

Care and Support Economy Taskforce
CareandSupportEconomyTaskforce@pmc.gov.au

Re: Submission to Draft National Care and Support Strategy - Carers Advisory Council

Dear Care and Support Economy Taskforce,

The NSW Carers Advisory Council (the Council) writes to you regarding the Draft National Care and Support Strategy.

The Council provides advice to the NSW Government on legislation, policy and other matters relating to carers. For more information, about the Council and our members, the majority of whom are carers, please visit our website at www.facs.nsw.gov.au/inclusion/advisory-councils/carers.

Following are the Council's feedback to the following objectives of the draft Strategy.

Objectives	Council feedback
Objective 1.1: People have access to the care and support they need. How should your needs as a carer be communicated to paid services to enable you to continue providing care?	<p>It should be a policy for all organisations that provide support to allow input from carers (where the carer provides significant support) when providing support for their care recipient. This should include the initial assessment, planning of the service and ongoing liaison while care is taking place. Issues around the release of information (in regards to any Privacy policy) that can be released to a carer should be made up front and documented.</p> <p>Assessment processes currently base service offerings on the availability/involvement of unpaid carers (or what it is 'reasonable' to expect of unpaid carers). Unpaid carers should be more actively involved in the discussion about what they can manage in the short and longer term (a tool developed by carers organisations to support carers to make these judgements would be helpful). This will support the sustainability of informal</p>

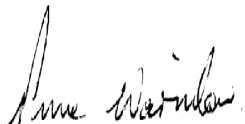
Objectives	Council feedback
	care relationships and the important contribution they make to the care economy.
<p>Objective 1.5: People can easily navigate systems, assess service quality, and access care and support. What do you require to navigate the systems effectively?</p>	<p>Support is needed for people who are not digitally literate or do not have access to the internet. Telephone and face to face support is essential for such people. Promotion/information of services should not just rely on online information and should be readily made available in a range of other formats, eg written documents. Support should be made available to carers where cultural or language barriers exist to ensure they can access a service.</p> <p>Carers need access to advocacy services; and specific disability/chronic disease related information, advice and referral services; to complement the resources for carers available through the Carer Gateway.</p> <p>Challenges with navigation are the major barrier to accessing quality care and support. In the aged care sector in particular, but also some parts of the disability and mental health service systems, carers undertake the majority of the service navigation. The successful navigation of services by carers is therefore essential to the successful functioning of the care economy. If carers are unable to successfully navigate systems, people requiring care and support will not receive the services that they require. Service navigation is excessively complex and consumes a very large amount of time and energy for unpaid carers, interrupting their work, social and recreational activities and family relationships and having an impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Carers consistently report complex barriers in navigating service systems. This is exacerbated where they are required to navigate multiple systems (i.e. aged care and carer support, or disability and mental health). More is required to support carers with navigating aged, disability, mental health, and carer support services, including providing warm referrals BETWEEN the four systems mentioned above (current navigation support is siloed), and between care services and other support systems such as health and social security.</p> <p>Greater emphasis should be placed on building a <i>care navigation</i> workforce that could comprise of both professional and peer navigation support workers.</p>
<p>Objective 1.6: The contribution of informal carers is valued, and they are supported in sustaining their caring</p>	<p>The impact of a service, or lack of a service, should include an assessment of the role of the informal carer and the impact a service will have for the carer.</p>

Objectives	Council feedback
<p>roles. How can your contribution be recognised and valued? What support do you need to sustain your caring role?</p>	<p>What support is needed</p> <p>Many carers need:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continuing access to services previously offered through Home Care such as domestic assistance, home maintenance, help with transport and shopping, and advice on home adaptation and modifications. 2. Access to expanded in-home and community-based planned respite services, including those that align with carers paid working hours. 3. Expanded access to a broad range of ongoing mental health carer services. 4. Greatly enhanced financial security. Options that should be considered include a Superannuation Guarantee Contribution for those on the Carer Payment, and/or increases to the Carers Payment, and more support for carers to balance paid work with unpaid care. 5. Improved access to face-to-face carer social support groups. 6. Improved support for people with a disability, particularly those who are ineligible for the NDIS. If those they are caring for do not have adequate support, this adversely affects the economic, physical, social and mental well being of carers. 7. Individual support for the carer to meet their needs for social interaction. <p>Carer recognition and value</p> <p>This can be enhanced by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensuring carer involvement in the assessment and planning processes for NDIS and aged care packages so that participant and carer need are met and plans are efficient and sustainable. 2. Greater investment in identifying 'hidden' carers and connecting them with services
<p>Objective 3.5: Opportunities in data and digital are harnessed to enable quality care and support, decent jobs, and productivity growth. Are there any concerns or challenges you face with using digital technologies?</p>	<p>Same response for Objective 1:5. Ongoing training for people who are digitally literate and alternative sources of information be made available. Financial assistance be made available with those who struggle financial to enable them to own an IT device and assistance with ongoing internet connection fees.</p>

On behalf of the Council and carers across NSW, I ask that you review our feedback taking into consideration needs and the role of carers. We also give permission for our submission to be published.

If you wish to discuss this further, please contact me on 0408 020 904 or at NSWCarersAdvisoryCouncilSecretariat@facns.nsw.gov.au.

Sincerely,



Prue Warrilow
Chair – NSW Carers Advisory Council