

National Carers Week Recap



National Carers Week 2023 was a great success, with Carers from all around South Australia coming together for this important annual celebration in one way or another. Last year's National Carers Week was incredibly special with the lighting up of Parliament House in blue and National Carers Week flags that adorned the streets in Adelaide's CBD, to raise awareness of Carers and the important role they play in the community.

National Carers Week 2023 also saw the launch of Parliamentary Friends of Carers which has been formed in partnership with Lucy Hood MP and Heidi Girolamo MLC to further the education of parliamentarians and politicians about Carers. Together with South Australian Carers, we had the pleasure of attending Parliament House and sitting in

Continues over page



From the CEO

I have started 2024 full of expectation but already I feel like this year is slipping by quickly. My kids tell me I feel like time is going faster because I am getting older, and there is definite truth to that statement. I think I am being a little reflective on the passing of time

because many of my friends have 'enjoyed' their 50th birthdays recently and there is a realisation that mine is not far away! Or maybe it is because I have realised that in March I will have been working at Carers SA for ten years. Whatever the reason I can't help but to also reflect on what Carers tell me about time.

When I listen to Carers they have very different reactions to the concept of time. Some Carers tell me they are not sure where life has gone since becoming a Carer, they say it has flashed by so very quickly. Others tell me that the challenge of being a Carer seems to make life go very very slowly. Many have told me a tale of both fast and slow depending on what is happening in their life and caring role at the time. But what all Carers tell me is that time to themselves is something they don't have a lot of.

At Carers SA we hope that we can assist to get you some time to yourself. There are a number of supports that we offer that may be able you get some time to yourself, breaks funded by State Government, or maybe time at Silversands, our house at Aldinga that was so generously donated by Joy Noble. There are other practical things that we can do to get you a little time to yourself and please call us on 8291 5600 or via Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737 to find out more.

I do have high expectations for 2024, we will hear about the findings from the review of the State Carer Recognition Act and also the Federal Inquiry into the Recognition of unpaid Carers. There is the National Carer Strategy which should be with us by December and many opportunities for myself and others to push the case of Carers to decision makers across the country. Please be assured that my colleagues and I will be fighting for better recognition of Carers throughout the year. Remember, we are here to support you. If you have any questions, concerns, or simply need support, please don't hesitate to reach out.

David Militz
CEO

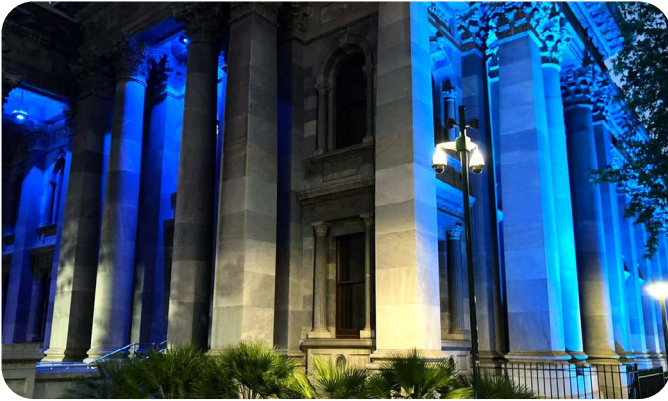
National Carers Week Recap (Continued from page 1)

the audience to hear MPs recognise and appreciate the invaluable effort of Carers, followed by afternoon tea.

National Carers Week celebrations did not stop there, Carers SA has also hosted its annual Carer Expo at Lights Recreation and Sports Centre in Lightview. As many as 500 Carers walked through the doors on the day learning about services available for Carers. Carers also had an opportunity to enjoy free coffee on us, mini massages, information sessions by Carers SA, Services Australia and Council on the Ageing (COTA) as well as African drumming sessions and a First Nations Music

Workshop by Mother Earth Caretaker Music Working Group. There were also a range of events hosted by Carers SA across South Australia such as a river cruise with lunch down the Murray River on the Captain Proud Paddleboat, leather craft and mini art workshop at Goolwa Community Centre, golf driving range at Vines Golf Club, afternoon tea and chair yoga at Arid Lands Botanic Gardens to name a few.

