



Annual Report

20

20







CARERS *First*

SPEED *that* **MATTERS** 



INTEGRITY *Always*

CARE *in all* **WE DO** 



QUALITY *Every time*



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Chair's Report

Rebecca Moles



This year has been one of outstanding achievements for Carers Tasmania Ltd in the face of unprecedented challenges in our community and across the country. As Chair, I am proud to report that Carers Tasmania Ltd, the Board of Directors and our staff stayed true to our values and remained focused on the best interests of and support for the 85,500 carers in Tasmania.

During the year, Carers Tasmania Ltd implemented significant governance decisions to ensure the organisation is flexible, agile and sustainable into the future to meet the challenges of a more competitive social services sector. The organisation shifted to a company limited by guarantee governance structure, ushering in a contemporary constitution and established a new entity Care to Serve Ltd to support the delivery of carer support services through the Carer Gateway.

The advocacy of a peak organisation is critical in raising the voice of

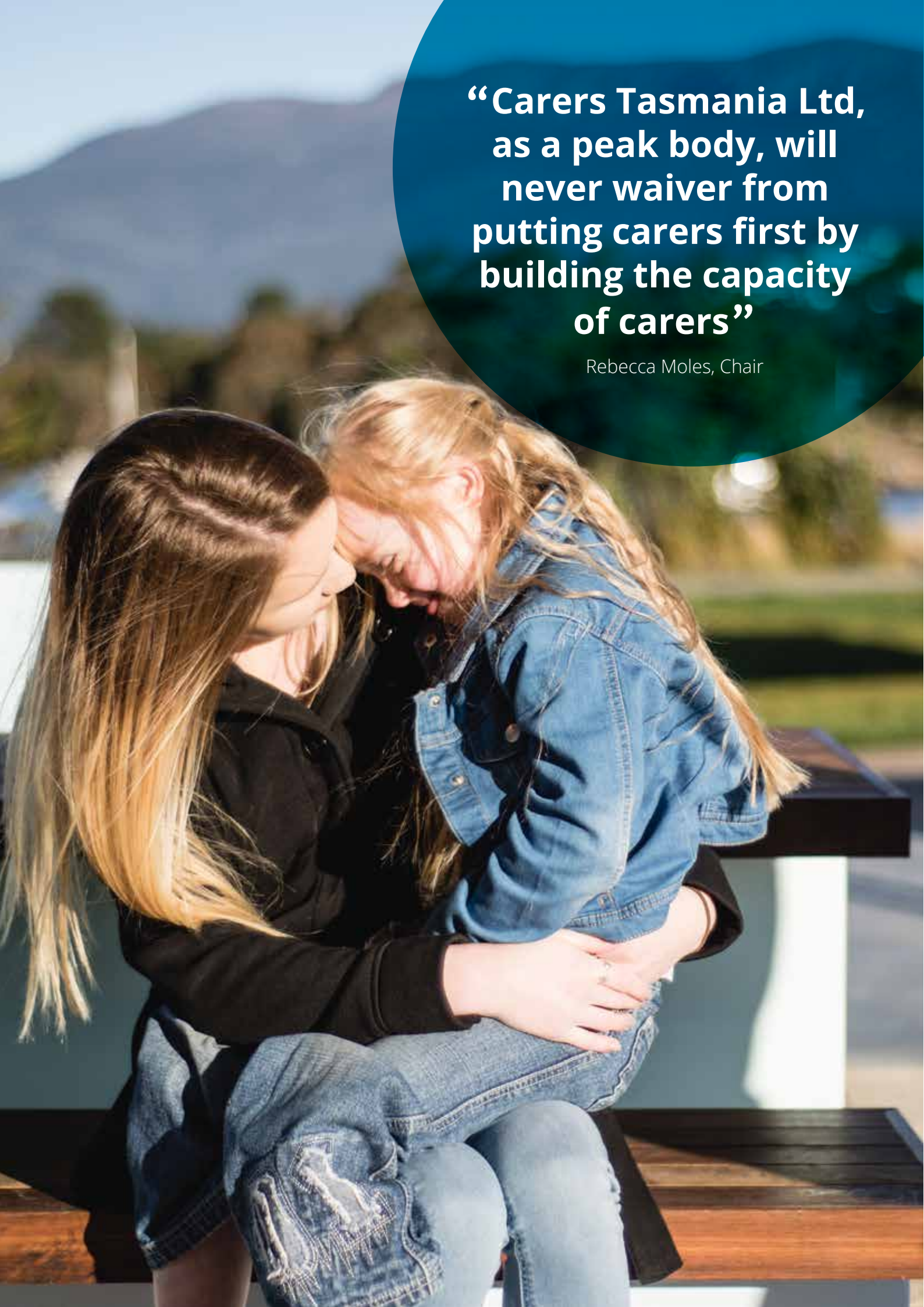
carers in the community and across government at all levels. To this purpose Carers Tasmania Ltd collaborated with the other state and territory carer organisations to renew the focus and governance of Carers Australia Ltd. This involved extensive consultation over many months to usher in a new constitution reflecting the importance of collaboration with its state and territory members and rebuilding the core relationships across the network. I am proud to report that over this period we have been effective in rebuilding a mutually respectful and beneficial relationship with Carers Australia Ltd and our state and territory partners that will benefit and elevate the voice of Tasmanian carers nationally.

