positive.

Some Carers told us that they would like more detailed information about what information and services Carers SA can provide.

Carers also made some fantastic suggestions regarding expanding distribution channels for information about Carer services.

I PREFER EMAIL COMMUNICATION AS MY PHONE IS ALWAYS ON SILENT SO IT DOESN'T UPSET MY [...]. EVEN WHEN I NOTICE A CALL I AM USUALLY AFRAID OF TAKING IT AS MY BEING ON THE PHONE CAN ALSO UPSET [...]. I GENERALLY DON'T TAKE CALLS UNLESS I KNOW WHO IS CALLING AND WHY.

Carer

Other suggestions were related to individual Carer's service needs and specifically around individual preferences regarding communication and contact, which were based on caring role needs and/or complex circumstances.

For example, Carers could potentially miss important phone calls if the displayed call number was not familiar, or security settings in email system can land carer information emails in 'junk-email folder'.

These can be barriers to smooth and timely

access to important support information to Carers. With this in mind a mixed approach to messaging is recommended to reach Carers in different circumstances.

Many of the ideas and suggestions Carers shared will also assist in Carers SA's general advocacy for better recognition of Carers – especially with federal and state elections coming up soon!

This is another important part of Carers SA's work – albeit in the background: Only 20% of Carers were aware that Carers SA is providing advocacy and Carer recognition lobbying for all Carers to policy and decision makers.

Carers SA is speaking up for Carers in South Australia but also at a national level in collaboration with Carers Australia. The views and input of our South Australian Carers are therefore also heard on a national level.

For information about Carers, or services for Carers, please contact us via the Carers SA website:

www.Carerssa.com.au, talk to our team via webchat, or call our friendly Carer Services Planning team on:
Freecall: 1800 422 737



You can stay in touch with us and influence our work and support for Carers and the sector, share your suggestions and have your say via our new **"Your Voice"** online platform: <https://yourvoice.Carerssa.com.au> and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).