



New services for carers

The Australian Government is rolling out a range of new early-intervention services and supports for carers. These new services have been designed based on evidence that shows the best way to help carers is to help them early in their caring role, increase their skills and reduce the strain of caring.

These new services can help you get the support you need before reaching crisis point.

New services to give you support and skills

Carers can now access new online services:

- **Peer support** to assist you to connect with and learn from other carers. This online community forum will help carers share their stories, knowledge and experience with others.
- **Self-guided coaching** to support and teach you skills useful to your caring situation. The coaching modules will cover a range of topics and can be completed at your own pace online.
- A new phone-based **counselling service** to provide short term emotional and psychological support.
- Practical **skills courses** to improve your general skills and knowledge are being gradually rolled out. You can explore the first module, *Dealing with stress* now on www.carergateway.gov.au.

New local service delivery

From April 2020, a new Australia-wide network of Carer Gateway service providers will give carers access to tailored services in their own right, no matter who they are caring for, including:

- **Carer support planning** – to help you identify what areas of support will best help you in your caring role and to develop a simple plan for ongoing support and service.
- **Tailored financial packages** – to give carers practical assistance. The packages will be arranged by your service providers and might be a:
 - one-off practical support in the form of equipment or an item to assist in your caring role
 - range of ongoing practical supports, such as respite or transport, provided over a twelve-month period.

- **In-person counselling** – for one-on-one support with a professional counsellor if you feel stressed or overwhelmed.
- **In-person peer support** – where you can meet with people in similar caring situations and share your stories, knowledge and experience.
- **In-person coaching** – where you can work one-on-one with a qualified coach to gain skills and resilience to help you as a carer. You can reflect on how you are going, how you would like things to be, and how you might take steps towards making things happen.
- **Emergency respite care** – to make sure the person you care for will be looked after if an urgent or unplanned event stops you from being there.

The new network of Carer Gateway service providers will use a mobile work force to bring services to carers in their local area and work with a range of local providers to provide services beneficial to carers.

What do I need to do now?

We encourage you to access the new online services through the Carer Gateway website: www.carergateway.gov.au.

Carers can continue to get support through their usual service providers and will be supported to access the new Carer Gateway service providers from April 2020.

Current services will be funded until 31 May 2020 to ensure continuity of support to carers during the important transition to the new Carer Gateway service providers.

The April 2020 to 31 May 2020 window will ensure carers and the sector have time to understand the changes and are supported to transition to the new service system.

These changes to carer services do not affect any state or territory carer services you may be receiving, young carer bursaries or other services delivered through My Aged Care or the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Why are these services changing?

To improve support for carers, the government has undertaken research and engaged with stakeholders over 2 years to re-design services. This has resulted in the development of the Integrated Carer Support Service model.

Improvements includes the introduction of new early-intervention services and a new service deliver model that will provide carers with a support system that is easy to navigate and provides a consistent experience across the country.

More information

For more information about services for carers you can contact Carer Gateway on 1800 422 737 or visit the website (www.carergateway.gov.au). Carer Gateway provides a range of information that can help carers in their role, from practical advice and resources, to help finding support services.