

# Media Release

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## **Government seeks input from carers on National Carer Strategy**

The Australian Government today released a discussion paper to inform the development of a National Carer Strategy at the launch of National Carers Week 2010.

The discussion paper – *Towards a National Carer Strategy* – outlines the Government's commitment to deliver improved support and greater recognition for carers.

The Government is seeking the views of carers on how to achieve better opportunities for work and education, improve health and wellbeing for carers and provide better access to information and support.

To ensure we hear from carers across the country, the Australian Government has provided \$175,000 to Carers Australia and Children with Disability to run discussion forums with carers to seek their views and ideas for the National Carer Strategy.

The Government will also consult directly with carer organisations, advocates and service providers, across all capital cities and selected rural and remote areas.

The National Carer Strategy will be a ten year agenda to support carers, to drive reform, and guide policy development and the delivery of services for carers.

The Australian Government will work with State and Territory Governments to deliver the strategy in the first half of 2011.

The National Carer Strategy will complement the Carer Recognition Bill the Government has introduced into Parliament, which recognises that all carers should have the same rights, choices and opportunities as other Australians.

Organisations funded by the Australian Government to support carers, or the people that they care for, will need to adopt the principles outlined in the Bill in their interaction with carers.

The National Carer Strategy will also build on the Government's election commitments to support carers:

- A new \$122 million Better Start for Children with Disability program to assist families caring for children with listed developmental disabilities to access early intervention services; and
- A \$60 million supported accommodation fund to will provide capital grants to community organisations to construct up to 150 new supported accommodation or respite places, to relieve the pressure on ageing carers.

The Government values the enormous social and economic contribution of carers all over Australia who are caring for people with disability, mental illness or other medical conditions and the frail and aged.

To access a copy of the discussion paper or find out how to provide feedback visit: [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

Carers are invited to make submissions until the closing date of 5 December 2010.

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