To find out more about upcoming 2024 National Carers Week events, follow us on [Facebook@CarersSA](https://www.facebook.com/CarersSA) or sign up to our e-news via www.carerssa.com.au



Reconciliation Action Plan

At Carers SA we are always focused on developing ways to collaborate with other organisations and the community to enhance and improve the opportunities for people and Carers who have been marginalised on every front.

In 2023, as part of this focus, Carers SA embarked on a journey with Reconciliation Australia to develop our first Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). A RAP is a nationally endorsed strategic document that lays out how organisations can support the national reconciliation movement to build positive and productive relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations and communities.

We are proud to announce that our RAP has been endorsed by Reconciliation Australia and will be one of the ways we are demonstrating reconciliation in a meaningful and proactive way.

To know more, you can read here: [Carers SA Reflect RAP - First Nation Carers.](#)



Carers SA Advocacy Involvements

Carers SA persistently advocates across Governments, health systems, businesses and communities for the recognition of Carers, appropriate and meaningful support and services for Carers.

We take our mandate from Carers. We listen to what Carers tell us directly. We collate feedback to inform the key focus of advocacy and to provide evidenced information and submissions to state based or national decision makers regarding what Carers want and need.

The following are some key advocacy involvements to benefit Carers in South Australia throughout 2023 up to the beginning of 2024:

2024 – Carers SA Carer Advocacy Statement – Pre Budget Submission 2024-2025 State Budget

Carers SA submitted to the South Australian Government our Carer Advocacy Statement, asking the SA Government to allow specific budget items in the 2024-2025 State Budget to address issues related to Carer Recognition, support for Young Carers and to address the significant Cost of Living Pressures experienced by Carers. This document can be accessed here: [Carers SA Carer Advocacy Statement-Pre-Budget Submission 2024-2025](#)

2023 – Carers SA formal submission to the Review of the South Australian Carer Recognition Act 2005

South Australian Carers shared their experiences when interacting with South Australian Government departments and agencies via an extensive survey during 2023. These experiences formed the foundation of the Carers SA submission to the Review of the South Australian Carer Recognition Act 2005 with the view of legislatively embedding stronger Carer Rights. You can read that submission here: [Carers SA 2023 Submission Review SA Carers Recognition Act 2005](#)

2023 – Carers SA formal submission to the Inquiry into the Recognition of Unpaid Carer and the effectiveness of the Australian Carer Recognition Act 2010.

Carers SA extensively consulted with Carers via a survey conducted in July 2023 regarding their experiences as Carers when interacting with Government Departments and agencies. The detailed information that Carers shared formed a core component of the Carers SA submission (Part 1) to the Inquiry. Carers SA also gave South Australian Carers the option to collate their own submissions, thoughts and recommendations and formally submit these to the Inquiry on behalf of the Carers. These submissions are published also in Part 2 of the submission documents sent to the Inquiry. You can read both submissions here:

[Part 1 - Submission for Response to the Inquiry of Unpaid Carers](#)

[Part 2 - Submission for Response to the Inquiry of Unpaid Carers](#)

Carers SA representatives (David Miltz, CEO and Marianne Lewis, Manager Strategic Policy) were subsequently invited by the Inquiry and appeared as witnesses advocating for a review, and changes to the Australian Carer Recognition Act 2010.

To read these submissions visit: [Carers SA - Advocacy](#)

Carer Testimony

“The support groups (Peer Group) are remarkably caring and encouraging. The Coaching is an amazingly positive reminder to keep strong, cheerful, fresh and happy to cope in the caring role.” – Kathleen

Community Engagement

Throughout the year, Carers SA's Community Engagement team has been actively participating in community events all around South Australia to ensure local communities are aware that supports are available to Carers. There was a variety of events covering Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, LGBTIQ+, disability, young children, aged and multicultural communities.



Kids & Youth Disability Expo (KYD-X) at the Priceline Stadium.



SA Council on Intellectual Disability (SACID) Conference at the Hilton Hotel.



Salisbury Wellness Day at Jack Young Centre for Seniors.

Caring For Yourself While Caring For Others – Skylight Mental Health

Have you ever been told you should 'focus on self-care'? How did this advice make you feel?

