



More funding for carers services

2019 Budget

The Australian Government is investing an additional \$84.3 million to support the 2.7 million Australians caring for loved ones due to disability, age, mental illness, or long-term physical illness.

What was announced in the 2019 Budget?

The Australian Government will invest an additional \$84.3 million to boost services for Australia's carers including more financial support packages, respite and increased support for young carers.

Under the new measure, carers will be able to access over 5,000 financial packages valued at up to \$3,000 for practical supports to help them in their caring journey. The new measure will also increase the availability of respite to support carers' wellbeing.

Up to 25 per cent of all financial packages will be reserved to support young carers' continued participation in education or in the workplace.

Young carers will be supported by dedicated young carer support workers employed across Australia to provide outreach services with

schools, youth services, training organisations and employers.

Getting help early can make a big difference to a carer's life. It can help reduce emotional or physical strain, stay in work or study, and ultimately improve their health and wellbeing.

That is why the Government is investing in early intervention and prevention support to ensure carers get the support they need before they reach crisis point, and to help sustain them in their caring role.

This new funding forms part of the Australian Government's overall investment of \$550 million over the next four years to roll out improved services and supports for carers, as part of the new Integrated Carer Support Service model.

What new services will be available to carers?

Carers are now able to access new supports and services through the Carer Gateway website at www.carergateway.gov.au

These services include new phone counselling, online peer support and coaching services for carers, and practical educational resources to improve carer wellbeing, skills and knowledge.

From April 2020, carers will be able to access support and services through a new network of Carer Gateway service providers. Local services will include:

- carer support planning
- targeted financial support packages with a focus on employment, education, respite and transport
- in-person and phone-based coaching, counselling and peer support
- information and advice
- access to emergency and short term respite
- assistance with navigating relevant, local services available to carers.

Why focus on young carers?

When a parent becomes very ill or has a disability or mental illness, all too often it's a child who takes on the responsibility of caring for them. In Australia, more than 270,000 carers are under 25.

These caring responsibilities can often place a heavy strain on their education and training, or efforts to find work. This is why up to 25 per cent of all targeted financial support packages will be reserved for young carers to assist them continue their participation in education and training.

Young carers in receipt of Carer Payment or Carer Allowance will be prioritised for the targeted financial packages to support their engagement in education or employment.

Will existing services for carers be affected?

Carers can continue to access support through their usual service providers until the commencement of the Carer Gateway service providers.

How can carers access supports and services?

Carers can call Carer Gateway on **1800 422 737** (Monday – Friday, 8am – 6pm) or visit www.carergateway.gov.au to find out what current services are available to support them.

In July 2019, new online services for carers became available through the Carer Gateway website.

From April 2020, carers can speak directly with their local Carer Gateway service provider. The Carer Gateway service provider will assist carers to access relevant services and support in their local area.

Key facts

- An estimated 2.7 million carers in Australia provide care to people with disability, people with long-term health conditions, mental illness, or those who are frail or aged.
- Of the 2.7 million carers in Australia, there are around 272,000 young carers aged under 25 years.
- As at September 2018, there were 8,819 carers under the age of 25 in receipt of Carer Payment and 11,102 young carers receiving Carer Allowance. Carers may receive both payments.
- Under the Integrated Carer Support Service model, instances of carer support will increase over time from 130,000 per year in the current system to around 360,000 per year.

More information

For more information about this measure and other Department of Social Services' Budget measures, visit the [Department of Social Services](http://dss.gov.au) website (dss.gov.au).

For information about the 2019 Budget, visit the [Australian Government budget](http://budget.gov.au) website (budget.gov.au).