



Supporting Tasmanian Carers

Tasmanian Carer Action Plan 2021-2024

Final Monitoring Report 2023-24

Acknowledgement

In recognition of the deep history and culture of this Island, we would like to acknowledge and pay our respects to all Tasmanian Aboriginal people; the past and present Custodians of the Land.

Acronyms

DECYP – Department for Education, Children and Young People

DoH – Department of Health

DPAC – Department of Premier and Cabinet

DSG – Department of State Growth

PESRAC – Premier’s Economic and Social Recovery Advisory Council

PHT – Primary Health Tasmania

SSMO – State Service Management Office

THS – Tasmanian Health Service

TSS – Tasmanian State Service

Final monitoring Report for the period 1 January 2023 to 30 June 2024

This monitoring report is the final report on actions from *Supporting Tasmanian Carers: Tasmanian Carer Action Plan 2021 – 2024*, covering the period 1 January 2023 – 30 June 2024.

The Tasmanian Carer Action Plan was refreshed in August 2024 to align with the *Carer Recognition Act 2023* and Carers Charter. This report does not include reporting against new actions in the refreshed Carer Action Plan. A final monitoring report will be produced in early 2026 which reports against the updated actions, covering the period 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2025, following the conclusion of the refreshed Carer Action Plan 2021-25.

Recognition

Action 1.1: Consult on and introduce Carer Recognition legislation including a review of carer principles and governance structures.

Agency: DPAC

Status as at 30 June 2024: Completed

The Bill passed unanimously through the House of Assembly in November 2022 and the Legislative Council in March 2023. The Carer Recognition Act 2023 (the Act) received Royal Assent on 20 April 2023.

The Act includes:

- An updated definition to include informal kinship carers.
- Implementation of a Carers Charter.
- Elevating the Carer Issues Reference Group to the Minister's Carer Advisory Council (MCAC) to be chaired by the relevant Minister and to include three to five carers with lived experience.
- Monitoring and reporting requirements for Tasmanian Government agencies.

Action 1.2: Establish the Carers Week Small Grants program.

Agency: DPAC

Status as at 30 June 2024: Ongoing

Six applicants were successful in obtaining a total of \$4,545 funding from the Carers Small Grants Program 2023-24. Grants were awarded to organisations hosting events to celebrate Carers Week.

As part of the 2030 Strong Plan for Tasmania's Future, the Tasmanian Government announced the doubling of funding for Carers Week to \$40,000 each year for the next three years, including \$20,000 for Carers Tasmania to deliver activities and \$20,000 each year for the Small Grants Program.

Action 1.3: Investigate options for an annual Carer Forum.

Agency: DPAC

Status as at 30 June 2024: Ongoing

Planning progressed for a Young Carers' Forum scheduled for the end of 2024.

Action 1.4: Review Carers Week activities to identify opportunities to increase recognition and awareness of the role of carers.

Agency: DPAC

Status as at 30 June 2024: Ongoing

DPAC undertook a review of Carers Week activities including opportunities to increase the recognition and awareness of the role of carers.

Carers Week Grant guidelines were updated in June 2024 to reflect this, in preparation for expanded 2024 Carers Week activities.

Action 1.5: Investigate options to include carer recognition in Communities Tasmania's annual grant programs.

Agency: DPAC

Status as at 30 June 2024: Completed

Options to include carer recognition and needs in the planning for and targeting of small grants rounds were considered in the previous reporting period.

The Carers Week Small Grants Program was established.

Action 1.6: Consult carers in the Review of the *Disability Services Act 2011*.

Agency: DPAC

Status as at 30 June 2024: Completed

The Tasmanian Government drafted new legislation '*Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024*', rather than amend the previous *Disability Services Act 2011*.

Carers views were considered as part of the initial review of the *Disability Services Act 2011*, which informed drafting instructions for its replacement legislation - *Disability Rights, Inclusion and Safeguarding Act 2024*.

Carers Tasmania also provided a submission on the draft *Disability Inclusion Bill 2023*, which was also considered in the drafting process.

Access and Participation

Action 2.1: Pilot a digital literacy program for carers through Libraries Tasmania.

Agency: DECYP

Status as at 30 June 2024: Completed

The pilot program was completed in 2022, during the previous reporting period (from 1 January to 31 December 2022). The program was not continued.

Action 2.2: Review the Housing Connect application process to ensure carers are identified and included.

Agency: Homes Tasmania

Status as at 30 June 2024: Completed

Homes Tasmania updated the Social Housing Health Assessment Form (HAF), following consultation with Carers Tasmania. The HAF now includes a new section (Part A.3) 'About carers' to ensure carers are considered as part of a person's social housing application (i.e. bedroom entitlement).

Action 2.3: Review the TSS Workplace Flexibility Policy to support employees with caring responsibilities.

Agency: SSMO

Status as at 30 June 2024: Completed

A draft Workplace Flexibility Policy has been developed, including a draft set of flexible work principles that will benefit TSS employees with caring responsibilities.

Action 2.4: Maintain and enhance flexible working arrangements in State government agencies, including the Carer Toolkit.

Agency: SSMO / DPAC

Status as at 30 June 2024: Completed / Ongoing

The State Service Carer Toolkit, launched in October 2019, supports employees to manage their work and care responsibilities. PESRAC also recommended that Government agencies should embed the flexible working arrangements used during the COVID-19 suppression period, to support the recruitment and advancement of women in the State Service.

Any enhancements to flexible working arrangements will be included in the toolkit. The toolkit will be reviewed to ensure it reflects the flexible work principles. The definitions and legislation within this toolkit will also need updating in line with the Act.

