

**My wife
lives with
chronic
illness**



**My little
sister lives
with
disability**



**My husband
lives with
mental health
challenges**



**Some of
my mob
live with
disability**



**It's not
easy when
our parents
get older**



**My child
lives with
disability**




Carers SA

2024-25
Annual Report



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Our Strategic Plan 2024-2026



Our values represent how we engage with Carers, each other and the broader community



About Us

Carers SA is the peak advocacy body for Carers in South Australia. Raising the voice and recognition of Carers, their rights, wellbeing and needs are at the heart of Carers SA's efforts. We persistently advocate across governments, health and social services and systems, business and communities to prioritise appropriate and meaningful support and services for Carers. Carers SA aims to ensure that Carers needs, wishes, values and perspectives are elevated and able to inform and influence decision-making by government, service providers, policy makers, legislators, systems and services to improve the lives and wellbeing of Carers in South Australia.

Carers SA is both a peak body and a service provider for Carers through the Carer Gateway and other state funded programs. This provides us with a unique opportunity to understand the needs of Carers and identify and implement ways to improve the services used. It enables us to engage with many and diverse Carers across South Australia through our broad networks and through services and supports. This positions Carers SA to raise awareness of issues facing Carers and raise the voice of Carers to inform and influence policy and decision-making about issues that impact them.

Our service reach is extensive and diverse. We receive funding from state and federal governments to provide Carer services throughout South Australia that extend from the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands (APY) in the North to the Limestone Coast, Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island in the South.

Collaboration and partnership is core to our work, we recognise that meeting diverse needs and achieving meaningful outcomes requires innovation, collaboration and continuous improvement.



We have a deep connection with Carers formed over 30 years since our establishment. By keeping Carers informed, listening to their ideas, co-designing initiatives, and supporting their advocacy, we continue to work alongside them to build the foundations for meaningful and positive impacts in their lives.

President's Report



Following two years on the Board I was elected President of Carers SA in November 2024. I extend sincere thanks to outgoing President Phil Martin for his leadership and commitment over many years which has laid strong foundations for the future. On behalf of the Board, I also acknowledge former Chief Executive Officer David Militz for his outstanding leadership and dedication, guiding Carers SA through the transition to Carers SA being South Australia's primary Carer Gateway provider. His strategic vision and integrity have left a lasting legacy for the organisation and the Carer community.

In January 2025, we welcomed Julia Overton as CEO. Julia brings extensive experience in community leadership, strategic development and stakeholder, consumer and Carer engagement, including leading an advocacy peak body. She combines a deep passion for improving outcomes for Carers with a collaborative and innovative approach that will strengthen our partnerships and impact at both state and national levels.

Since joining the Board, I have been inspired by the remarkable people at the heart of everything we do, the Carers of South Australia. Every day, Carers provide care, support and compassion to a family member or friend, often at great personal cost. Their strength and resilience drive the work of the Board and our staff.

As the state's peak Carer body, Carers SA advocacy continues to grow in achieving positive outcomes for the rights, recognition and wellbeing of Carers. It is

important that South Australia remains a key contributor to shaping national Carer policies and legislation. To this end, our State's Carers provided nearly 2800 responses to the National Carer Survey and in my role as President, I attended Carers Australia President's Meetings to inform national policy directions.

Our dual role as the peak body and as the largest Carer support organisation in South Australia, brings us unique and deep insight. Engagement with members, stakeholders and Carers has been a strong focus this year and our engagement activities and outcome measurements telling us that the vast majority of Carers who responded to the satisfaction survey have positive levels of satisfaction using our services.

I thank our Chief Executive Officer, Julia Overton, the Executive Leadership Team and our staff for their professionalism and compassion, and I acknowledge my fellow Board Directors for their commitment to strong governance and a shared vision for Carers SA. Looking ahead, we remain steadfast in our mission to recognise, support and advocate for all Carers, from metropolitan Adelaide to regional and remote communities.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read 'Tony Simmons'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

Tony Simmons
President, Carers SA

CEO's Report

It has been a privilege to step into the role of CEO in January 2025. I am grateful to our Board, Executive Leadership Team and dedicated staff for their professionalism and care, and to the Carers of South Australia whose resilience and advocacy inspire our work every day. I acknowledge and thank former CEO David Militz for his dedicated leadership and contribution to Carers SA.

It was an honour for Carers SA, together with Carers to be present at the launch of the National Carer Strategy in South Australia in December 2024 launched by the Hon Amanda Rishworth MP, Minister for Social Services. Carers SA actively engaged with the National Carer Strategy to ensure the views and needs of South Australian Carers inform policy and system design. Through the National Carer Organisation CEO Network, including the June meeting hosted in Adelaide, we collaborated with peers across Australia to share insights, advocate with a unified voice and progress issues that matter to Carers. In aiming to ensure our advocacy is strategically targeted to best meet the needs of Carers, we established a new Carer Advisory Committee and Carer Advocate Register, and the Board endorsed our first Advocacy Policy Statement which will guide Carers SA's future advocacy directions.

Outcomes for Carers remained our focus. Our teams delivered high quality, practical supports through the Carer Gateway and State funded programs, helping Carers access respite, information, social connection and wellbeing supports aligned to their goals. We strengthened safeguarding, quality and practice to ensure our services are safe, effective and Carer centred. We also prepared for future service enhancements to embed a vocational pathways program into the Carer Gateway service model in 2025–26.

Partnerships are central to our impact. Carers SA maintained active membership with sector peaks including the Mental Health Coalition of South

Australia (MHCSA), Palliative Care South Australia (PCSA), the South Australian Council of Social Service (SACOSS), Community Centres SA, Turkindi Inc., Diversity Council of Australia, Youth Affairs Council of SA and Carers Australia. As the Convener of the Carer Support Network SA, we increased membership and adopted a broadened, inclusive view of who is a Carer. We also strengthened operational collaborations, progressing work with the education sector to reach more Young Carers and formally partnering with two of the largest Local Health Networks (LHN) including launching the new online Carer Awareness training for LHN workforce. In doing so we advanced joint initiatives to improve navigation, referrals and codesigned supports.

Our communications and engagement strategies expanded our statewide reach, this included distributing e-news to Carers and stakeholders, holding events and community outreach sessions, sharing practical resources while building awareness, collaborating and empowering across metropolitan, regional and remote communities.

