



NSW CARERS STRATEGY 2014-2019 PROGRESS REPORT

FOCUS AREA 3: INFORMATION AND COMMUNITY AWARENESS



OCTOBER 2016

Focus area 3: Information and community awareness

Expected outcomes in the Strategy

Carers are able to easily access information when they need it

Carers feel the broader community understands their experience

Summary of progress

Feedback from carers indicates that this focus area was one of their highest priorities and that access to good information underpins their ability to provide care. Carers have said that finding information is too time consuming.

Carers also said that among the broader community there is a lack of understanding about carers and what they do. They want people to understand that caring is both rewarding and challenging. Carers want their role to be valued, but do not want to be seen as saints or victims. By increasing awareness and understanding in the broader community it is hoped that carers will report greater recognition and that society values their caring role. We also hope that awareness raising activities will encourage hidden carers to seek support.

There are four Strategy projects in this focus area:

- 3.1 Media campaigns to raise the profile of carers
- 3.2 Embed and improve information for carers
- 3.3 Young carer mobile application (app)
- 3.4 Information for carers in Aboriginal communities.

As significant progress has been made in this focus area, this report will highlight achievements in all four projects. Together these ongoing projects are improving carers' access to quality information and improving broader community understanding of carers.



Highlight Project 3.1 Media campaigns to raise the profile of carers

Lead agency

The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS)

Identified need

Greater community awareness of carers is important because it directly relates to the attitudes carers encounter every day. Greater awareness helps people to identify as a carer and helps carers to seek the information and support they need.

Project description

The project aimed to develop an ongoing media campaign to raise community awareness of carers.

Progress to date

The project established a working group with Carers NSW and other partners including NSW Health, NSW Carers Advisory Council, Multicultural NSW, an Aboriginal Carers Strategy working party member and FACS Media and Communications.

The project developed a media campaign called *Care for a Carer* with a professionally designed website as its platform. The website includes:

- A one minute video featuring real carers with diverse caring responsibilities and highlighting the need to care for carers
- Carer stories
- Practical suggestions about how to support a carer.

Care for a Carer was launched in Carers Week 2014.



During Carers Week 2015, the media campaign was promoted in mainstream media publications to improve visibility resulting in increased website views from 327 in September 2015 to over 2,700 in October 2015.

Key achievements

- 2014: Development of a media campaign *Care for a Carer* including video and website (www.careforacarers.nsw.gov.au).
- 2015: Development of print advertisements for the Daily Telegraph and Sunday Telegraph, online advertisements and social media to enhance the general public's understanding of carers and link them to the *Care for a Carer* website to access more information.
- 2016: *Care for a Carer* website enhancements, including a contemporary new design and new content. New information was included to encourage more people to visit the website so that they can learn more about carers and how to support them.
- The *Care for a Carer* website has been visited more than 14,600 times since it was launched in Carers Week 2014¹.

Next steps

As this project is ongoing, FACS is reviewing the campaign and seeking feedback to improve future campaigns, focusing on increasing the number of website visits and shares of the video through social media.

1 in 10 people are carers in NSW

"I'm proud to know that because of me, Mum enjoys her life and is still part of the community"

- Greg, full time carer for his mum Lyn.

Greg is the full time carer for his mum Lyn, whose degenerative spinal condition limits her mobility and causes pain. He helps her with medications and pain management, he supports her to use walking aides and takes her wherever she needs or wants to go.

Carers may not ask for your help or support - but that is not because they do not need it. Carers might not tell you that they miss going out with you - but they probably do. It might surprise you to know how easy it is to **care for a carer.**

NSW MAKING IT HAPPEN Find out how at www.careforacarers.nsw.gov.au

¹ Google analytics for *Care for a Carer* www.careforacarers.nsw.gov.au

Highlight Project 3.2 Embed and improve information for carers

Lead agency

Healthdirect Australia and Carers NSW with the Department of Family and Community Services (FACS)

Identified need

Carers have said that access to accurate and trusted information can help them in their caring role. Carers report that the wealth and depth of information available via websites is often difficult to understand and time consuming for carers to find relevant information, as well as know what is reliable and accurate.