The Board of Directors is responsible for the governance and strategic direction of Carers Tasmania Ltd and its entities to ensure the vision statement relating to carers is achieved. As such, during this period we have farewelled and welcomed new Directors, all bringing a depth of experience and expertise to the organisation. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Unmesh Ratnagobal, John Gilpin and David Bartlett for their significant

contributions to the Board and organisations over several years.

I would also like to welcome Sue Ham, Will McShane and Belinda Bresnehan onto the Board, all of whom quickly stepped up to meet the demands and uncertainties faced by the impact of COVID on the organisation. The wisdom, expertise, shared values and commitment from both past and present Directors has been fundamental to the solid foundations that have underpinned the achievements of this year. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the exceptional work and professionalism of our CEO, David Brennan, who has led his team and the organisation from strength to strength.

This year has meant change for the way carers access support from the organisation and this at times for many is unsettling. As Chair, and on behalf of the Board and staff, be assured Carers Tasmania Ltd, as a peak body, will never waiver from putting carers first by building the capacity of carers, whether it be by through advocacy, research, policy discussions and more, to enable you and the person you care for to have the best life imaginable.

A photograph of two young women with long hair sitting on a wooden bench outdoors. The woman on the left has long brown hair and is wearing a black jacket. The woman on the right has long blonde hair and is wearing a blue denim jacket and jeans. They are both smiling and hugging each other. In the background, there are trees and hills under a clear sky. A large blue circular graphic is overlaid on the top right of the image, containing white text.

**“Carers Tasmania Ltd,
as a peak body, will
never waiver from
putting carers first by
building the capacity
of carers”**

Rebecca Moles, Chair

CEO's Message

David Brennan



The 2019-2020 year is not one that we will easily forget. Much has happened, not least of which was the overwhelming impact of the coronavirus on Tasmania's carers.

Whilst Governments led on closing borders and putting the economy into hibernation, carers played such a significant role in flattening the curve. Carers stepped-up and locked-down homes across Tasmania and protected the most vulnerable, but with significant impact on their own health, wellbeing, employment and finances.

In May and June, 400 carers responded to a survey issued in hard copy and online. The impacts identified by carers were startling.

We also participated for the first time in a National Carer Survey, led by Carers NSW, in conjunction with carer associations from all states and territories.

Over the year, we continued working with the Tasmanian Department of Health to deliver excellent outcomes under the Home and Community Care contract. We appreciate the proactive partnership of the Department and being flexible in response to the disruptions caused by COVID-19.

We were successful under the Healthy Communities funding program and will deliver a five-module health mentor program in conjunction with eight Neighbourhood Houses across the state. Whilst the program was to have commenced by mid-2020, we will still meet our contractual obligations, but will commence from February 2021. Again, the Department of Health has been very supportive in allowing us to adapt delivery in the COVID-19 context.

This year, the Board also developed and approved a more modern approach to carer engagement in lieu of a paid membership model. The Tasmanian Carers Voice initiative will enable scheduled and ongoing opportunities for carers to share feedback and input into key policy and legislative matters, across all parts of the state.