Looking ahead, we will continue to strengthen services and advocacy for Carers. We will remain financially responsible, stewarding resources carefully, prioritising frontline impact and maintaining transparent reporting to our Board and stakeholders. Thank you to our Board, partners, volunteers, Carer Advocates, Carer Collective members and staff for your commitment, and to Carers, for the care you provide every day.



Julia Overton

Chief Executive Officer, Carers SA





Câlin, which means hug in French is a sculpture made up of nearly 1400 interconnecting pieces.

This interactive artwork aims to symbolise connection, togetherness and support in its recognition and celebration of all unpaid Carers.

Board

Tony Simmons (President)

B. Ec., Fellow Chartered Accountants Australia & NZ (FCAANZ), Registered Financial Adviser (previously)

Key Skills and Expertise:

Accountancy and Financial Services

Tony is a Chartered Accountant with over 40 years of experience working in financial service provision, including as partner of accounting firm PKF and also BDO until his retirement in October 2022. He has served as a Board member and Treasurer of Motor Neurone Disease SA, Careworks and Bay to Birdwood. He has also been a member of Rotary for over 20 years and served as the Chairman of the SA Branch of Chartered Accountants Australia & NZ. Tony has lived experience as a Carer of family members.



Adrian Hinton (Treasurer)

B. Ec, FCAANZ

Key Skills and Expertise:

Audit and Assurance

Adrian Hinton brings over 40 years' experience at Deloitte, where he held senior leadership roles and managed complex audits across the manufacturing, resources, financial services, Not For Profit's and the wine industries and in countries including Romania and the United States. With board experience, including with the Multiple Sclerosis Society of South Australia and Northern Territory Inc, Adrian brings technical acumen to audit and assurance processes which contribute to Carers SA's ongoing reputation for excellence, integrity and transparency.



Sonya Weiser (Chair of Carer Engagement Subcommittee)

B. Sc, MBA, GAICD

Key Skills and Expertise:

Information Technology Governance, Strategy and Procurement

Sonya Weiser brings 36 years working in the information technology industry, and 16 years on boards and committees including the North Eastern Community Hospital and Goodwood Community Bank. Sonya is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, Behind Closed Doors, the Institute of Community Directors, the MBA Alumni Association of The University of Adelaide, HerTechPath, the Rotary Club of Adelaide, Women on Boards and Women in Innovation. Sonya has lived experience as a Carer of an elderly mother.



Stuart Watt

B Sc (Hons), B. Ec, B. Sc, GAICD

Key Skills and Expertise:

Technology, Digital, Cyber Security

Stuart has had a long career in the SA Department of Primary Industries with expertise including Technology / Digital Strategy, Stakeholder Management, Digital, Governance, Change Management, and Cyber Security risk. His previous Board experience includes with Defence SA Audit and Risk Committee and he is involved in his own local community with surf life saving and old scholar's football. Stuart has lived experience as a Carer for a family member living with dementia.



Sharon Wachtel

*G Dip Podiatry, G Dip Bus Admin,
G Dip Com and PR*

Key Skills and Expertise:

Innovations in Service Delivery,
Community Engagement



Sharon is a recently retired community services and corporate executive, having held senior roles with local government and the Red Cross. She has extensive expertise in people leadership, innovative service delivery with diverse and vulnerable communities, and community engagement, including leading national initiatives such as the Justice Program, the Red Cross National Reconciliation Plan and place-based First Nations community development. She is a member of the LGBTQIA+ community and has lived experience as a Carer for her elderly parents.

Lauren Bradley

*B. Int. Dev Studies, M. Applied
Proj Mgt, Dip Languages*

Key Skills and Expertise:

Public Health Delivery,
Partnerships, Advocacy



Lauren has a strong track record in managing complex public health programs across Australia, the Pacific and Southeast Asia. Her commitment to driving community and peer-led responses to improve health outcomes is demonstrated in her work as Director with Women in Aid, Hepatitis Australia and Health Equity Matters where she provided executive oversight of multi-million-dollar public health initiatives, brokered strategic partnerships, and influenced law and policy reform. Lauren has lived experience as a Carer supporting a close family member through a terminal illness.

Angela Allison

*B. Arts, Dip Proj Mgt, Chartered
Practicing Accountant, GAICD*

Key Skills and Expertise:

Outcome Measurements,
Strategy, Corporate Services



Angela has a career background in executive roles in local government, SA Housing Authority and the SA Film Corporation across corporate services, strategy and performance measurement, marketing, social housing and state immigration services. She brings extensive Board insight and acumen through her previous Board and Committee appointments including Southern Region Waste Resource Authority, Australian Institute of Advanced Technology, Slingsby Theatre Company, Catalyst Foundation, Study Adelaide, SA Housing Authority, Northern Adelaide Local Health Network and Department of Education and Child Development.

Paul Kitsi

*Cert IV Gov (Stat Compliance),
Cert IV Govt (Investigations), Adv
Dip Accounting, Dip Bus Studies,
Cert Fundraising*

Key Skills and Expertise:

Audit, Taxation



Paul has worked in senior professional roles throughout his career, including the management of accounting, audit, and investigation as well as holding a range of volunteer leadership and coordination roles. As a Carer for more than 25 years, supporting four family members including his son, he has firsthand understanding of the daily challenges Carers face. Drawing on his Greek cultural background and strong connection to the Orthodox community, Paul also offers valuable cultural insight from a Carer perspective in his contribution to the Board.

Wendy Warren

Grad Cert Human Services (Child & Adolescent Welfare), Grad Exec Programs (Flinders & Adelaide Universities)



Key Skills and Expertise:

Disability Services, Leadership, Clinical Governance, Risk Management

Wendy is a strategic leader and passionate advocate for people with disabilities and Carers in crisis. With over 25 years' experience across disability services, legal consulting, employment and economic development, she has held roles on the NDIS State Committee, Regional Economic Development Boards and the National Operations Committee for Job Services Australia. Since 2011, she has been CEO of a specialist disability provider. Wendy's lived experience as a Carer reinforces her commitment to trauma-informed care and resilient communities.