Project description

This project aimed to improve the quality and accuracy of information to help carers to access information in the trusted systems they frequently use.

Progress to date

The project established a working group including lead agencies and NSW Ministry of Health, Aboriginal Disability Network NSW, Association of the Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Ill (ARAFMI) NSW, Council on the Ageing NSW, Motor Neurone Disease Association of NSW and Carer Assist.

Information on the Healthdirect Australia website *Caring for Others* page was reviewed and revised (www.healthdirect.gov.au) so that it could be more easily found through searching the internet.

The review process ensured information included instructions to prompt the user to click through to get more information and was relevant to the topics that carers usually search for on the internet, such as their health needs. Consumer research with approximately 1,000 people informed the initial re-development of the website content.

The project developed a search widget which enables access to Healthdirect Australia's National Health Services Directory which includes carer supports and services. The widget was developed for use by Carers NSW staff who support a telephone helpline. The widget increases the number of services they can access when searching for services for carers.

This project helped to enhance the quality of information for carers as well as targeting organisations to become Healthdirect Australia information partners.

Key achievements

Baseline data is being collected for evaluation in the future, for example:

- The Healthdirect Australia website *Caring for Others* page has received 29,900 total visits (since 24 July 2015). 80 per cent of these visits have come from Google searches.
- The revised content has led to improved traffic to all carer pages on www.healthdirect.gov.au.
- Healthdirect Australia manages Carer Gateway on behalf of the Department of Social Services. Carer Gateway is a national phone and online service (www.carergateway.gov.au) that was launched on 14 December 2015. Carer Gateway provides practical information and resources to support carers, connecting carers to local support services. The background research completed for this project informed aspects of the development of Carer Gateway.

Next steps

Content will be reviewed every two years to:

- Ensure existing content on www.healthdirect.gov.au addresses the needs of carers
- Enhance landing pages to align with the scope of the NSW Carers Strategy
- Ensure relevant content is displaying in internet search results
- Encourage other organisations to link to Healthdirect Australia carer content
- Ensure relevant information is being promoted.

In the future there is potential to explore how to reach carer target populations with a greater presence on Facebook, for example, women aged 39-50 years.

The screenshot shows the Healthdirect Australia website interface. At the top, there is a navigation menu with categories: General health, Pregnancy and parenting, Mental health, Aged care, and Caring for someone. Below this is the Healthdirect logo and the tagline "Free Australian health advice you can count on." A search bar is present with the text "Search eg. asthma, chickenpox". The main content area is titled "Caring for others" and features a large image of two hands holding each other. The text below the image reads: "At some point during our lives, we will most likely need some type of care or support and many of us will become carers." This is followed by a section "Are you a carer or helping someone out?" which defines carers as everyday people who provide unpaid care and support. Below that is a section "Support for carers" which mentions Carer Gateway as a national online and phone service. At the bottom of the page, there is a "Symptom Checker" section with the heading "Worried about your health?" and a "START YOUR SYMPTOM CHECK" button. There are also "Related Pages" and "SHARE" options.

Highlight Project 3.3 Young Carer App - *Who Cares?* A mobile app for young carers

Lead agency

The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) with Carers NSW

Identified need

There are more than 105,000 young carers in NSW. Research highlights that many young carers experience social stigma, isolation, anxiety and fatigue because of their caring role. There is also evidence that overall young carers are less likely to complete high school or be employed than their peers. Many young carers do not identify as a carer and therefore do not access available supports.

Research by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) indicates that approximately 72 per cent of all Australian young people (aged 14-24 years) are accessing the internet more than three times a day using their mobile phones². Young carers involved in developing the Strategy suggested that a mobile app would be an effective way to reach young people who have caring responsibilities and provide them with information.

Project description

The project aimed to develop a mobile app with and for young people with caring responsibilities, to encourage them to self identify as carers and get the support they need.

Progress to date

The app was developed through the NSW Finance and Services' *Apps4NSW* competition. It was co-designed by young carers from across NSW and app developers who entered the competition.