During the year, the Board made the decision to separate the service delivery and peak activities through the creation of Care to Serve Limited. This has enabled the operational activities of Carers Tasmania Ltd to focus solely on being the voice for Tasmania's carers. As that voice, Carers Tasmania Ltd has contributed to policy reviews, made submissions to two Royal Commissions, supported a national policy agenda, and represented carers in a range of program design activities.

The success of Carers Tasmania Ltd stems from the vision of the Board and the tireless effort of our staff. Our Chair, Rebecca Moles, and the Board have been instrumental for ensuring first class governance in all we do and being nimble with decision making. Our management and staff have always worked to support carers in all corners (and islands) of our great state.

As we look forward to the year ahead, our focus will be on significant pieces of work that underpin support for carers.

At a state level, this includes influencing the next Carer Action Plan for the period from 2021-2023, lobbying for bi-partisan support for legislating a carers charter, routinely identifying carers in schools, continuing to submit proposals to improve training and employment outcomes for carers and fully rolling-out the Tasmanian Carers Voice initiative.

In conjunction with Carers Australia Ltd, we will pursue a pre-election platform that focuses on economic security of carers, advocating for carers needs with the two Royal Commissions, continuing to argue for superannuation for carers, and providing input into policy and legislation affecting carers.

As always, we will energetically be the voice for Tasmania's carers.

Board Directors

As at 30 June 2020



Renee Anderson
SECRETARY

MEMBER, HUMAN
RESOURCES AND
GOVERNANCE
COMMITTEE



Kate Beer
DIRECTOR

MEMBER, FINANCE,
RISK & AUDIT COMMITTEE



Belinda Bresnehan
DIRECTOR

MEMBER, FINANCE,
RISK & AUDIT COMMITTEE



Sue Ham
DIRECTOR

MEMBER, FINANCE,
RISK & AUDIT COMMITTEE



Rebecca Moles
CHAIR

MEMBER, HUMAN
RESOURCES AND
GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE



Will McShane
DIRECTOR

CHAIR, FINANCE,
RISK & AUDIT COMMITTEE



David Morrell
DIRECTOR



Brett Walker
DEPUTY CHAIR

CHAIR, HUMAN
RESOURCES AND
GOVERNANCE
COMMITTEE

Over the past year, Umesh Ratnagobal, David Bartell and John Gilpin retired from the Board.



**“Carers
Tasmania
represents
the state’s
85,000+
carers”**

Another Strong Year of Supporting Carers



This year was one of transition. The introduction by the Commonwealth of reforms to carer supports in the form of the new Carer Gateway meant the end of a number of programs.

Some programs were held through contracts with the Department of Social Services, whilst others were sub-contracted through Carers Australia Limited. We provided first class counselling across the north, north-west and south of Tasmania. Counselling was provided to carers during their caring roles, and in the twelve months after losing the person for whom they cared in palliative caring situations.

We also supported young carers, carers of someone with mental illness and families of children under 7 years of age with disability.



Australian Government

In partnership with the Tasmanian Government, we supported carers across the State through Peer support groups, counselling a targeted, practical skills and educational opportunities.



Carers were supported in their caring roles with a broad range of workshops and programs across all regions of Tasmania.

Topics included:

- Managing Carer Stress and Fatigue
- Beyond Frustration and Anger
- NDIS workshops
- Understanding dementia
- Practical Considerations of a Death in the Home
- Understanding Mental Health & Mental Illness
- Understanding Autism
- Aged Care Fees and Services
- Practical Communication for Carers
- Effective Boundaries and Communication
- Managing Medication (Terry White Pharmacy)
- First Aid Certification
- Medication Safety in the Home
- Drug & Alcohol Services Panel
- Nutrition Workshops

**1,242.5
hours**
counselling
(HACC)

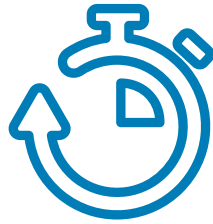
**833
hours**
(NCCP)

**209
hours**
(Mental
Health Carers)





20 peer
support groups

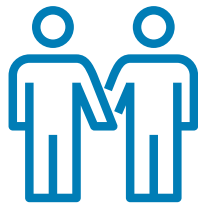


643 hours
of carer education

811
carer
support plans



836
carer reviews



41,274
carer contacts



2,216
carer inquiries

95

ACTIVE INBOUND
REFERRAL PATHWAYS



543
outbound referrals

41
community
awareness
expos



2,817.5
carer wellbeing
hours

“Carers Tasmania Ltd implemented significant governance decisions to ensure the organisation is flexible, agile and sustainable into the future to meet the challenges of a more competitive social services sector.”