Work has commenced towards the Tasmanian Government becoming an accredited carer friendly employer through the Carer + Employers Accreditation program.

Action 2.5: Implement the outcomes of the State Service Review as they relate to employees with caring responsibilities.

Agency: SSMO / DPAC

Status as at 30 June 2024: Completed

There were no outcomes that directly related to carers in the State Service Review. However, in line with Recommendation 61, SSMO has developed a draft set of principles for TSS employees to work away from the office, drawing extensively on existing arrangements and resources and taking into consideration benefits and cautions to provide a consistent underlying basis for individual agency policies. Embedding the flexible arrangements will also benefit employees who are carers.

Additionally, changes to family and flexible leave entitlements that support TSS employees with caring responsibilities were implemented including:

- Personal (Carers) Leave, Family Violence Leave and Compassionate and Bereavement Leave was expanded to recognise Aboriginal Family Relationships.
- An increase to the length of paid leave available to new parents.
- Updated terminology to reflect modern family dynamics.
- Parental Leave now includes Grandparent Leave where grandparents are the primary caregivers.

Paid Foster and Kinship Leave was introduced for employees who provide care to a child or young person.

Action 2.6: Review the Tasmanian Consumer and Carer Participation Framework to improve engagement with consumers and carers.

Agency: DoH

Status as at 30 June 2024: Ongoing

To date, DoH's Consumer and Carer Participation Framework has not been developed. The Systems Management and Reform (Health Planning Unit) are

leading the development of an agency level Consumer Consultation and Engagement Framework. This has been put on hold due to other priorities.

Options for the development of the DoH wide Framework to guide engagement and consultation with consumers and carers are currently being considered.

Improvement of engagement with consumers and carers has been occurring through:

- Enactment of the *Tasmanian Carer Recognition Act 2023*, with a policy development notification assigned to the THS Executive Directors Quality & Safety/Directors of Patient Safety and Quality Improvement to develop a Carer Recognition Policy for implementation across health services.
- The THS has developed “The Patient Will See You Now”: Tasmanian Health Service Consumer Engagement Model of Care: A Framework for Patient Centred Care.’ This is inclusive of carers and how the THS can engage and partner with carers at both the individual and program service levels.

The THS Consumer and Community Engagement Principles that were developed by the Tasmanian Health Service Consumer and Community Engagement Councils with support from the Governing Council Partnerships Subcommittee and Strategy and Planning Unit, include carers in the provision of the principles.

Action 2.7: Support distribution of the Carers Tasmanian iCare book in THS hospitals.

Agency: DoH

Status as at 30 June 2024: Completed

The Tasmanian iCare books are available and are distributed widely within the Tasmanian Health Service Hospitals. They are available in corridor displays and in waiting areas. The iCare books are also made available by Social Workers.

Action 2.8: Develop clinical guidelines for working with carers.

Agency: DoH

Status as at 30 June 2024: Ongoing

Hospitals and Primary Care will be leading the development of a clinical guideline for working with carers which will include input from Social Work teams and other relevant business units, as well as consultation and liaison with carers. Work on the development will be progressed within the next reporting period.

Action 2.9: Develop referral pathways for patients and carers to Aboriginal health and migrant support organisations.

Agency: DoH

Status as at 30 June 2024: Ongoing

The *Improving Aboriginal Cultural Respect Across Tasmania's Health System Action Plan 2020-2026* includes the following actions which are to be progressed that will support referral to Aboriginal community-controlled health services and support the engagement of carers:

- The development of a Tasmanian Aboriginal clinical care pathway with a health and wellbeing focus.
- Exploring the possibility of including Aboriginal Health Worker roles within the Department of Health. These roles are separate to the Aboriginal Health Liaison Officer roles that work within the THS Hospitals.
- Develop and include questions about Aboriginal cultural safety within patient experience feedback surveys.

Multicultural Health Liaison continues to engage with providers around the state, including through the Migrant Support Network.

Learning

Action 3.1: Develop targeted information and referral resources for learners with caring responsibilities.

Agency: DECYP

Status as at 30 June 2024: Ongoing

DECYP is in the process of developing a series of online resources, targeted primarily at DECYP Professional Support Staff who support learners with caring responsibilities. These will complement direct resources for young carers that have been developed by Carers Tasmania, which DECYP will promote through available communication channels.

Action 3.2: Promote resources for young carers to DECYP learners, schools, and support staff.

Agency: DECYP

Status as at 30 June 2024: Ongoing

This action item follows on from Action 3.1. The resources developed by DECYP and Carers Tasmania will be promoted to learners, schools, and support staff as appropriate.

Action 3.3: Implement the Adult Learning Strategy to support carers to engage or re-engage in learning.

Agency: DSG

Status as at 30 June 2024: Ongoing

The Adult Learning Strategy concluded on 30 June 2024. Action 12 in the strategy was to support projects through Skills Tasmania's Training and Work Pathways Program to address barriers to engaging in education and training for disadvantaged learners. This is an ongoing program, and its target groups include people with caring responsibilities.

Most projects funded under this program target more than one group. During the current reporting period, in the 2023 grant round, three projects were funded with target groups that included people with caring responsibilities.

If you are deaf, have a hearing impairment or have complex communication needs,
phone the National Relay Service on 13 36 77 or the Speech-to-Speech Relay
Service on 1300 555 727



Department of Premier and Cabinet

Visit: www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/cpp/community-policy-and-engagement
[carer_policy_and_action_plan](#)