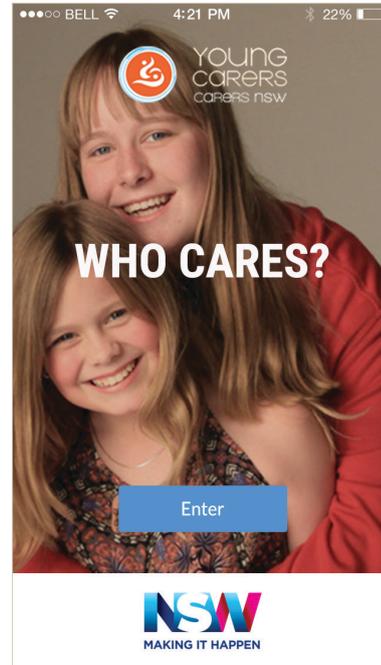
The young carers who helped to design the app developed their technical skills, as well as their individual confidence and team work skills. Young carers appeared in the *Apps4NSW* pitching video to encourage and educate developers entering the competition and were also involved on the judging panel for the competition.

Who Cares? was launched by the Hon. John Ajaka MLC, NSW Minister for Disability Services and Minister for Ageing in October 2015.

² Australian Communications and Media Authority, Aussie kids and teens online, February 2016, www.acma.gov.au/theACMA/engage-blogs/engage-blogs/Research-snapshots/Aussie-teens-and-kids-online

Key achievements

- Developed *Who Cares?*, a free mobile app available to download through iTunes App Store and Google Play.
- *Who Cares?* has been downloaded more than 200 times and its content viewed online more than 1,350 times to date. Both trends have been steadily increasing since launch.



Next steps

- *Who Cares?* has been promoted on websites such as the national Carer Gateway, Carers NSW, FACS, Youth NSW and Healthdirect Australia. The Carers NSW Young Carer Team promote *Who Cares?* through competitions and when presenting to their young carer network.
- The success of the app is now about working with young carers to improve content and better target communications and promotion to increase reach and the number of young people accessing and sharing it.
- Exploring new partnership work, such as recent collaboration with the digital marketing team at Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies in Australia.

Highlight Project 3.4 Information for carers in Aboriginal communities

Lead agency

The Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) with the Aboriginal Carers Strategy working party established to provide advice on the project

Part 1: *Taking care of business – planning ahead for Aboriginal people in NSW*

Identified need

Aboriginal carers have said that they worry about planning ahead for their family's future, sharing stories about the trauma and family conflict they have experienced when someone in their family dies without a Will. Anecdotally Aboriginal people have a low rate of Will-making. They want useful and culturally appropriate information to help them with future planning.

Aboriginal carers also told us that they need information provided to them multiple times and in different formats to suit different people. Ongoing promotion of the resource in different ways is critical to ensuring the information reaches Aboriginal carers.

NSW Trustee & Guardian has developed strong and positive relationships with other organisations such as The Benevolent Society, Carers NSW, NSW Fair Trading, Good Services Mob (a coalition of government agencies that do outreach into Aboriginal communities), Public Guardian and key Aboriginal service providers

NSW Trustee & Guardian

Project description

The project aimed to update an existing planning ahead resource targeted to Aboriginal people (*Taking care of business*), and ensure it is culturally appropriate as well as expand the information to all parts of planning ahead to include Powers of Attorney and Enduring Guardianship.

Progress to date

The project established the Aboriginal Carers Strategy working party to provide advice on the project. The working party comprises people who are leaders in their field and strongly connected to their communities and includes: the Aboriginal Disability Network NSW, Gathering Committee, Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre, Aboriginal Affairs, National Disability Services, NSW Health (Primary Health Network), Link-Up NSW, NSW Carers Advisory Council, Carers NSW, NSW Trustee & Guardian, NSW Public Guardian and The Benevolent Society.