Rebecca Moles, Chair



Tasmania part of new tri-state initiative: Your Caring Way



We understand that economic security for carers is critical and the key determinant of being secure is a career underpinned by robust skills. For this reason, we were delighted to partner with Carers Queensland in March 2020 to include Tasmania in a tri-state jobs and training pilot program called Your Caring Way.

This program offers free training, education, volunteering and employment support to carers in Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania. The program centres on three core pillars of support: plan, grow and achieve.

In the planning phase, coaches work with carers to create a personalised plan based on their

life goals, aspirations, the flexibility or constraints of caring roles and their dreams for the future. The second phase is focused on gaining the skills needed to fulfill their goals through study, training or on-the-job opportunities. This can include skills to be job-ready and qualifications, such as a Certificate III in Individual Support or Community Services. The final phase is about placement and achievement. Your Caring Way helps carers to move into employment or volunteering, no matter if casual, part-time or full-time.

Your Caring Way has staff on-the-ground in Tasmania to support the program, including a coach, trainer and a business development and placement specialist.

The pilot will run through until mid-2022.

plan,
grow
and
achieve



Always a Strong Voice for Tasmania's Carers

We represent Tasmania's 85,000+ carers providing unpaid care and support a family member or friend. This figure represents 16.6 per cent of Tasmania's population.

Carer Engagement Model

In June 2020, the Carers Tasmania Board resolved to adopt a new Carer Engagement Model providing a voice for carers in the governance of Carers Tasmania and the work of advocating for carers issues and concerns. Known as the *Tasmanian Carers Voice*, the model will ensure the voices of carers are heard. Drawing upon and understanding the perspectives and lived experience of carers through Tasmanian Carers Voice, Carers Tasmania will represent carers in state and national policy review and development.

Policy

We have continued to work closely with the Tasmanian Government through Communities Tasmanian, the Department of Education, and the State Service Management Office (SSMO). In 2019-2020, the Peak raised awareness of carers and promoted carers in written submissions to a range of Tasmanian and Commonwealth Government consultation opportunities.

These included:

- Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety (38 responses received)
- *Mental Health Act 2013* Review (25 Carer representatives participated in consultations)
- Productivity Commission's Draft Report on Mental Health (15 responses raising significant concerns)
- Draft Tasmanian Adult Learning Strategy
- Productivity Commission's Draft Report – Mental Health
- Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety
- Tasmanian Labour's Mental Health Issues Paper
- Productivity Commission's Draft Report on Mental Health
- Carers Tasmania's statement to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety Community Forum -Launceston 2019

Advocacy

We continued to ensure the Tasmanian Government was well informed of the issues faced by carers through letters to

government outlining key concerns including the mental health and wellbeing of carers, the prevention of family violence, young carers and advocating for the elevation of Tasmanian Carer Policy to legislation.

Representation

Carers Tasmania has continued to build and maintain partnerships and alliances to advance carers issues via regular committee, advisory, reference and working groups including:

- Partners in Palliative Care
- Multicultural Policy Working Group to identify barriers and actions to improve services for carers with a refugee or migrant background
- Minister's Disabilities Reference Group
- Tasmanian National Psychosocial Support Advisory Group
- Carers Issues Reference Group
- Mental Health Carers Reference Group
- Mental Health inquiry public hearings
- Health Consumers Tasmania Reference Group



Collaboration

Carers Tasmania actively collaborated as a member of the National Carers policy Working Group (include Carers NSW, Carers Victoria, Carers South Australia, Carers Western Australia, Carers Northern Territory, Carers Queensland, Carers Australia) in areas such as:

- Royal Commission into Disability Abuse, Violence, Neglect and Exploitation
- Mobile Phones in School Settings Ban – Impact on Young Carers
- Alternative Models for allocating residential aged care places
- Carer Issues beyond the ICSS implementation
- NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) Act Review (Tune Review)
- Retirement Income Review – financial disadvantages of being a carer upon retirement savings and the need for caring credits, particularly for women

- Productivity Commission Review into Mental Health
- Supporting Carers in higher education
- Young Carers Forum
- Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety
- Carer support networks

National Carers Survey

The carer associations for all states and territories collaborated through Carers NSW to survey carers nationally. Carers Tasmania distributed over 6,000 National Carer Surveys to Tasmanian carers receiving the highest (1,024) per capita response rate of any Australian State or Territory demonstrating the considerable level of engagement Carers Tasmania has with carers. The results will be available in late 2020.

