

Media Release



13 August 2010

Carers Australia is the recognised national voice of Australian carers. Our members are the carers associations in each state and territory. We have no political affiliation. We work with all parties to achieve better outcomes for all carers. We believe that all carers are entitled to the same rights, choices and opportunities as other Australians.

Carers doing it tough!

Unpaid family carers should be able to achieve long-term financial security as do other Australians. Carers and their families are doing it tough financially. On average their gross personal income is more than 25% lower than for non-carers. For almost half a million carers, the difference is even greater at more than 40%. Carers Australia is calling for the introduction of a Carers Superannuation Scheme and an amendment to the Fair Work Act.

Carers are affected by a lack of workplace flexibility and a high financial commitment to goods and services related to caring, such as medication, equipment, transport, therapies, food continence products, white goods, electricity and alternative care.

CEO Carers Australia, Ms Joan Hughes, said 'carers often face difficulties participating fully in the workforce, due to their caring commitments and a lack of workplace flexibility. The majority of carers are of workforce age but experience significantly lower levels of workforce participation compared to the general population.

The introduction of a Carers Superannuation Scheme for those carers on long-term carer payment would assist carers to build for retirement and have a degree of financial security.

An amendment to the Fair Work Act to allow all carers the right to request flexible working arrangements would enable carers to stay in the work force or re-engage in the work force, assisting them to achieve long-term financial security.

Carers Australia Election Platform 2010 and further information on supporting family carers' long-term financial security can be found at www.carersaustraliaelection2010.com.au

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