We acknowledge and thank the following directors, who retired or resigned during the year, for their service and contribution to Carers SA:

- **Phil Martin** – Co-opted in February 2014, elected in November 2014, Vice President from November 2017, President from November 2021, retired AGM 2024.
- **Susan Antoun** - Co-Opted in June 2017, elected in November 2017, Treasurer from 2017 – 2019. Retired AGM 2024.
- **Jody Martin-Rankin** - Co-opted in February 2023, elected in November 2023, resigned April 2025.

FY 2024-25 Director Attendance Register

Director	Board		Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FAR)		Carer Engagement Committee (CES)	
	Held	Attended	Held	Attended	Held	Attended
Total Held	11		10		7	
Tony Simmons	11	11	10	10	7	6
Adrian Hinton	11	8	10	7	–	–
Paul Kitsi	11	9	6	4	–	–
Sharon Wachtel	11	11	–	–	7	6
Sonya Weiser	11	10	–	–	7	7
Stuart Watt	11	7	6	5	–	–
Angela Allison	6	5	6	2	–	–
Lauren Bradley	6	6	–	–	5	4
Wendy Warren (appointed to CES prior to being Board Director)	2	2	–	–	6	6
Jody Martin-Rankin	10	7	–	–	5	4
Phil Martin (Past President)	5	5	4	4	2	1
Susan Antoun	5	4	4	4	–	–

Note:

"Held" means the number of meetings held while the Director was a member of the Board/Committee

"Attended" means the number of meetings attended in person or virtually via MS Teams while the Director was a member of the Board or Committee.



Our Advocacy

Carers SA is funded by the Department of Human Services under the Advocacy and Impact Program Grant. Under this funding Carers SA is mandated to deliver on:

Advocacy

- Meet with Ministers, Executives and other key stakeholders to communicate Carer issues and concerns and advise on relevant service and policy responses
- Conduct Carer and community engagement, education and awareness raising activities
- Conduct Carer research and publish relevant reports and submissions

Representation

- Promote the interests of Carers and the Carer sector
- Map Carer services and systems including their interconnectedness with health, disability and aged care and other sectors such as education and employment
- Collect data and support National and State Surveys
- Consult with Carers and Carer communities with lived experience and provide direct representation on their behalf

Sector Support

- Provide capacity building activities for Carers and service providers
- Disseminate targeted information, particularly in relation to compliance, obligations and regulatory matters to key stakeholders
- Consult with Carer service providers and coordinate their input to represent the needs of services and the target cohort
- Provide expert advice to Carers and Carer service providers and other relevant Sectors

Our advocacy aims to enable Carers are to

- Have their voices heard on issues that are important to them.
- Defend and safeguard their rights.
- Partner in decision-making that impacts them and the people they care for.
- Contribute to shared planning and problem solving to improve the lives of Carers.

Our systemic advocacy acts to enhance the voice and lived experience of Carers and to actively work with Carers to safeguard their rights, participate in decision-making, and contribute to solutions that improve their lives and those they care for.

This year we have strengthened our listening, created more meaningful and accessible opportunities for Carers to share their experiences, perspectives and tell us what they need and want to improve their lives. We have been further informed by the priorities in the National Carer Strategy and Action Plan, the National Carer Survey, the National Carer Wellbeing Survey, the Carer Recognition Acts and our own data and feedback from the Carer Gateway data, survey, forums, focus groups and round table discussions.

We focused our advocacy on the unique needs of priority Carer groups who have a high need for support services. These include Carers with lived experience of mental illness, a disability or dementia; those who experience racism, stigma and marginalisation including LGBTQIA+, First Nations Peoples and people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds and Veterans and defence Carers; and Young Carers and their “excessive” care responsibilities.

Collaborations and Partnerships

We advocate for Carers by engaging with government, service providers and key stakeholders to communicate Carer issues, promote their interests, and influence policy, legislation and service responses. Impactful advocacy is enhanced through building

strong partnerships and networks. Carers SA met with a broad range of organisations across state and national peak bodies, government agencies, community and consumer organisations, research and education to build and nurture partnerships, identify issues and increase recognition of Carers.

Research Partnerships

We further drove Carer focused research and Carer outcomes research projects. Carers SA advocates for lived experience of Carers to be a central element of research that impacts their lives. We have partnered with researchers and universities on key research projects including:

- Improving Young Carer Research Policies and Practices (Flinders University Centre for Palliative Care, Death and Dying and Palliative Care SA)
- Psychosocial Approaches to Thriving Health Systems (Carers in the Barossa Region and the Northern Adelaide Local Health Network, Mental Health Coalition of SA and the Queensland Alliance for Mental Health)
- Dementia Model of Care for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Carers (Flinders University, codesigned with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) community members)

- Oral Health CALD People with Dementia (Adelaide University)
- Young People with Disability and Young Carers (Flinders University)
- The Compassionate States Project (Carers SA, Carers Victoria, Palliative Care SA and Palliative Care Victoria)

Government Submissions

Our submissions to government act to inform and influence policy to ensure Carers are recognised and represented in systems and services so that their unique needs are met. We made submissions to the:

- Inquiry into a South Australian Human Rights Act 2024
- SA Health/NALHN Draft Crisis Stabilisation Centre Model of Care 2025SA
- DHS Draft Suicide Prevention Action Plan 2025–2028
- Models of Care Consortium Young Peoples' Mental Health 2025
- Draft State Disability Inclusion Plan 2025–2029 (in joint submission with Carers and Disability Link)
- Purple Orange Call for Independent Disability Advocacy 2025 (a joint signatory)



Carer Advisory Committee and Carer Advocate Register

Established in May 2025, the Carer Advisory Committee (CAC) currently comprises 10 Carers whose expertise comes from their lived experience. The purpose of the CAC is to actively involve Carers in informing and influencing Carers SA systemic advocacy and policy mandate and strategic directions.

The Committee's actions and recommendations are reported to the Executive Leadership Strategy Meeting and Carer Engagement Board Subcommittee. This provides a transparent pathway by which the collective voice and lived experience of Carers directly informs and influences Carers SA planning, priorities, strategic directions and decision-making and demonstrates accountability and transparency of Carers SA's advocacy mandate.