COVID-19 Surveys

Our Road to Recovery: COVID 19 Survey captured carer's experience of the COVID 19 pandemic. 400 responses to the survey were received. The survey aimed to assess how carers were affected by the pandemic in their caring role and what support was required to transition them out of the restrictions. Overall, the results demonstrated the considerable impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on carers despite their being few confirmed cases and deaths from COVID-19 per capita in Tasmania. Over 70 percent of care recipients were in the high-risk category for contracting Coronavirus and over 60 percent of carers in the high-risk categories.

Many carers had lost some or all the supports for the person they cared for due to decline in service availability relating to quarantine requirements. Carers reported up to a 40 hour increase in the amount of time spent in their caring role throughout the pandemic. Carers also reported increased expenses, including food, household bills, and fuel for transport had risen during isolation.

Carers also reported changes to their sleeping habits, and concern for their mental and physical health. Many carers felt exhausted and overwhelmed and were concerned and worried daily. Just over 30% reported contacting their GP for support, while just under 60% of carers said that they had utilised telehealth appointments throughout the pandemic.

Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety

Notably during the 2019-2020 financial year Carers Tasmania made a detailed policy submission to the Federal Government's Royal Commission into Aged care Quality and Safety. The submission noted Tasmania as having the oldest population in Australia per capita with 19.4% aged 65 years or older (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics: 2016 Census QuickStats Tasmania). As Tasmanian population is aging faster than the Australian average a major concern for Tasmania is the projected increase in

diagnosed cases of dementia. The role of family and friend carers is supporting the aged and particularly those with dementia cannot be underestimated with evidence suggesting that 90% of people living with dementia rely on informal care and nearly a quarter of those people do not access and formal care services (Source: Dementia Australia 2015: Caring for Someone with Dementia: The economic, social and health impacts of caring and evidence-based supports for carers). Informal carers play an important and often significant role in the lives of older people remaining in the community, and of those accessing services at home or in residential facilities.

COVID-19 Pandemic

Tasmanian carers provided more care than ever before because of the COVID 19 pandemic. Rules around self-isolation, the closure of required services and reduced support had had a negative impact on many, creating higher levels of anxiety, frustration, and exhaustion. Carers Tasmania undertook a COVID-19 Impacts for Carers survey to understand. The survey results were fed into Tasmanian Government processes through the Carers Issues Reference Group to inform planning for the recovery.

By virtue of their relationship and their role, carers are likely to witness and be impacted by the quality and safety of aged care, as demonstrated by the carer voices woven through this submission. The carer perspective and lived experience is therefore important in this Inquiry.

Carers also have a place in this Inquiry in their own right. We are a long way from the routine recognition, identification, inclusion and support of carers which would sustain them in their role.

The quality and safety of those requiring care may also be significantly improved with their involvement.

Major findings from the consultation included the

- In-home care needs to be more flexible and supports provided should meet the needs of the care recipient (right time, right place)
- Carers needed more support and training to assist with managing the administration and management load of home care packages
- Quality of aged care residential services causing significant distress as carers felt residential and home care staff were not engaged and empathetic
- Need for residential and home care staff to be engaged and empathetic, and that adequate remuneration and provisions for career advancement may assist with the calibre of staff in the sector
- Need for training in supporting people with anxiety and depression
- Quality of care provided in a for-profit environment
- Mistrust and reluctance to access services, resulting in increased responsibilities and stress for carers and impacting on carer health and wellbeing.



**“Informal carers
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Financials

Carers reported up to a 40 hour increase in the amount of time spent in their caring role throughout the pandemic. Carers also reported increased expenses, including food, household bills, and fuel for transport had risen during isolation.

Our Road to Recovery: COVID 19 Survey
June 2020





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