

### Background and scope

- On 30 March 2012, Minister for Human Services and Minister for Community Development announced the development of a Tasmanian Carer Recognition and Support Framework. The first element of the Framework is the development of the Tasmanian Carer Policy.
- The Policy was released for public comment on 6 November 2012 and six submissions were received. Where practicable, these comments were incorporated into the Policy.
- A five-year Tasmanian Carers Action Plan has also been developed to implement the objectives of the Policy. The Policy and Action Plan will apply to Tasmanian Government agencies.

### Objectives of this communications plan

- Inform carers in Tasmania, and their associated support organisations, about the Tasmanian Government Carers Policy and what it means for them.

### Primary audiences/stakeholders

- Tasmanian carers
- Tasmanian carer support organisations
- Tasmanian Government agencies – in particular agencies key to delivering the Action plan:
  - Department of Health and Human Services
  - Department of Education
  - Department of Justice
  - Department of Economic Development, Tourism and the Arts.

### Secondary audiences/stakeholders

- Local government
- Wider Tasmanian community

### Key message

- Tasmanian carers deserve recognition and support for the role they perform in society.

### Supporting messages

- The Tasmanian Government acknowledges and respects the important role carers play in society.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tasmanian Government agencies have a role to play in promoting the work of carers and supporting them in their work.</li> </ul>
<b>Spokesperson/spokespeople</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minister for Community Development</li> </ul>

<b>Risks/challenges</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tasmanian Government agencies will deliver actions from within existing budgets, which limits the scope for introducing new initiatives.</li> </ul>		
<b>Likely critics</b>	<b>Criticism/concerns</b>	<b>Mitigating action</b>
Carers Carer organisations and advocates	Carers may feel the Policy and Action Plan will not deliver tangible outcomes for themselves and those they care for	Ensure messages focus on tangible outcomes for carers Publicise the outcomes as they occur that provide a real benefit for carers.
<b>Likely supporters</b>	<b>Reasons</b>	<b>Action to inform supporters (past and future)</b>
Carers Carer organisations and advocates	Carers will receive recognition for their role and their work	Media release Letters to organisations
Tasmanian Government agencies	Key Tasmanian Government agencies have provided input into the development of the Policy and Action Plan	Media release Letter to Heads of Agencies
Wider Tasmanian community	The wider community should support the increased recognition of carers	Media release Information on website

<b>Communications activities</b>	<b>Timing</b>	<b>Budget</b>
Media release	Launch – Oct 2013	n/a
Direct mail/email to stakeholders	Launch – Oct 2013	n/a
Update CDD webpage	Launch – Oct 2013	n/a
Stakeholder briefings or meetings	Oct/Nov 2013	n/a
<b>Total budget</b>		\$0

<b>Evaluation: how the success of this communication plan will be measured</b>
<p><i>Communications Objective: Inform carers in Tasmania, and their associated support organisations, about the Tasmanian Government Carers Policy and what it means for them.</i></p> <p>Awareness will be measured by:</p>

- Media monitoring
- Feedback, requests for information from target audiences
- Hits on the webpage

Participation in Action Plan initiatives.

**Additional information or comments**

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**Contact details**

Author's name	
Position title	
Department	

**Approval from agency Communications Manager (must be obtained)**

Name	
Title	
Date	

## *Attachment: Draft media release and frequently asked questions*

### **Draft media release**

#### **Government action to improve recognition for Tasmanian carers**

The Minister for Community Development today announced the Tasmanian Government will begin developing a Tasmanian Carer Recognition and Support Framework.

“Carers perform an essential role in our community by providing support and friendship for people who are unable to independently undertake routine daily activities,” said the Minister.

“Tasmania has the greatest number of carers per capita than any other part of Australia with many of our State’s estimated 66, 300 (13.3 per cent) carers operating under challenging circumstances, often to the detriment of their own health, financial situation and personal needs.

“Most people do not choose to become a carer; the role typically evolves due to changing circumstances and, in fact, many carers remain hidden in our community because they do not relate to the term ‘carer’. Instead, they see themselves as wife, husband, son, daughter or friend.”

The Framework, which will be developed in partnership with Carers Tasmania, will include a whole-of-government Carer Policy, a five-year Action Plan to operationalise the Policy, and legislative amendments to include a standard definition of a carer.

The Minister said that Tasmania has the fastest ageing population in Australia and, as its population matures, demand for informal care is projected to increase rapidly, outstripping the supply of informal carers.

“Improving the quality of life for carers improves the quality of the care relationship.

“Carers are the direct link to the experiences of the people they assist, with effective carers not only contributing to reduced hospital stays and an increased success of early discharge, but also a reduction in patients unnecessarily returning to hospital.

The Minister said that any actions by the Government must be in partnership with the carers themselves, the non-government sector and the broader community to ensure the challenges faced by carers are addressed and that a better environment is created for them and those in their care.

The Carers Policy is expected to be completed by the end of 2013 and the Action Plan and legislative amendments by the end of 2014.

<b>Frequently asked questions (FAQs)</b>	
Q	Who are you defining as “carers” for this policy?
A	For the purposes of this policy, a carer is a person who provides personal care, support and assistance to another individual. That individual needs the care because they have a disability, a medical condition (including terminal or chronic illness), have a mental illness, or are frail and aged.
Q	Why focus on carers?
A	Carers make a substantial contribution to society, both through the care they provide and economically.
Q	What are some of the issues faced by carers?
A	While carers report that caring for their loved ones can be rewarding and satisfying, there is a personal cost in assuming a caring role. Carers are significantly worse-off than the general population in regards to income, health and well-being, employment and social interactions.