Carer Advisory Committee members are

Lyn Woodforde OAM

Jacqueline Riviere

Bonnie Ireland

Helen Darling

Glenys Maczkowiack

Geoff Richards

Mario Corena

Lyn Whiteway

Melissa Cadzow

Brenton Drogemuller



As the peak body for Carers in South Australia, our advocacy is based on robust evidence, informed by lived experience, aligned with national strategies, bold, collaborative and targeted.

Advocacy Impact - SA Carer's Voices Heard Loud and Clear in National Carer Survey



We work to ensure the issues and insights of Carers in South Australia inform the set of National Carer Survey questions; and that SA Carer voices are heard loudly. In 2024, Carers in South Australia submitted nearly 2800 responses and were the largest group of respondents nationally (nearly 28% of total responses). This means that Carer data and information from the survey is well informed by Carers' experience in SA.

Advocacy Impact - SA's New Mental Health Crisis Stabilisation Centre Responds to Carer's Needs



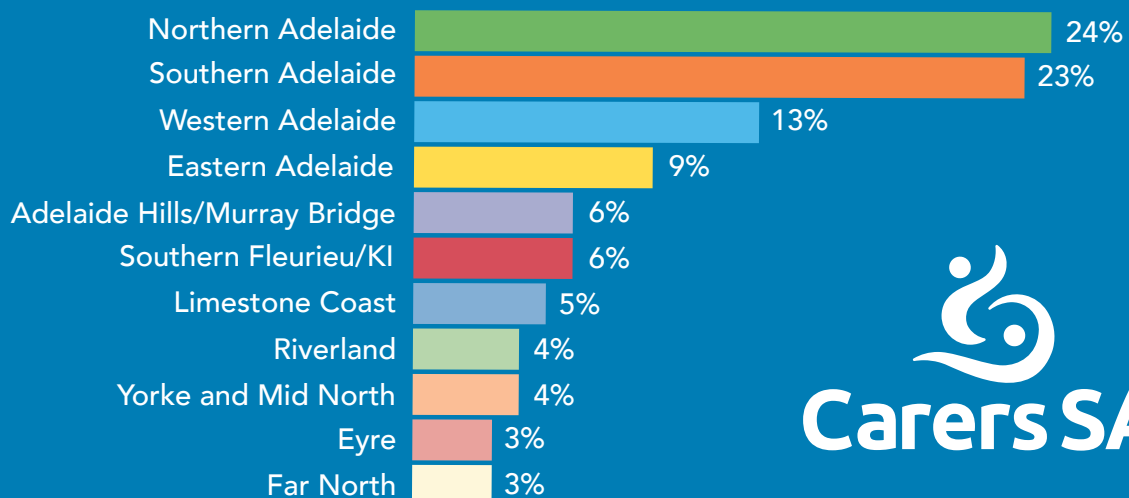
Our submission to a SA Health's new Crisis Stabilisation Centre resulted in Carer needs being comprehensively recognised. Carers will now be provided with information about treatment and care, their legal rights, practical skills and tasks where a Carer might be required to support the person during their stay (medication administration or financial support) and accessing emergency supports.

The Year at a Glance

During FY24/25 Carers SA provided:



Carers supported in each SA Region as a % of total




Carers SA

Service Delivery

Since 2020, Carers SA have supported 38,609 Carers located across South Australia.

Our Services

Carers SA delivers a range of practical and emotional supports for Carers across the state. Our services include the delivery of Carer Gateway, an Australian Government initiative providing a mix of free telephone, online and in-person supports, services and advice for Carers. Supports and services that Carers may be able to access through Carer Gateway include Peer Support, Carer Coaching, Counselling, Tailored Support Packages and Emergency Respite.

Other Carers SA services include Young Carers 1-1 Support, Carer Breaks, Systemic Advocacy and Policy, Social Support and Community Engagement.

To find out more about these services please visit www.carerssa.com.au

Meeting Service Gaps

Our services often fill the gaps Carers experience from other services including aged care, disability and mental health supports. We supported many Carers who are waiting for My Aged Care or receiving an inadequate My Aged Care Package. Additionally, many Carers face significant challenges in securing respite care beds due to high demand and limited, dispersed availability. We were able to support Carers to access residential respite this year, using Bed Search. Carers reach out to access tailored support packages when the NDIS package for the person they care for has been reduced and they are seeking a review but the care and support falls on the Carer during this time.

Through our community engagement work we convened Collaborative Provider Workshops across South Australia. During 2024–25, 11 workshops

brought together industry wide stakeholders from health, disability, local government, community services, aged care and diverse community sectors. These sessions built awareness of Carers, strengthened referral pathways and encouraged collaboration to better meet Carer needs at a local level, and helped to inform service gaps and opportunities for enhanced service delivery.

Service Partners

Carers benefit from our extensive partnerships and broad reach across South Australia, including the APY Lands. Carers SA collaborates with providers such as Skylight Mental Health and Sonder (Headspace) for mental health support, Multicultural Communities Council of SA, German Community Services, Chinese Welfare, Jewish Community Services and NPY Women's Council (APY Lands) to address cultural needs. For Carers facing challenges like food security income, and housing, we refer to organisations including Foodbank, Uniting Communities, Catalyst Foundation, and Services Australia. In addition, Carers SA collaborates with a wide range of practical service providers to deliver timely and flexible assistance. This includes partnerships with 78 in-home direct service providers, 25 driving instructors, and 117 cleaning and gardening providers, alongside strong relationships with residential facilities to support urgent or short-term respite placements when needed. We also engage a range of specialist suppliers to provide equipment and services through Tailored Support Packages, ensuring Carers and their families receive help that meets their unique needs.

Carer Breaks

Carers SA delivered a diverse range of group, individual and retreat breaks across metropolitan and regional South Australia during 2024–25. Funded by the SA Department of Human Services, this program, provided Carers meaningful time away from their caring role to rest, recharge and reconnect.

Group activities promoted social inclusion and wellbeing through shared experiences such as high teas, café lunches, movie-and-meal events, bowling, creative workshops, including resin art, mosaics, candle making, mindful clay, glass painting, adventure and nature outings including river and sailing cruises, zoo visits, kayaking, and the Adelaide Oval Roof Climb.

