

A SPECIAL LUNCH: MARGOLYES-STYLE

On Wednesday, 21st November, UK actress Miriam Margolyes took some time out to speak to Carers about her caring experience, while in Canberra performing her play *Dickens' Women*. Having previously cared for both her elderly parents and as patron of the UK Carers' charity *Crossroads*, Miriam has a very strong commitment to Carers and the issues they face. Miriam says that her saving grace was the fact that she had enough money to get support with caring for her parents.

"People who are Carers give up their lives for the people that they love, and that is what is so terrifying and shocking and humbling. I would have had to give up my life and my career for my father but I was saved from that by money" said Miriam, at the lunch.

Miriam said that allowances paid to Carers in Australia are pitiful and governments are not doing enough to assist people in caring roles.

"Carers are pushed to the back (in society)! Carers are not vociferous because they are so busy looking after the people they are caring for, they haven't got time to tell people what they are going through", said Miriam.

Those in attendance were humbled by her frank and honest story, and her sharp wit filled the room with laughter throughout the afternoon.

Read on to find out what an attending Carer had to say.



Left to Right: Brett Walker, Miriam Margolyes, Andrea Walsh and Dee McGrath.

Margolyes? Is that a fine food? No. It's a treat of a different sort, served up by Carers ACT last month to over 100 eager Carers, over an elegant lunch at Rydges Lakeside.

Carers from Canberra gathered to hear the English actress Miriam Margolyes discuss her views. She spoke on the politics of caring, the benefits of paying for care for her invalidated father, and a myriad of other things on which she has strong opinions.

When the special invitation arrived, it beckoned to me. I put it under a fridge magnet and considered... If I organised some respite.... If I took a little extra time for lunch from work, if I was organised... Maybe it could be a special treat for a tired Carer! I did those things, and what a treat it was. The opportunity to listen to two other inspiring women, Virginia Haussegger (ABC news presenter) and Dee McGrath (Carers ACT CEO), speak as well.

I learnt a lot about being a Carer too. Not just from the experiences of Miriam Margolyes, which she shared both generously and humourously.

Dee told us the story of how she rang Miriam after watching an Andrew Denton interview, and how promptly Miriam responded to Dee's invitation to talk to Carers in Canberra. Dee pointed out that you have to be a bit gutsy and follow your instinct, if you are going to make things happen! The discussion also made me reflect that being a Carer is a choice we all make. Although we usually feel that there is no choice, our value systems tell us this is the most important job there is, that it must be done, whatever it takes. But I reflected, caring is also a finite job, a part of a life cycle. Caring needs will change, and current arrangements will come to an end too. This is not something that had occurred to me before in my journey as a Carer for a young child with physical and intellectual challenges!

This special Carer's lunch also prompted me to see that taking time out is beneficial in all sorts of ways. Meeting other people at the lunch table who were Carers, having stimulating adult company and hearing a wide variety of views reminded me that caring may be an all consuming activity, but if you are into caring for the long haul and you want to do it in a balanced and gentle way, it is essential to give yourself a treat, right now and maybe even for every single week you have left!

Thank you Carers ACT for lunch Margolyes-style, what a full menu!

By Kristin J Byrne, a Carer

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If you did not get the chance to attend the lunch, a video was taken of Miriam's speech on the day and can be borrowed on DVD from Carers ACT. Please call 6296 9900 to borrow a copy.

Carers ACT From the CEO



Who is Carers ACT?

Carers ACT provides information, counselling, respite, education and support for people who have taken on caring responsibilities. The role of Carers ACT is to participate in a partnership with Government, the non-Government sector, and the wider ACT community for the provision of better services, to improve the conditions under which Carers work and to increase recognition of Carers' contribution to the ACT community.

Our Vision:

That Carers are recognised, valued and supported by Government and the community.

Our Mission:

To enable and empower Carers in all their diversity to fulfil their role through provision of information, support, community education and advocacy, to lead change and be the 'voice' of Carers in the ACT.

Contact Us:

Belconnen Office:

Ground Floor, Churches Centre,
Benjamin Way, Belconnen ACT 2617
Phone: 6296 9900 Fax: 6296 9999
E-mail: carers@carersact.asn.au
<http://www.carersact.asn.au>

Torrens Office:

1 Torrens Place, Torrens ACT 2607
<http://www.carersact.asn.au>

Commonwealth Carelink Centre
1800 052 222*

Carer Advisory Service
1800 242 636*

Commonwealth Carer Respite Centre 1800 059 059*

** An Australian Government Initiative.
Free local call. Mobile phones will be charged at mobile phone rates.*

Patron Mr R J Cahill, OAM,
Chief Magistrate

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NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE:

Friday 11 April 2008

Please send articles and items to
carers@carersact.asn.au

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year! We hope you enjoy this first edition of Carers News for 2008.

Over the past few months, comprehensive lobbying work by Carers ACT and the Carers Australia Network has led to a greater awareness of the issues faced by Carers throughout Australia. Since the Federal Election, Carers ACT has written to each of the re-elected ACT representatives to the Australian Parliament and Senate seeking their support for realizing better outcomes for Carers. The election of the Labor Government has given us new opportunities to continue to lobby for better outcomes for Carers at a national level. To read about these opportunities and how we are monitoring them, turn to page 12.

