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MEDIA RELEASE

2022 NATIONAL CARER SURVEY DATA - TASMANIA

Today the initial findings of the 2022 National Carer Survey were launched to mark the beginning of National Carers Week.

With more than 2.65 million unpaid family and friend carers living in Australia - including more than 80,000 in Tasmania - National Carers Week (16–22 October 2022) is dedicated to acknowledging and celebrating the outstanding contribution carers make to Australian society.

In Australia it is estimated a total of nearly 2.2 billion hours of care are provided every year by family members and friends. The replacement value of unpaid care in Australia is estimated at over \$1.5 billion per week, while carers lose on average \$392,500 in lifetime income due to care commitments.

“The 2022 National Carer Survey provides important insights into the lives of carers and shows their continued care and support of their loved ones no matter what they are confronted with,” Carers Tasmania CEO David Brennan said.

“Anyone at any time can become a carer, providing support to a family member or friend with disability, mental ill health, alcohol or other drug dependency, chronic condition, terminal illness or who is frail or aged.

“We encourage all carers to take some time out for themselves this National Carers Week.”

Of the 691 Tasmanian respondents, the majority identified as female and were aged 70 to 79. The average age was 65.5 years. Most were caring for a partner, and most were the sole carer.

Carers from Tasmania typically spent 108 hours per week caring, and had been caring for 11.3 years. More than 21% of respondents were also working while providing care.

Carers Tasmania is calling for the introduction of a Superannuation Guarantee Contribution for the government’s Carer Payment, which would leave carers less reliant on the aged care pension after retirement.

“Although there is an initial investment required, the long-term benefit to the budget is significantly higher,” Mr Brennan said.

“This is a positive initiative that Treasury could adopt, and it fits with the need for governments to address structural deficits in the post-COVID era.

“It also makes sense in the context of a rapidly ageing population.”

Mr Brennan said more could also be done to support carers to remain in paid employment while also undertaking unpaid informal care responsibilities.

“We have recommended leave entitlements and flexible work arrangements that enable carers to balance work and caring,” he said.

“Carers also need targeted support to re-enter employment after what are often long periods of informal care.

“The bottom line is that it makes sense for State and Federal Budgets, for employers, for the economy and most importantly for carers themselves, to take steps to secure the employment and economic future of carers.”

The Survey received a total of 6,826 valid responses from carers across Australia, including 691 from Tasmania. This included a strong response from diverse and hidden groups of carers - including young carers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) carers and sexuality and gender diverse carers, which will enable a better understanding of the experiences and support needs of these groups.

Key Australian findings from the 2022 National Carer Survey include:

- Nationally, the average age of respondents was 59.8 years, and 3 in 4 respondents were female.
- Respondents were most likely to be caring for their child (including adult children), or their partner.
- The most common group of people being cared for by respondents was people living with disability, followed by those with a chronic health condition or living with a mental illness.
- Nearly half of respondents provided care to someone aged 65 years or over.
- Nationally, respondents spent an average of 104 hours providing care per week, with 49% providing care 24/7. The average length of time respondents had been caring for was 12.9 years.
- Around half of the carers who responded were experiencing high or very high psychological distress, and felt highly socially isolated.
- Large numbers of carers reported not being asked about their own needs when accessing aged care, NDIS, and mental health services with or on behalf of the person they cared for.
- 1 in 2 respondents experienced financial stress and 1 in 7 experienced financial distress.
- The average wellbeing of carers remains significantly lower than for the general population in Australia.

High-level Survey results from Tasmania result can be downloaded from <https://www.carerstas.org/resources/publications/>, and across Australia can be downloaded from www.carersnsw.org.au/research/survey, with more findings to be published in the

coming months.

The 2022 National Carer Survey was conducted as an initiative of the national network of carer associations, supported by an expert reference committee that includes carers, service providers and academics from several universities. Carers NSW receives funding from the NSW Department of Communities and Justice to conduct the biennial Carer Survey, which was conducted nationally for the second time in 2022.

Notes to the editor

Supplementary Statistics

- There are approximately 80,000 carers across Tasmania *i
- It is estimated that carers in Australia provided 2.2 billion hours of unpaid care in 2020. *ii
- The replacement value of that care (the cost were it provided by paid care workers) is estimated at \$77.9 billion, over \$1.5 billion per week *ii
- The demand for unpaid carers is at an all-time high and set to increase in the future *ii
- Carers lose on average \$392,500 of lifetime earnings at age 67, with the top percentile losing \$940,000 *iii

i Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers

ii Deloitte Access Economics (2020) The Economic Value of Informal Care in 2020

iii Evaluate (2022) Caring Costs Us: The economic impact on lifetime income and retirement savings of informal carers. A report for Carers Australia.

For all media enquiries and interview requests -

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