

## About Carers SA

Carers SA is the peak advocacy body for Carers in South Australia. Raising the voice of Carers, recognition of Carers, their rights, wellbeing and needs is 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 and systems and services to improve the lives and wellbeing of Carers in South Australia.

Carers SA is both the advocacy peak body and the lead Carer Gateway provider in South Australia. We receive funding from state and federal governments to provide Carer services. This provides us with a unique opportunity to understand the needs of Carers and identify and implement ways to improve the services they need and use. It enables us to engage with many and diverse Carers across South Australia through our broad networks and through services and supports and in so doing, 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 things that impact them.

Carers SA will be a leader in advocating for Carer-informed and targeted research that is ethical, inclusive, and impactful. By prioritising partnerships that elevate Carer lived experience, needs and expectations and focusing on improving outcomes for Carers, we will help drive meaningful change in Carer policy, practice and broader understanding and awareness of the vital role and significant burden Carers experience.

## Our Research Purpose

This policy outlines the criteria by which Carers SA will consider requests for research collaboration, partnership and/or support and for selecting research partners. Carers SA is committed to ensuring that the voice of Carers is central to all research that impacts their lives. This policy outlines our approach to embedding carer perspectives in research design, implementation, and outcomes.

Research supported by Carers SA will align with the

- [\*Carers SA Advocacy Policy Statement \(2025\)\*](#)
- [\*National Carer Strategy \(2023–2033\) and Action Plan \(2024-2027\)\*](#)

The criteria outlined in this policy statement will provide a structured approach to gather detailed information from researchers seeking to engage/partner with Carers SA and act as a guide by which we can determine whether, and to what degree, the research aligns with our advocacy and research priorities. These criteria will be a useful guide to support us identifying and prioritising partnerships with researchers and institutions.

Whilst Carers SA is committed to advocating for and collaborating in Carer focused research, it is not funded to absorb costs associated with research partnerships. Carers SA will consider requests for research collaboration and partnerships and evaluate each request against its alignment with this Policy and its contribution to outcomes for improving Carers lives.

## Our Research Aims

Despite their significant contribution, that often adversely impacts their own health and wellbeing, Carers are less visible in policy and outcomes focused research.

Carers SA advocates for Carer research by:

- Promoting carer-led and carer-informed research,
- Ensuring research reflects the diverse experiences of Carers,
- Prioritising projects aligned with the National Carer Strategy goals and Carers SA's strategic priorities
- Collaborating and partnering with research that has relevance and benefit for Carers.

## Our Research Collaboration Principles

Carers SA will only consider supporting or collaborating on research that upholds the following principles:

- **Carer Partnership:** Carers are engaged as active partners in codesign, oversight and evaluation of research ie as co-researchers, members of research advisory committees and as co-evaluators.
- **Diversity and Intersectionality:** Research reflects and respects the diversity and intersectionality of Carers across South Australia with a focus consistent with Carers SA's advocacy priorities.
- **Value and Outcomes Focused:** Research is values and outcomes-based and provides an evidence based for developing targeted services that improve Carers outcomes. Values and outcomes-based research approaches are central to system change improvement, integrated service systems and encourage innovation in Carer support.
- **Accessibility and Equity:** Research offers a range of meaningful participation options for Carers that reduce barriers for them to participate including, different modalities to gather information and feedback.

## Our Research Partnerships

The following criteria will provide a structured approach to gather detailed information from researchers seeking to engage/partner with Carers SA in a research proposal at the time of making an application for grant funding. This will act as a guide by which we can determine whether, and to what degree, the research aligns with our advocacy and research priorities with the National Carer Strategy and Action Plan objectives and priority areas. These criteria will be a useful guide to support us identifying and prioritising partnerships with researchers and institutions.

### 1. Carer-Focused Research

- Research is targeted at Carers as the primary focus of the research
- Research body demonstrates previous Carer focused research.
- Research is aligned with Carers SA advocacy priorities as outlined in the [Carers SA Advocacy Policy Statement \(2025\)](#).
- Research is aligned with at least one priority area of the [National Carer Strategy \(2023–2033\)](#):
  - *Carers are recognised and valued.*
  - *Carers are supported to participate in work, education and community life.*
  - *Carers achieve greater financial security.*
  - *Carers are supported in their own health and wellbeing.*
  - *Carers are supported by inclusive and responsive services.*
  - *Carers are recognised in data and evidence drives improved outcomes*

- Research is aligned with at least one priority area outcome of the [National Carer Strategy Action Plan \(2024-2027\)](#):
  1. *Government, the community and services see and value Carers, recognise their expertise and contribution, and create an environment that enables Carers to identify at the earliest opportunity.*
  2. *Carers can access supports, services and programs at the right time, right place and in the right way.*
  3. *Ensure Carers are able to develop knowledge and skills when needed to fulfill their caring role.*
  4. *Carers can access, and participate in employment and education or training, including to improve their financial wellbeing.*
  5. *Carers have access to supports that safeguard their psychological, physical and social wellbeing.*
  6. *Build the evidence base about Carers to better understand who Carers are, including their diversity, what their experiences are, what works for them and why.*

## 2. Codesign

- Carer engagement and participation is evident in embedded codesign of the research from application through to implementation and evaluation.
- Carer lived experience is evident and embedded in research leadership, oversight and advisory roles.
- Co-design approaches that ensure diverse Carers lived experience is embedded and integral to shaping outcomes.

## 3. Carer Priority Groups

- Methodology uses proactive strategies to reach underrepresented Carer cohorts
- Flexible methodologies enable participation by Carers that experience barriers to participation and engagement
- Research is aligned with at least one priority group of Carers SA [Advocacy Policy Statement](#)

## 4. Knowledge Translation and Impact

- Engages Carers SA as co-researchers
- Evidence of clear plans of how findings will be shared with Carers SA and with Carers, communities, policymakers and service providers.
- Demonstrated commitment to applying research findings to improve policy, services, or Carer supports.

## 5. Ethical and Respectful Practice

- Research adheres to the [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#)
- Cultural safety and trauma-informed practice are embedded in design and delivery.
- Child safety is embedded in design and delivery.
- Note: Carers SA requires researchers working with Young Carers to have a current [Working with Children Check](#) and have completed an approved [Child Safe Training Program](#).
- Ensures informed consent includes clear information on data handling, confidentiality and privacy practices
- Ensures informed consent includes clear information about participants rights including rights to withdraw at any time.
- Compliance with the [Australian Privacy Principles and the Privacy Act 1988](#).

## 6. Data Security

- Data is stored in Australia.
- Adheres to data protection best practice and compliance.
- Addresses risks, security measures and data lifecycle stages.
- Provisions for research data storage in secure, encrypted environments with strong authentication and access controls.
- Uses de-identifiable data using unique codes for participants.
- Compliance to [\*Office of the Australian Information Commissioner \(OAIC\)\*](#)

## 7. Financial Support

- Financial support (discrete budget line) is embedded in funding to support Carers SA in:
  - Carer recruitment and selection process
  - Carer participation (such as transport and access to relevant equipment).
  - Carers expertise and insight contribution - that informs the research and can identify research gaps
  - Carer honorariums and reimbursements for participation as coresearchers, sitting on oversight committees and research participants
  - Costs associated with sitting on research oversight committees, contributing to reporting, focus groups, reviewing research materials, contributing expertise, advice).

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