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MEDIA RELEASE

TASMANIAN STATE BUDGET

State Budget a Mixed Bag for Informal Carers

Carers Tasmania, the state's peak body for unpaid family and friend carers, has welcomed the funding of election commitments for informal family and friend carers but overall has declared State Budget as a being a mixed bag.

The State Government has continued funding for Carers Tasmania, as the peak body for family carers, and has funded a new small grants program promised in the recent state election. The Government has also made good on its promise for legislated carer recognition and commenced consultations.

Informal carers stand to gain from announcements in the health portfolio, including extension of hospital-in-the-home services, funding for prevention and community-based wellbeing programs, strengthening in-home and community-based palliative care supports and improvements for oral health.

Carers Tasmania was pleased to note Mental Health funding for reforms within the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, support for new Community Health and Wellbeing Networks, a new Mental Health Hospital in the Home Pilot for the North-West and additional funding for community mental health services.

"Family carers contribute over \$2.2B in unpaid care each year in Tasmania. Services that support carers at home to care for some of the most vulnerable members of our community is warmly welcomed," said David Brennan, CEO, Carers Tasmania.

"Investment in hospital-in-the-home services, oral health and mental health is heading in the right direction."

Carers Tasmania noted that the budget has not recognised the needs of young carers.

There are over 80,000 informal carers in Tasmania of which 11.6% are aged under 25 years of age. Carers Tasmania estimates that 1:15 school aged students are a carer.

Research demonstrates that young carers are often the most bullied group in primary school and by Year 9 are 18-24 months behind students without caring responsibilities in NAPLAN.

“Carers Tasmania had hoped to see an investment in young carers as part of the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy response,” said Mr Brennan.

“Young Carer Connectors formed part of our submission for the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy and our Budget Priorities Statement and would have worked with Tasmania’s more than 9,000 young carers.”

“Whilst we are disappointed that young carers have been overlooked in the budget, we are hopeful that next year’s budget will give them a seat at the funding table.”

About Carers Tasmania

Carers Tasmania is a non-profit body supporting informal carers across the state. They were appointed the state’s Peak Body for carers in July 2018, recognising their central role as the leadagency for family and friend carers.

Carers Tasmania has offices in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie.

About carers

An informal, unpaid carer is often a family member that cares for someone suffering chronic or life-limiting illness, has a mental health illness, is frail aged, has a disability or alcohol or other drug dependence.

Informal carers are distinct from paid support workers who are also colloquially also called ‘carers’, but who are fully employed and remunerated with all the benefits of employment. Conversely, family carers perform their caring duties without remuneration, other than minimal carer payments and allowances from the Department of Social Services.