



SUPPORTING ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CARERS


This resource is intended for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers in our communities.

[This resource is not focussed on employees of paid care services; however some of the links may be useful in assisting these “support workers” in their roles.]

Contents	2
Are you a carer?	3
Caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	3
Carers need care too.....	4
Caring for yourself.....	4
Take time out for yourself	5
Don't feel shamed to ask for help.....	5
Money Matters	6
Young Carers	7
Working carers.....	7
Disabilities and Illnesses	8
Other helpful resources	8
News and information	9
Heritage.....	9
Equipment.....	9
Carers Queensland.....	10
Contact us	10



Are you a carer?



For many people, it's easy to see yourself first as a parent, child, family member, friend or partner, but perhaps you are one of Australia's 2.6 million carers?

If you provide unpaid care and support to family members or friends who have a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, terminal illness or who are frail aged, you are not alone. You may be receiving a Centrelink carer allowance or carer payment and still be a family carer.

Caring for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Unpaid family carers come from all walks of life and help the people they care for in many different ways. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are more likely to care for another person with a disability, long-term illness or ageing related problem than non-Indigenous Australians.

Many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander carers accept caring as a normal part of family and community life and may not think of themselves as carers. Some carers have sole responsibility for caring, while others share it. Some provide constant care to family members with complex needs while others assist with daily activities, like housework and shopping.

Every caring situation is different. It can bring both joy and challenges. But there is one thing that all carers have in common – they give comfort, encouragement and support to the person they care for.



Carers need care too

The responsibility of caring can impact the ability of a carer to have a normal life. Socialising, financial security as well as other opportunities that were once part of everyday life can be diminished because of the challenges involved in caring.

It is essential that family carers receive effective support and recognition for their caring role and are aware of the resources and support programs available to help.

The term “family carers” includes friends who are caring for a friend who has chronic illness or disability as well.

Caring for yourself

When in a caring role it is easy to forget your own needs until something goes wrong.

Taking small steps every day to look after yourself will enable you to have more energy to care for others.

Your health, your wellbeing

A carer’s own health and wellbeing can deteriorate as a result of their responsibilities. So it’s very important that you:

- Eat healthy
- Exercise regularly
- Get good quality rest and relaxation
- Have regular health checks

Inala Indigenous Health Service provides health-related services at a community level. They also run a small outreach service (Elorac Place) for women's and children's health in Ellen Grove. Contact this service on 07 3101 4222 or visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/InalaIndigenousHealthCOE

13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) is a Queensland Health phone line for all Queenslanders to help take the worry out of health concerns. You can phone 24 hours a day 7 days a week for the cost of a local call.



Take time out for yourself

Sometimes carers just need a break and if other members of your family cannot help, you can try a respite service.

Respite services are designed to give relief to you by offering support where it's needed and therefore enhancing your quality of life.

For more information about respite services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people call Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres on **1800 052 222**.

[Blue Care](#) recognises the importance of a support network for carers to access when they require a break and provide respite services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Don't feel shamed to ask for help

Carers often need to have a chat and find someone to listen.

[Gallang Place](#) located in West End, Brisbane, Gallang Place provides counselling services for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Their counselling service is developed around the specific social and cultural needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

[Community Service Map](#) is a Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS) tool for people with information about organisations and the services available across the state. Specific Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander searches can be made by region to help find the most appropriate service.

[Carers Australia – Resources for Aboriginal carers](#) is a website with National and services and support information for Aboriginal carers and their supporters.





Money Matters

[Money smart](#) is an ASIC website with information written for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about:

Budgeting and saving
Your bank account
Borrowing money
Book up
Mobile phones

Cars
Door-to-door sales
Superannuation
Scams and warnings

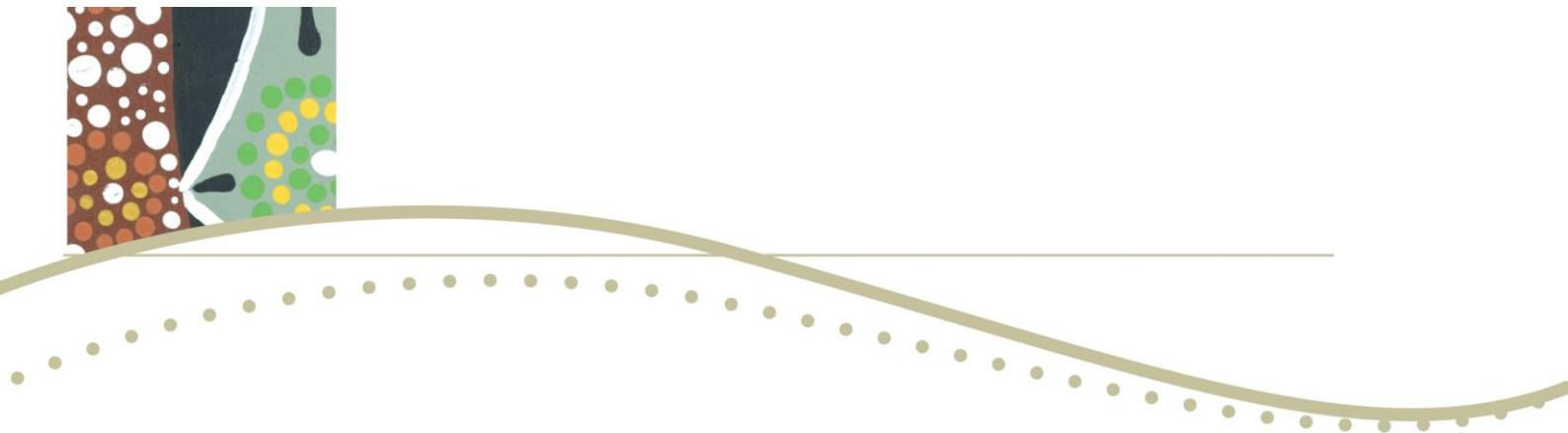
Make a complaint
Get help with money
Wills
Paying for funerals

