# 4 Carer Navigation Supports

**Our Ask:** Establishment of a Service Navigation Program for Carers in South Australia.

## The Problem

Carers often face the overwhelming task of navigating a complex maze of systems including aged care, disability, mental health, health services, Services Australia, respite providers and more. These systems rarely work together seamlessly, leaving Carers to piece everything together on their own.

Carers regularly report difficulty finding information, understanding what supports exist, who is eligible, and how to coordinate across multiple services.

Navigation takes time and emotional energy, often pulling Carers away from paid work, rest, social connection or caring for their own wellbeing.

Many Carers do not realise they are Carers, meaning they miss out on early support and spend longer struggling alone.

The cumulative pressure of system navigation plus caring responsibilities can lead to fatigue, burnout, financial stress, isolation, and diminished capacity to continue caring.

When Carers cannot easily find the right support at the right time, their wellbeing suffers and so does the sustainability of the caring role.

### The Implication:

When Carers cannot successfully find the information and support they need, their risk of stress, burnout, poor wellbeing, isolation and financial hardship increases which can be circumvented by timely, appropriate support for Carers to navigate systems and services.



# Time to Care

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### All Carers should:

- ✓ Be able to easily navigate systems and services needed to support them and those they care for.

- ✓ Be supported during times of transition in systems, services and in their caring role.

- ✓ Have access to services which support them and those they care for on an individual level.

### As per 2024 National Carer Survey

**33%** Up to 33% of Carers struggle to find information or organise services.

**30%** Up to 30% of Carers reported that it takes too much time and energy to navigate systems.

**Carers SA**

## The Solution:

The establishment of a Service Navigation Program.

- Implement a dedicated Carer Navigation Program to alleviate the navigation burden on Carers, strengthen their capacity, improve access and streamline journeys through service systems.

- Allowing Carers the opportunity to attend educational workshops on service navigation for Carers.

- Offering both in person and online service navigation supports.

- Offering self-advocacy skill building workshops for Carers.

- Develop System Navigation resources and online training modules.

- Provide assistance at key transition points, including diagnosis or change of diagnosis, changes in the cared-for person's support needs, including transition into end-of-life care, and the post-caring period.

## The Benefits:

A Carer Navigation Program will:

- Improve policy and service responsiveness by using insights from navigation data to guide better system design, strengthen service coordination, and support the priorities of the National Carer Strategy.

- Improve Carer wellbeing and retention by reducing navigation burden and enhancing access.

- Carers may experience less stress, higher quality of life, better ability to engage in employment or study.

- Support Carers to sustain their caring role and reduce time and energy put into navigating multiple systems.

## Alignment with Legislative and Policy Frameworks

- The SA Carers Charter – *A Carer should be supported during changes to the care relationship.*

- The SA Carers Charter – *A Carer should be provided with support that is timely, responsive, appropriate, respectful, culturally safe and accessible.*

- National Carer Strategy – 2024- 2034. Priority Outcome Area 2: *Carers can access supports, services and programs at the right time, right place and in the right way.*

- National Carer Strategy – 2024- 2034. Priority Outcome Area 3. *Ensure Carers are able to develop knowledge and skills when needed to fulfill their caring role.*

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