When you pour most of your energy into your caring role and are already overwhelmed just trying to keep your head above water, the suggestion to *look after yourself* can feel frustrating, insensitive, or even outright impossible!

And yet...

In Skylight's therapeutic work with Carers; a recurring theme is Carers feeling like they have *lost touch with themselves*. Carers tend to get used to putting others' needs before their own, and they often feel depleted as a result. But your wellbeing matters too, and as the saying goes: 'you can't pour from an empty cup'.

When considering self-care, it is important to be realistic. Massages and holidays, while they might be enjoyable, are often not accessible for Carers due to restraints around time, finances, and other practical considerations.

Because you are a multifaceted human being, there are many different parts of you to tend to. A holistic exploration of self-care can incorporate the following parts of your life:

• Emotional

What helps you tend to your emotions? You might consider journalling, talking with a counsellor, or creating space for yourself to feel and allow your emotions to *be*, just as they are.

• Physical

Are you eating food that helps you feel nourished? Going to bed on time? Moving your body? This also includes boring or uncomfortable tasks, like booking in for that overdue health screening.

• Spiritual

In what ways can you tune in to something bigger than yourself? This might be through prayer, meditation, or even by connecting with your values.

• Creative

Movement, drawing, painting, music, writing... creativity helps us process our experiences, and invites a sense of playfulness and flexibility.



• Intellectual

What topics are you interested in? Are there books, podcasts, documentaries, discussion groups or trainings that you might like to explore?

• Social

In what ways could you invite a little more social connection? You might call a friend or join a group. You are not alone.

• Environmental

Connect with your senses to consider the environment you surround yourself with. Seemingly small things like lighting or smell can make a big difference, or you might decide to spend more time in nature.

Self-care is not a luxury. It is essential. Skylight is there to support you in your quest toward caring for your *self*.

Written by Merel van Kalker, Skylight Mental Health Counsellor.

Skylight Mental Health partners with Carers SA to provide support and information, build community awareness and advocate for improved mental health policies and services as part of the Carer Gateway.

They assist Carers who are supporting a friend or family member with mental illness and offer a number of support options for Carers, family members as well as for the Carer themselves who is living with a mental illness.

For more information about Skylight Mental Health, [click here](#) or phone them on 08 8378 4100.

Upcoming Events

Adelaide Hill/Murray Mallee

Face to face Peer Group Locations in the Adelaide Hills & Murraylands:

- Aldgate
- Lobethal
- Mount Barker
- Murray Bridge
- Murraylands Men
- Strathalbyn
- Tailem Bend
- Woodside

NEW PEER GROUP at Mannum starting soon!

Monthly Online Peer Groups via Zoom

Dates: 16th April 2024, 21st May 2024
and 18th June 2024

Time: 8pm

To RSVP for any of these Peer Group sessions, please contact Cat at 0455 442 276 or cat.kennedy@carerssa.com.au

Country based Carer Collective Volunteers



Are you aged 18 and above and live in country South Australia?

Would you like to volunteer with Carers SA?

This is an excellent opportunity to be part of Carers SA by offering your skills and knowledge.

Carer Collective Volunteers share their insights and experience to help inform Carers SA about how we can enhance services and support for Carers in the community.

What does a Carer Collective Volunteer do?

- Contribute their knowledge, experiences and skills
- Suggest and recommend enhanced opportunities for easier access to Carers SA services
- Be part of a group that puts forward ideas for Carers to have a positive experience
- Attend regular meetings with other Carers and Carers SA staff throughout the year

For more information or to express your interest please contact Volunteer Coordinator Julie at 0423 343 441 or email communityengagement@carerssa.com.au

Special Guest Speaker

Join Michelle from the Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) as she shares information on Guardianship Orders & South Australian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (SACAT).

Topics include:

- What to do if the person you care for is no longer able to make decisions and they did not nominate a decision-maker earlier when they were able (e.g. did not complete an Advance Care Directive).
- Guardianship Orders
- What to expect from SACAT

Date: Tuesday 30th April 2024

Time: 11am

Location: CWA Hall Mt Barker

To RSVP for this event, please contact Carer Connector Cat on 0455 442 276 or cat.kennedy@carerssa.com.au.