[Centrelink](#) provides a range of payments and services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Services include Medicare as well as assistance in looking for work, studying or training.

[No Interest Loan Scheme \(NILS®\)](#) is offered through Carers Queensland and allows carers to borrow money for essential goods and services as a loan with no interest.

[Moola Talk](#) is a resource with advice to call the Australian Securities and Investments Commission Infoline for help on **1300 300 630** if you think a bank, credit union or insurance company has made a mistake with your money.

[The CARE Program](#) is offered through Carers Queensland and provides carers discounts on products and services such as electricity, dining, entertainment, leisure, shopping, accommodation, tickets, and many more items.



Young Carers

A young carer is considered someone under the age of 26.

Some of the things a young carer might do include taking a person to medical appointments, helping them dress or shower, giving them their medicine, cooking for them, cleaning their home, helping them get around or always being there to keep an eye on them.

[Are you an Indigenous Young Carer?](#) provides information about what young carers do and how to get help and support.

[KidsMatter](#) is a primary school mental health initiative. Their website contains some research around aboriginal schoolchildren and mental health issues and challenges. The KidsMatter is aimed at improving primary schools response to mental health issues for all children and recognising cultural dynamics.

Working carers

[Working carers](#) offers ideas on how to meet the challenges faced when balancing employment commitment with a caring role.

[Deadly Mob](#) is an online Aboriginal youth community offering mentoring and work placement program.

Disabilities and Illnesses

[Australian Indigenous Health Infonet](#) has a searchable database by topic and type of media. It's an extensive resource and has a yarning board.

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Disability Network of Queensland](#) connects people with disabilities together so they can - tell their stories, give each other support and create a voice for change.

[Continence Foundation Australia](#) has 13 different brochures for Aboriginal people and carers. They also run a free national helpline for all continence topics. For more information phone **1800 33 00 66**.

[What is dementia?](#) is a factsheet explaining dementia and how to identify and things that may cause it.

[Personal Helpers and Mentors \(PHaMs\)](#) workers provide practical assistance to help people with mental health conditions in high-need vulnerable groups within the community including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. One-to-one and ongoing support ensures that individual needs are addressed.

[ABIOS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Program](#) works directly with people with brain injury and their families. ABIOS works to build sustainable supports around people with acquired brain injury, in response to client and family goals. This often includes family and friends as well as health, disability and other services, depending on each person's unique situation. Contact ABIOS at abios@health.qld.gov.au



News and information

www.indigenous.gov.au is a website with information, news, stories and events.

[Deadly Vibe](#) provides lots of useful info about health, sport and education issues.

Heritage

[Link-Up \(Qld\) Aboriginal Corporation](#) supports people who have been separated from their families and cultures through forced removal, fostering, adoption and/or institutionalisation.

Equipment

[Medical Aids Subsidy scheme \(MASS\)](#) provides access to subsidy funding for the provision of a range of aids and equipment to eligible Queensland residents with permanent and stabilised conditions or disabilities.

[Lifetec](#) has developed strong links and respectful partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations. They provide culturally appropriate information and advice to maximise a person's independence and safety around the home, school, workplace or community.

[Eduapps](#) is a set of free computer programs that can help in a number of ways. For example, it can read text off the screen, convert documents to spoken or another accessible format and change the colour or size of pages. For students struggling with literacy or vision impairment, the MyStudyBar is a good resource. All you need to do is download it onto a USB stick to be able to use the tools on any computer. With over 80 free programs, you are sure to find at least one which will be useful!

[Zac Browser](#) is a free web browser specifically designed for children with autism and other special needs.

[Google Sketchup](#) is a free 3D drawing tool that can be helpful in giving people an outlet for creativity or to express themselves. View some of the training videos for this easy to use tool.

Carers Queensland is the peak body for family carers in Queensland, representing the diverse needs and interests of carers. We provide much needed support, innovative programs and services to carers that help them re-connect, revitalise and access special services and assistance. This goes a long way towards improving carer health, wellbeing and financial security.

As an advocate for carer rights, Carers Queensland also seeks to influence governments and other decision makers to improve services and support and develop programs and policies that assist carers to perform their caring role.

Contact us

VISIT www.carersqld.asn.au

LIKE US on Facebook @Carers Queensland

FOLLOW US on Twitter @CarersQLD

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