

Peter Primrose MLC

Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability Services
Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteering



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New Carers Advisory Council to look at issues faced by young carers

The Minister for Disability Services and Minister for Youth, Peter Primrose, has announced that the NSW Government's new Carers Advisory Council will consider how young carers can be better supported and engaged.

Mr Primrose said Carers Week (October 17-23) had highlighted the issues facing young carers and the need for more awareness.

"There are more than 90,000 carers under the age of 25 in NSW, so one of the first issues I am going to ask the new Carers Advisory Council to look at is the needs of young carers," Mr Primrose said

"While young carers provide the same types of care as older carers, they face many unique issues.

"Young carers are often under pressure to grow up earlier than their peers and to be more responsible.

"It can be difficult for them to socialise or spontaneously meet friends. It can also be difficult for them to find time for school work or study, and this can have a significant impact on their education and future career.

"In addition to helping with things like shopping, cooking and getting around, young carers often provide emotional support for parents or other family members."

The Carers Advisory Council was legislated under the Carers (Recognition) Act 2010, which was passed in May with bipartisan support.

Applications for membership of the council closed recently and appointments are being finalised. The new council is expected to meet for the first time in December.

The majority of council members will be primary carers and it will include representatives of young carers, Aboriginal carers and carers from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Mr Primrose said that the NSW Government provides a recurrent allocation of \$240,000 for the Young Carer Project, being run by Carers NSW, to help support young carers.

"The Young Carers Project provides information, counselling, advice, peer support and social activities for some of the state's most vulnerable young carers," Mr Primrose said.

"It also allows these young people to meet each other online or face to face to share their experiences and their concerns.

Key government agencies have developed an action plan to improve identification, referral and support of young carers.

The NSW Government has also been a key partner in an important research project on the impact of caring on young people.

This research is currently being finalised by the Social Policy Research Centre at UNSW and its findings will inform further strategies to improve support for young carers.