Using links to Aboriginal communities provided by the Aboriginal Carers Strategy working party, NSW Trustee & Guardian and Public Guardian held consultation sessions with Aboriginal carers and other key stakeholders to get feedback on *Taking care of business*. Consultation groups were held with Aboriginal elders, community members and service providers in Campbelltown, Moree, Coonabarabran, Dubbo and Albury Wodonga. The groups were asked what they thought of the resource and how they would like to receive this kind of information and their feedback was considered in the development of the final publication.

Taking care of business is written in easy to understand English and uses case studies and illustrations to communicate key messages in a culturally appropriate way. It has been delivered through effective, face-to-face engagement with the Aboriginal community and key service providers.

NSW Trustee & Guardian aligned the distribution and promotion of *Taking care of business* with the *Aboriginal Wills Handbook*. The Handbook targets the legal practitioner on culturally appropriate Wills for Aboriginal people. Aligning the two publications has been positively received by legal practitioners.

“I really like the stories and tips, they sound Aboriginal”

“This is really good this info, important”

“Well you’ve convinced me love! (regarding the importance of having planning ahead documents in place)”

Community feedback on *Taking care of business* 2015

The two resources have been distributed and promoted through service providers, NSW Trustee & Guardian’s website and community education sessions delivered by Public Guardian and NSW Trustee & Guardian.

Members of the Aboriginal Carers Strategy working party have promoted the resources through their education and information sessions.

The Aboriginal Carers Strategy working party also provides cultural advice on a number of other Carers Strategy projects.

Key achievements

- The updated version of *Taking care of business* was publicly released in June 2015 and is available on the NSW Trustee & Guardian website www.tag.nsw.gov.au.
- 15,000 printed copies have been distributed to government and non-government organisations and Aboriginal communities.
- Information about *Taking care of business* has been circulated to 65,000 clients and key stakeholders via the NSW Trustee & Guardian newsletter.
- Inclusion of *Taking care of business* into 4,000 of The Benevolent Society’s client information packages for Aboriginal people across NSW.

- Community education sessions delivered in NSW metropolitan and regional centres to thousands of community elders and key service providers about planning ahead, for example, NAIDOC event National Centre for Indigenous Excellence in Redfern, Aboriginal Carers Women's Retreat in Collaroy, Good Services Mob presentations across many locations in NSW, *Getting Ready Together* conference in Wollongong.

The Benevolent Society and the NSW Carers Strategy have brought about many positive outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients and communities. Often unrecognised as carers, it has given the community recognition and a voice to express their needs to fulfil their caring roles.

Sharlene McKenzie
Aboriginal Senior Practitioner, The Benevolent Society

Next steps

The Aboriginal Carers Strategy working party is continually exploring different strategies to promote *Taking care of business* to community. An ongoing challenge is how to distribute and promote *Taking care of business* to more regional, rural and remote areas.



Part 2: Develop a template for Aboriginal carers to share key information about the people they care for

Identified need

Sometimes an Aboriginal carer is the sole holder of key information about the people they care for. They worry about how to share this information if someone else has to suddenly step in and help because they are unavailable, for example, if they need to go to hospital or attend to Sorry Business.

Project description

The project aimed to develop an emergency care and contacts template for carers to document key contacts for those they care for and which can be shared with other family members. The template will be able to be adapted to reflect different community needs.

Progress to date

This project is in its early stages. So far the Aboriginal Carers Strategy working party has developed a draft template for carers to document key information about the person they care for in a format that they can easily share with other family members. The template is generic and therefore can be tailored by individuals or local communities with photos or local artwork and images.

Knowing that key information about the people they care for is recorded and shared with other family members brings peace of mind to Aboriginal carers. Other family members can then easily step in and help support the carer if required.

Initial feedback on the template is positive. Carers have reported that the template has initiated the process of recording and sharing information with other family members which has been very helpful.

Key achievements

- Two versions of the draft emergency care and contacts templates have been developed by two Aboriginal organisations, Link-Up NSW in Mount Druitt and Yarkuwa Indigenous Knowledge Centre in Deniliquin. The two versions reflect local needs and they have been piloted with Aboriginal carers in their local areas.

Next steps

The next stage of the project will be to further develop and test the template and then distribute and promote it in Aboriginal communities.