Eastern & Northern Metro

NEW PEER GROUP at Para Hills/Modbury starting soon!

Due to popular demand, we are starting a group for Carers who care for adult children living with a disability.

Would you like to meet other Carers of adult children and learn more about the adult world of disability (or are happy to share your experience) and support your child's transition to adult services?

Topics will include but not limited to:

- Transitions from school to employment/volunteering role: Using and accessing School Leavers Employment Supports (SLES) funding through National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).
- Transitioning from home to supported accommodation and/or independent accommodation: What does that look like, who funds this, how does it work?
- Focus on planning for the future: What happens when you are no longer here or unable to support your child any longer?

For more info and to express your interest, please contact Jane on 08 8291 5600 or jane.brzezinski@carerssa.com.au.

Have you heard about HomeSeeker SA?

HomeSeeker SA is the State Government's new program to helping low to moderate income people into the housing market; with a website offering exclusive access to affordable homes for sale, as well as information on how to rent, save and buy a home. **Visit www.homeseecker.sa.gov.au**

Future Planning Session – Office for the Public Advocate

Come and learn more about planning for the future. This session includes topics such as:

- Advance Care Directives
- Substitute Decision-Maker role and responsibilities
- Powers of Attorney
- Attorney role and responsibilities
- Informal Arrangements

Date: 26th March 2024

Time: 1:30pm – 2:30pm

Location:

Playford Uniting Church, Munno Para SA 5115

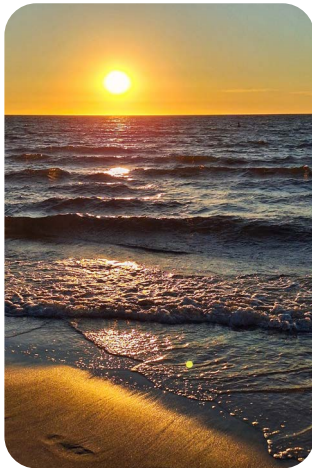
To RSVP for this session, please contact Jane on 08 8291 5600 or jane.brzezinski@carerssa.com.au.

Western Metro

Photography/Mindfulness Carer Group

Our Carer group recently went to Semaphore for some sunset photography.

Here are some photos from one of the Carers, who is excited about how their photography has been progressing since joining the group.



You do not need a camera for this group, your phone will do just fine.

Contact John for more information on how to join in the fun and relaxation on 0423 342 423 or john.piovesan@carerssa.com.au.

Your Caring Way

Your Caring Way provides free support and training options to unpaid Carers wishing to pursue their own goals.



Whether you want to rejoin the workforce, pursue a new career, study, or get volunteer experience, we are here to help.

Contact Shauna at 0437 069 899 or email at sgallagher@yourcaringway.com.au for more information.

Barossa and Light

Looking for an opportunity to connect, share, and learn from each other?

Come together with other Carers in a group and meet with people in similar caring situations. There are Peer Groups around the region that meets at the following locations and times.

- Hillier Park Residential Village
160 Hillier Road, Gawler SA 5116
Every THIRD WEDNESDAY of the month. 11:00am
- Barossa Fresh Café
1 Murray Street, Nuriootpa SA 5355
Every SECOND TUESDAY of the month. 9:30am
- Gawler Cinemas (Expression of Interest needed)
11 Murray Street, Gawler SA 5118
Every THIRD TUESDAY of the month. 10:00am

To join one of these Peer Groups, please contact Lee on 0455 445 524 or lee.wingate@carerssa.com.au

Carer Coaching Program



The Coaching program may just be for YOU. It gives you an opportunity to think about who you are and what you want in your life. Get supported by your Coach to work towards the things that are important to you!

- 6 x 1 hour free sessions
- Held face to face, via telephone or video conferencing
- Time to think about your wellbeing
- A non-judgemental space to explore strategies to work towards your goals
- Planning how to identify and achieve a change to improve your quality of life

To get connected with a Coach, call Carers SA via Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737

Did you know you can still access Carer Gateway services when your caring role ends?

Supports via Carer Gateway may be provided up to 2 years in certain situations after the caring role has ended where the person you have been caring for has passed away.

If your caring role or circumstances change, please notify Carers SA via Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737 or email info@carerssa.com.au