

Minister's Carer Advisory Council

Terms of reference

Purpose

The Minister's Carer Advisory Council (MCAC) has been established by the responsible Minister as a reference point for the Tasmanian Government on issues affecting unpaid carers.

Consistent with the definition in the *Carer Recognition Act 2023*, a carer is a person who provides unpaid care and support to a family member or friend who has disability, mental ill health, a chronic or life-limiting condition, alcohol or other drug dependence, who is frail or aged, or a child (if the person is an informal kinship carer of the child).

MCAC provides advice, information and insights about issues affecting carers to assist in the development and delivery of informed, effective and evidenced-based policy, programs and projects to support and recognise unpaid carers.

Role and function

The role of the MCAC is to:

- provide expert advice to inform Tasmanian Government responses to carer issues
- provide feedback on Tasmanian Government policies, programs, services and initiatives that address and respond to carer issues
- identify systemic issues faced by carers and the services that support carers
- support the sharing of information between the Tasmanian Government, Australian Government and key community sector organisations
- provide advice and assist in monitoring the implementation of and reporting on the Tasmanian Carer Action Plan, the *Carer Recognition Act 2023* and the Carers Charter.

Membership

The MCAC membership will include:

- the responsible Minister (Chair)
- the CEO of Carers Tasmania (representing carers in Tasmania)
- the CEO of Mental Health Families and Friends Tasmania, representing families and friends of people living with mental ill health, suicidality and/or AOD use

- senior representatives (SES level only) from the Tasmanian Government Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC), Department for Education, Children and Young People and Department of Health
- senior representatives (State Director level only) from the Australian Government Department of Health and the Department of Social Services
- the Regional Manager Tasmania, National Disability Insurance Agency
- three to five carers with lived experience, representing a diversity of carers, to be appointed by the responsible Minister.

Members with lived experience will be appointed for a two-year term following an expression of interest process. Members with lived experience may be re-appointed for a further two-year term at the discretion of the responsible Minister.

Other individuals and organisations may be invited to attend meetings of the MCAC where their experience or expertise is relevant to the MCAC's agenda. Prior approval from the Chair is required.

Meetings

Meetings will be held at least three times a year for at least one hour in length and will be scheduled at the beginning of the calendar year. Additional meetings may be called if deemed necessary by the Chair.

Additional out-of-session work may be set by the Chair as required.

Lived experience members are invited to co-host meetings or facilitate discussion(s) in conjunction with the Chair on relevant carer issues. This will be on a rotational basis in a location that is suitable to the carer. DPAC and/or Carers Tasmania (as appropriate) will provide support to lived experience members with co-hosting meetings.

Members of the MCAC are required to maintain the confidentiality of MCAC discussions.

There is an expectation MCAC members will attend meetings and, where required, provide feedback out of session.

A quorum of five members and the Chair will constitute a MCAC meeting.

Members may nominate a proxy to attend a MCAC meeting on their behalf. The Tasmanian Government and Australian Government members may only nominate a proxy if that representative is at the same level as their MCAC member. Proxies are not available to the appointed members with lived caring experience.

Any member with a conflict of interest regarding a particular issue or agenda item must declare that interest at the start of the meeting.

MCAC workshops may be held prior to or post formal MCAC meetings to enable MCAC members to discuss and consider agenda items in more depth.

Decisions and recommendations will be documented in minutes.

Administration

Secretariat support to MCAC will be provided by the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The three to five members with lived caring experience will be reimbursed for any reasonable out-of-pocket expenses in connection with their membership, including travel, meals and accommodation.

Review

The terms of reference and membership are to be subject to an annual review.