Carers also experienced cultural and recreational activities, attending concerts, theatre, museum and sports events. These activities helped Carers build community connection, reduce isolation and relax and have time to refresh and focus on themselves.

In addition to these shared experiences, individual breaks offered Carers in need and with complex caring roles, a tailored opportunity to rest and focus on wellbeing. These included short accommodation stays, pampering and wellness sessions, and meal or experience vouchers to provide choice and ease of access. Carers also benefited from restorative multi-day retreats that blended relaxation, social connection and self-care workshops in peaceful settings such as Normanville, Barossa, Melrose, Port Augusta, Berri, Northern Adelaide, Robe and Port Lincoln. These breaks gave Carers the time and space to focus on their own wellbeing, maintain resilience, and return to their caring roles feeling re-energised and supported.

Joy Noble Retreat

Joy Noble, former President of Carers SA kindly bequeathed a holiday home to Carers SA to be used specifically for Carers to have a break, located at Silver Sands in Aldinga Beach. During the year, 45 Carers stayed at the property for up to five days, some enjoying a peaceful personal break, while others shared the experience with the person they care for. This property offers a welcoming and accessible space for Carers to unwind by the sea, reconnect with family or friends, and return home feeling refreshed and supported.

Carers continue to describe the Carer Break Program as highly valuable, offering moments of reprieve and something positive to look forward to.

The diversity and breadth of our services represent our commitment and attention to Carers ongoing health, wellbeing and ability to participate and contribute not just to the lives of the people they care for, but also to broader Australian society.

1,647 breaks were provided to
568 Adult Carers.



"Staying at the Joy Noble Retreat gave me a rare chance to truly rest. I could hear the ocean, take a walk on the beach, and finally switch off for a few days. It reminded me how important it is to look after myself too."

Young Carers

The Carers SA Young Carer Program raises awareness of Young Carers and provides information, connection, wellbeing and social support opportunities through Young Carer Coaching, Peer Groups, a team of Young Carer-specific Counsellors, and state-funded Carer Breaks and 1:1 Supports. Our dedicated Young Carer Team of nine staff works flexibly across community, home and school settings to provide in-person assessments, reviews and service delivery.

Young Carer Gateway Services

Young Carers and their families often face financial pressures. This year we provided almost 500 Tailored Support Packages, a 30% increase from FY2023-24, to reduce financial stress, maintain school engagement and build independence. These packages were most commonly used for school fees and uniforms, laptops, sports and extracurricular costs, and driving lessons.

We also supported Young Carers to apply for the Carers Australia Young Carer Bursary Program, which helps Young Carers continue their education while managing their caring role. For those who were eligible but unsuccessful, we provided additional Tailored Support Packages to assist them in continuing with their education.

This year we co-designed with Young Carers in our Young Carer Collective to develop the Young Carer Wellbeing Booklet and developed a targeted social media campaign, strengthening the voice and visibility of Young Carers across South Australia.

2,229 instances of coaching, peer support and counselling delivered for Young Carers.

529 opportunities for Young Carers to have a Break from their caring role

We have seen a **41%** increase in the number of Multicultural Young Carers and a **32%** increase in First Nations Young Carers accessing our services.



CARER STORY

"I'm a Young Carer, I'm 15 and I support my brother who has disability and complex behaviours management needs. I help as much as I can because my mum gets very stressed and upset. We try to share supporting him. It can be very stressful and I sometimes feel overwhelmed.

I'm in the Young Carer Program with Carers SA. Through this program I have been able to go on a Young Carer Camp with about 30 other Young Carers. We went to a camp in the Victor Harbour. It was great being able to talk to other kids like me.

We get to talk about what its like for us and how hard it can be sometimes but also, how much we want to support our families where we can. It was just good to have a few days away where we could have fun. I have made some really good friends through the Camp. We now have a peer support group set up through Carers SA and we keep in touch all the time online.

This has really helped me just sharing how I feel but mainly, just talking to my friends and having a laugh. Before I was involved in the Young Carer Program I felt really alone.

I didn't have any friends because supporting my brother took up a lot of time. Now I have a great group of friends who know what it's like to be a Young Carer."

Our partnership with Headspace remains a cornerstone of our work supporting Young Carers experiencing mental health challenges. We have further strengthened collaborations with the Multicultural Communities Council of SA, and Australian Refugee Association (ARA) to support us in extending our reach and support for the growing number of Young Carers across diverse multicultural communities.

State Government Services

Intensive Young Carer Supports

Through Department of Human Services funded 1:1 Support Program, 112 Young Carers received 840 sessions of intensive support, helping them build confidence, strengthen wellbeing, and manage life and study alongside their caring responsibilities.

Young Carer Breaks Activities

Young Carer Breaks provide vital opportunities for Young Carers to take a break from their caring role and connect with peers. It is central to our Young Carer Program. These activities offered fun, relaxation and social connection for Young Carers who often balance significant caring responsibilities.

In 2024–25, we provided a variety of school-holiday and term-time activities, including Plaster Fun House, mini golf, bowling, cinema trips, Eco Farm visits, glass painting, high teas, zoo visits, and online catchups where Young Carers explore their creative sides on canvas while chatting with their peers. Carers SA also partnered with Carers and Disability Link to deliver four Young Carer Breaks.



"The Camp was amazing! I had such a great time and met heaps of other Young Carers. I can't wait for the next one!"



Young Carer Breaks – Statewide Camp

In April this year, a highlight was our Young Carer Camp, held at Cooina Retreats, Victor Harbor. Thirty Young Carers aged 12 to 16 took part in this two-night camp which provided a unique opportunity to connect with others, build confidence, and enjoy a meaningful and fun break. Young Carers had the opportunity for open discussions about the challenges, barriers and positives aspects their caring role brings.



CARER STORY

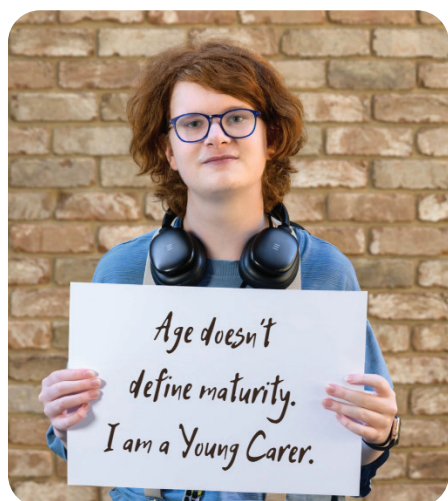
"My mother and father both had complex health issues, and my adult sister is on the autism spectrum. At the time my parents and sister lived together although I no longer lived at home.

