

Support for Carers

Who is this information for?

Family members

People who provide unpaid care and support to people with a disability

Accessing carer support

Information and support are available for carers, to help them with the caring role and address needs they may have in providing care. A carer may be providing care for a family member or friend, or in a voluntary capacity.

The current COVID-19 pandemic may impact on in-person carer services and support. It's advised that carers refer to the Federal Department of Health and the Department of Social Services websites for the most up to date information. Furthermore, non-government agencies and disability support services, provide updates on their websites and support phone lines.

What support is available?

- Respite
- Financial and income support
- Counselling
- Building skills and capacity
- Personal care and domestic assistance
- Home help
- Carer support groups

Carers may also be entitled to income support payments if they receive the Carer Payment or Carer Allowance. There are also additional one-off payments available during the COVID-19 pandemic. They may also be eligible for other payments such as pharmaceutical allowance and rent assistance.

Respite

'Respite' or 'respite care' is when someone else takes care of the person who is being cared for, so the carer can have a break. This gives the carer time to do everyday activities, manage any stressful situations and to be able to look after themselves. It is important for carers to take time out for themselves so they can rest and recharge.

If a carer is required to self isolate due to COVID-19, this will impact on the care provided to the individual with a disability. Therefore emergency planning and having alternative support plan/s in place is recommended. Emergency respite is also available and can be arranged 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Other services

Carers Australia assists to improve the health, wellbeing, resilience and financial security of carers, ensuring that caring is a collective responsibility between families, the community and government.

Carer Gateway provides practical advice and support for carers. This includes information on looking after yourself, practical help and advice on financial support and how to plan for emergency situations.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) can provide a range of supports within a person's NDIS plan, to support families and carers in their caring role. Support can be offered directly and indirectly, and assistance is aimed at increasing the sustainability of the family caring arrangement, related to the person's disability.

The Centre for Developmental Disability Health are a multidisciplinary team who work across a range of education, clinical, research and advocacy activities to improve the health of people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities.

COVID safe resources

- [Information for support workers and carers on COVID-19 testing for people with disability](#)
- [COVID-19 information for families](#)

Where can I find out more?

[Looking after yourself](#)

[Carers Australia](#)

[Carer Gateway](#) 1800 422 737

[Carers Victoria](#) Carer Advisory Line 1800 514 845

[National Disability Insurance Scheme](#)

[Centrelink](#) 132 717

[Caring for someone with an illness or disability](#)

[Information about payments and services for carers](#)

[Disability Information Helpline](#) 1800 643 787

[Services Australia \(Federal government\)](#)

[Centre for Development Disability Health](#) 03 9792 8042

[Emergency carer respite](#) 1800 422 737

Note: If you regularly see a health professional, we encourage you to continue your care and support during COVID-19.