I was responsible for assisting my three family members with all of their care needs. My sister's behaviours could be very challenging, and I was worried about my parents safety with her. I was exhausted, overwhelmed and experienced anxiety and emotional fatigue. Carers SA provided regular wellbeing check-ins and 1:1 support.

They contacted the Adult Safeguarding Unit to address safety concerns about my sister's behaviour. She received NDIS-funded respite to address the immediate risk. Emergency in-home respite was arranged for my parents.

All of this gave me time to recover. When my mother passed away, my father transitioned into permanent residential care. My sister continues to receive NDIS support, with housing options currently being explored.

The Intensive support I received through Carers SA helped me during a very challenging time. It reduced immediate risks, addressed all of my family's individual needs and gave me the support I needed to cope and look after myself."





Innovation and Continuous Improvement

Carers SA remains committed to continuous improvement through active monitoring, review and innovation. We aim to ensure Carers experience excellence in service delivery, feel confident in the confidentiality and safety of their information, and are supported to strengthen their wellbeing.

Technology

This year, we piloted the use of Artificial Intelligence tools to explore new ways of improving efficiency and innovation while keeping privacy and security at the forefront. Our IT and governance systems were strengthened including through the rollout of the Carers SA Generative Artificial Intelligence Policy, which was also embedded into our Privacy and Confidentiality Policy. Our Cyber Security Strategy was strengthened with a commitment to uplifting controls, resilience and data protection. We also streamlined systems and processes to increase efficiency and data integrity, and enhanced our Power BI management reporting to provide clearer, real-time insights across the organisation.

Carers Vocational Pathways Program

In preparation for future service enhancements, planning commenced to integrate a Carer's Vocational Pathways Program which will support Carers to access clear pathways to participation in education, training and future employment and promote long-term social and economic inclusion and financial security. This program was previously managed by Carers Queensland and will be part of Carers SA's Carer Gateway service model for the coming year.

Carer Outcomes

We also progressed the Carer Outcomes Model Project to establish a robust framework for measuring and reporting Carer outcomes that will, when fully implemented, provide quality information about the impact to Carers to our wide range of services. This will help us understand and target Carer services that best meet individual Carer needs.



CARER STORY

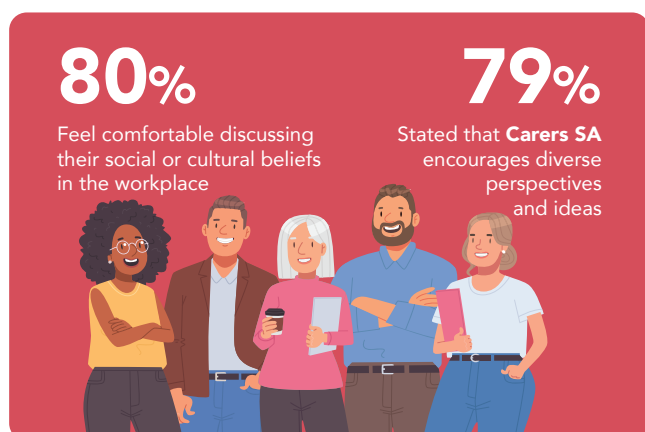
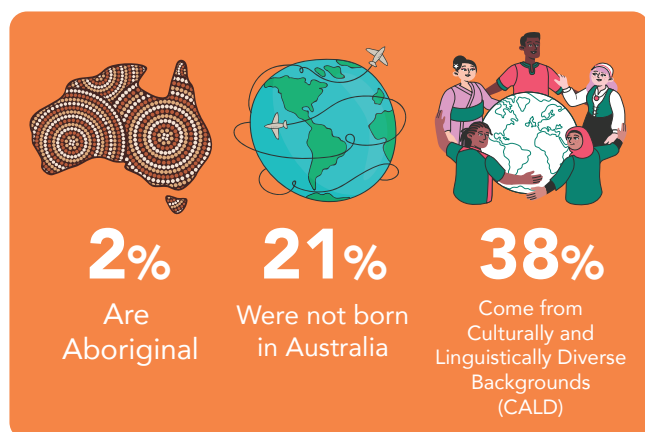
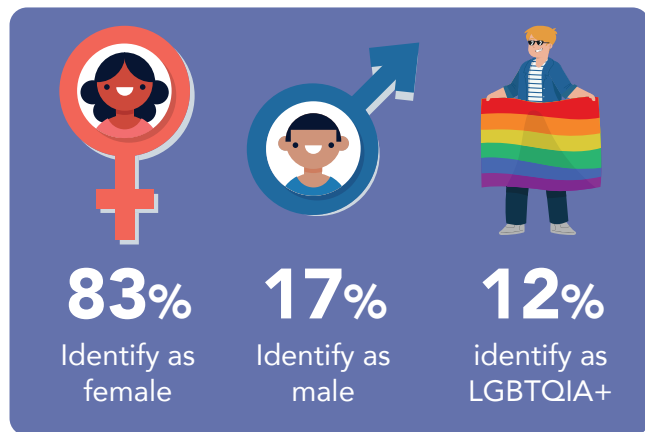
"When my Father was diagnosed with Cancer, I seemed to naturally fall into the role of Carer for him and Mum. Dad put his full trust in me and relied on my strength and support as the disease rapidly took hold. Most importantly, I was Dad's advocate when he couldn't speak for himself.

Someone involved in his palliative care said I should be getting support and register with Carer Gateway through Carers SA. I went on the website and had a lightbulb moment...I was ticking all the boxes as a Carer and hadn't even realised.

I made the call and registered. One of the most important and life changing calls I have made through this whole journey. Through Carer Gateway I've had individual and group counselling that have helped me cope with my caring role and dealing with the loss and grief after Dad passed. I have also had a Carer Break, two nights' accommodation, dinner and a show.

This was an amazing opportunity to feel valued, have time to myself and meet other Carers and share our stories."

Carers SA Workforce



I love what I do and feel I am making a genuine difference in the lives of others. I have a great team and it is a pleasure to work for a values-driven organisation.

Great work-life balance, direct managers are great to work for and very understanding. Team is a joy to be around.

I work with a fantastic team and feel very supported in the work I do and very proud in the work I get to do.

It is our purpose and the way we are supported to achieve it that makes the job so meaningful and enjoyable.

Understanding, flexible work arrangements, enjoyable place to work.

People and Culture

Staff Diversity & Workplace Gender Equality

Carers SA's 111 staff are as diverse as the communities we support. We are committed to creating an environment where the 40% of our employees who are also Carers, feel valued, understood, and supported to balance their professional and personal commitments. We are proudly committed to Carer inclusivity in the Carers SA workplace through our association with the national Carer Inclusive Workplace Initiative (CIWI) with Carers Australia which sees us providing flexible work arrangements, Carer-friendly policies, a supporting work environment and resources to empower Carers who are also employees.

We are deeply committed to fostering gender equality, addressing salary inequity, and providing flexible working arrangements which meet the needs of our staff and the Carers we support. With many of our staff needing flexibility in their lives to juggle work, family and sometimes Carer responsibilities, tenure flexibility outside of full-time employment is an important element of our organisational culture. Over 80% of our managers are female and 48% of females in non-management roles work part time.

Engagement, Professional Development & Support

With a commitment to support and development, staff engaged in 1:1 meetings, team meetings and regular CEO information sessions. A total of 76% of staff utilise the benefits of salary packaging with the introduction of the Employment Hero platform providing additional access to product and service discounts.

Monthly pulse surveys through Employment Hero have provided key insights into our dedicated staff.

Our commitment to professional development and ongoing learning has resulted in the delivery of over 246 individual and group training sessions covering mandatory Carer Gateway Compliance, Leadership, WHS, Wellbeing, Diversity and Inclusion, and Service delivery, with total attendance by staff exceeding

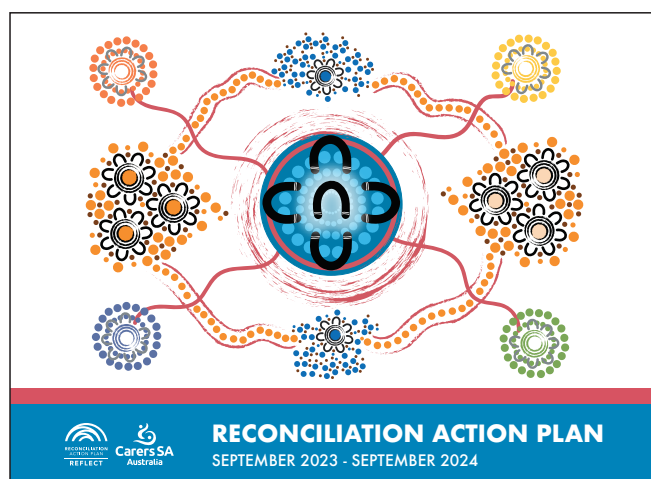
1,270 course participations. The secure data of staff and Carers is a priority for Carers SA and staff are required to participate in monthly Cyber Security training which is reinforced by regular phishing exercises.

Child Protection

Committed to the 10 National Child Safe Principles, all Carers SA staff work to create a child safe culture through policy, procedures, processes and actions. All staff, Directors and Volunteers have DHS Working with Children Checks, complete the Through Their Eyes Child Safety training and are supported by a dedicated and trained team of Child Safety Officers. Our team is committed to the safety of children and young people.

Reconciliation

This year we are proud to have Reconciliation Australia endorse our inaugural Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).



Artwork by Adjahdura/Narungga and Ngadjuri Artist Mel Agius.



Community Engagement

Raising Awareness

A fundamental part of Carers SA's work is raising awareness about who is a Carer and ensuring Carers, families, communities, and industry stakeholders are informed who is a Carer and the support and services available. Many people do not recognise themselves as Carers, making this awareness work essential to help them identify their caring role and access support when they need it most. Alongside Carers SA staff, Carers SA's nine Carer Champions, who are volunteers with lived Carer experience, supported our community engagement and outreach events. The broad reaching marketing campaigns activity throughout the year spanned digital, outdoor, radio, cinema and healthcare channels, reaching communities across both metropolitan and regional South Australia.

Annual Carer Expo

Carers SA hosts the only Carer Expo in South Australia. Held in the lead up to National Carers Week, more than 500 Carers and their families had access to 70 organisations providing them with information about services to support them in their caring role. On site Carer assessments enabled Carers to register with the Carer Gateway on the day and activities to support Carers included massage, Young Carer activities and even a silent disco.

A total of **836** community engagement and outreach sessions were delivered reaching **12,170** people

We attended **62** expos and community events reaching **16,865** people.

National Carers Week 13-19 October 2024

National Carers Week provides a chance to recognise, celebrate and thank unpaid Carers for the incredible work they do. Carers SA hosted 13 events across South Australia ranging from bowling and afternoon teas to lunches and a carnival day. National Carers Week flags brightened the CBD, while Parliament House was illuminated in blue on 13 October. Our inaugural Industry Wide National Carers Week Breakfast brought together stakeholders from government, corporate and community sectors and featured the launch of the National Carer Survey results. Carers SA representatives also attended an afternoon tea at Parliament House and a morning tea hosted by Hon Mark Butler MP.





Cassie Day - Carer Achievement Award



Eliza Durdin - Young Carer Award

Community Achievement Awards

Carers SA was proud to again sponsor the Community Achievement Awards, celebrating individuals who go above and beyond in their caring roles. This year, the Carer Achievement Award went to Cassie Day and the Young Carer Award to Eliza Durdin, recognising their remarkable dedication and contribution to the Carer community. Together with our partner agencies, the Awards event provided an opportunity to hear about the inspiring stories of Carers and their impact in the community.

Listening to Priority Carer Groups

Throughout this year we continued to engage Carers in continuous feedback via Carers SA Carer surveys and feedback mechanisms, Carer forums, focus groups and round table discussions, our four Carer Collectives – including First Nations, Multicultural and Young Carers Collectives; and through the former organisational Carer Collective which evolved into the new Carer Advisory Committee this year.



Culturally And Linguistically Diverse (Cald)

We were represented at Metropolitan Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) Networking Meetings, and attended the Australian Refugee Association Health Expo, Multicultural Aged Care Ageing, Wellness and Diversity Expo, Harmony Week activities, and MOSAIC Adelaide. Our Multicultural Carer Collective co-designed a social marketing campaign to better reach Carers who speak English as a second language and address barriers.

First Nations

We participated in NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week and introduced the First Nations Carer Collective who share their lived experiences and guide culturally responsive engagement. The Collective codesigned a new awareness video highlighting the experiences of First Nation Carers.

"The Carers SA info session was excellent. It really made me think about my own circumstances and led me to engage with Carer Gateway and Carers SA. It also gave me a much clearer understanding of who a Carer is and the range of support available. I now feel more confident recommending these services to my clients"

CARER STORY

"I am the Carer for my teenage son with Autism, developmental delays, and mobility challenges. His needs are very intensive, and I was diagnosed with cancer and have undergone extensive treatment and my husband left us.

My daughter and I are now registered with Carers SA. We are from Iraq and sometimes I struggle with the language, at one point, my carer payment was put on hold by Centrelink because I was unable to understand or complete required paperwork.

I was able to reach out to the Multicultural Communities Council of SA who are the Arabic-speaking subcontractor of Carers SA. It was hard for me as in our culture we do not discuss our personal challenges with strangers or individuals of the opposite gender so this was a hard step for me to take. But we were overwhelmed and needed help.

It was comforting being able to speak with an Arabic-speaking female worker. I value the trusting relationship I have formed with my worker and the Tailored Support Package I have through Multi-Cultural Communities SA and Carers SA.



LGBTQIA+ Communities

We attended the Feast Festival, Festival for the Future in Southern Fleurieu and maintained registration with the Rainbow Directory.

Mental Health

We presented at Borderline Personality Disorder Collaborative and worked alongside Kookaburra Kids to identify and support Young Carers within families where mental illness is present.

Veterans and Defence Family Carers

We maintained strong relationships with Veterans SA, Open Arms, Defence Families of Australia, Defence Member and Family Support, Legacy, the Partners of Veterans Association of Australia (SA Branch), and the Veterans Wellbeing Centre. We attended the RAAF Edinburgh Open Day and the Defence Member and Family Support Welcome Day for newly posted Defence families. We also launched a Veterans and Defence Carers video, featuring Carers talking to their lived experience and helping to raise awareness amongst the Veteran and Defence Force community about Carers.

Palliative Care Carers

We partnered with Palliative Care SA on the Ambulance Wish SA initiative, collaborated with Local Government to deliver end-of-life awareness events, and maintained involvement in the Statewide Palliative Care Clinical Network.



CARER STORY

"I am 16 and a Young Carer and because of my caring responsibilities I have trouble keeping up with school."

Through my Carer Gateway assessment and my personal aspirations, we set up clear goals. Carers SA supported me to access flexible learning arrangements, and tailored employment readiness support.

I successfully applied for the OzHarvest Nourish Program. It is a free 18-week hospitality training program designed for young people aged 16–25 who face barriers to education and employment.

Through the program I will gain practical skills in food preparation, cooking, customer service, and barista training. For me this is a step toward re-engagement with my education and future employment."



CARER STORY

"After my mother's passing my life changed dramatically as I became the Carer for my 32-year-old brother. He has complex mental health support needs, including substance use issues and hoarding. I had to restructure my professional life and switched to working from home. I found this very isolating and my brother was very resistant to having any external services so the demands on me were very challenging trying to balance his care needs and my job."

I was also still grieving the loss of my mother. As the one-year anniversary of my mother's passing approached, I wanted to attend a ceremony for my mother, but I needed some support to do this. My brother was comfortable staying with family while I was away, which was very helpful. Carers SA supported me with a Carer Break and two nights' accommodation to return to country for the ceremony.

This short but crucial break provided me with the sacred space I needed to honour my mother's memory and temporarily step away from my caregiving responsibilities. Most importantly, I was grateful for the opportunity to commemorate my mother in a way that helped me."





Financials

CARERS ASSOCIATION OF SA INCORPORATED

STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
Revenue	21,497,471	20,773,146
	21,497,471	20,773,146
Employee benefits expense	11,724,708	10,888,049
Program expenses	6,782,411	6,497,682
Supplies and services	1,254,951	1,420,881
Occupancy expenses	230,163	151,921
Business services	552,598	641,218
Depreciation	391,274	304,142
	20,936,105	19,903,893
Operating surplus before Fair Value movement and Income tax	561,366	869,253
Fair Value gain on Financial Assets (Investment Portfolio)	410,761	243,625
Fair Value increase on Investment Property	90,000	40,000
Income tax expense	-	-
Current year surplus	1,062,127	1,152,878
Other comprehensive income after tax	-	-
Items that may be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss:		
Net changes in fair value of Available-for-Sale financial assets	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year	1,062,127	1,152,878

CARERS ASSOCIATION OF SA INCORPORATED

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 2025

	2025	2024
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	3,964,061	4,672,467
Trade and other receivables	24,231	45,904
Other assets	242,628	415,397
Financial assets	127,126	518,342
Total Current Assets	4,358,046	5,652,110
Non-Current Assets		
Financial assets	5,430,596	4,876,663
Investment Property	640,000	550,000
Property, plant and equipment	595,506	790,416
Total Non-Current Assets	6,666,102	6,217,079
TOTAL ASSETS	11,024,148	11,869,189
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	1,015,723	1,243,647
Grants received in advance	1,873,000	3,138,324
Provisions	583,280	749,353
Lease Liabilities	219,304	201,723
Total Current Liabilities	3,691,307	5,333,047
Non-Current Liabilities		
Provisions	657,100	703,224
Lease Liabilities	238,045	457,349
Total Non-Current Liabilities	895,145	1,160,573
TOTAL LIABILITIES	4,586,452	6,493,620
NET ASSETS	6,437,696	5,375,569
EQUITY		
Retained earnings	5,099,862	4,478,952
Investment revaluation reserve	638,441	287,224
Investment property reserve	640,000	550,000
Other reserves	59,393	59,393
TOTAL EQUITY	6,437,696	5,375,569





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