Carers ACT has been hard at work to represent Carers at the Territory level too. We called for a priority review of the Caring for Carers Policy and Action Plan to be conducted, and subsequently a consultant has been appointed. See page 11 for further information on the consultancy process, and more information on our ACT budget submission.

In the Carers ACT office, Helen

Denning has been appointed to the new Operations Director position. Second in charge to me, Helen will be primarily concerned with managing quality and innovative service delivery programs across the organisation, contract management, compliance and reporting, knowledge management and the smooth and efficient business functions of the organisation. Helen brings to the position many years of senior management experience in the community sector and has worked with diverse communities including children, Indigenous and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse. Helen commences her role on Monday, 11 February and we warmly welcome her.

Further down this page you will notice and invitation for Carers to have input into our 2008-09 business plan. Your ideas are needed to ensure that our new business plan will be effective in delivering useful and valuable outcomes for you in the new financial year and beyond. So if you can spare the time, please RSVP as requested below.

Until next time, take care of yourselves!

Warm regards,

Dee McGrath

RESOURCE Emergency Care Kit

The Emergency Care Kit contains everything you will need to make an emergency care plan for your cared for person, so that if you have an accident or suddenly become ill, there will be something in place for who ever needs to take over caring responsibilities. To order your copy of the Emergency Care Kit, contact the Carers Advisory service today on 1800 242 636.

HAVE INPUT INTO OUR 07-08 BUSINESS PLAN CARERS FOCUS GROUP

Approximately 10 Carers are required to discuss their experiences of our services and their needs, for input into our business plan for 2008-09.

WHEN? 10am-12.30pm on Thursday, 17th April 2008.

WHERE? Carers ACT Belconnen Office

RSVP? To Judy on 6296 9926 ASAP

No one knows what it means to be a Carer more than you, so you can use the newsletter to share your story with other Carers who are in the same boat as you.

I Wish Someone Had Told Me....

When my mum passed away, my father was quite a handful to manage, as he was used to relying on her for cooking meals, cleaning the house and washing his clothes. He moved in with me and my family to make things a little easier on me. However, when he was diagnosed with dementia a few years later, I really learnt what it meant to be a Carer.

I was working as a PA in a small legal firm at the time. Trying to manage work and caring for Dad was getting too much, so I organised to cut my hours back. After a few months it became clear to me and my employer that it was not working, so I had to leave my job.

While Dad's care needs weren't 'high' by aged care standards, he still needed someone around to do most things for him, such as getting dressed, driving him to appointments and preparing meals. At the time, I was doing everything on my own and

receiving no support at all with Dad. The only thing I had enquired about was the Carer Payment through Centrelink and I had found out that I was not eligible.

After six months of being at home to take care of Dad, we started to notice the financial stress and having Dad as my number one priority was affecting my relationship with my husband. One day I cracked under the pressure and began frantically looking for help. Through surfing the web, I found out about Carers ACT and decided to call them to see if I could get any help. When I called I did not expect to find the wide range of services that they could hook me into. I couldn't believe that all of this help was out there and I had never heard about it. After talking to a couple of people at Carers ACT, I got through to the Employed Carers Program. They worked closely with me to get daily support workers in for Dad and helped me to get back into the workforce.

Dad now gets an early morning and afternoon home visits every week day, meals on wheels visit him at lunch time and Carers ACT organise for someone to take him to his doctors appointments when I can't do it.

Knowing that Dad was being taken care of throughout the day meant that I could start looking for jobs. When I finally received an offer, Carers ACT helped me to negotiate flexible working arrangements, so that I can be there for Dad when he needs me.

It has been such an amazing turn around since my first phone call. We now have another stream of income coming into the house again and my husband and I are back on track. I only wish I had known about the Employed Carers Program when I first started being Dad's Carer. Maybe then I wouldn't have had to leave my job and we would not have endured the consequential financial and relationship strain.

A Case of Mistaken Identity

By Ed Jones

My wife Mary was diagnosed with Lewy Body Dementia in 2000. Hallucinating is a major disturbing symptom of the disease and occurs regularly during the night.

As her primary Carer, I had to take precautions to minimise any damage Mary might inflict upon herself during these nightmarish episodes, which often involved her frantically repelling attacking snakes.

These precautions included Mary putting gloves on her hands and knee high stockings on her legs.

One evening when Mary was ready to retire, I helped her put on the gloves and stockings, tucked her into bed, kissed her 'Goodnight', put the bell on the bedside table, dimmed the light and retired myself.

I hoped that when I was called later it would be to help Mary to the toilet, rather than deal with one of her nightmares, which could be frightening.

The ring of the bell awoke me at around 2am. Barely awake, with eyes half closed in the dim light, I made my way cautiously to Mary's bedside and assisted her to the toilet. As I waited, I threw back the doona and top sheet to make it easier for Mary upon her return. It was then I notice the 'poo' on the bottom sheet in the centre of the bed. I was somewhat surprised because Mary is not incontinent... but sometimes accidents happen! Quickly I grabbed an old white towel from the linen cupboard, placed it over the 'poo' and carefully scooped it up. I hurried to the laundry and placed the

towel and the contents on the floor. The bottom sheet did not appear to be soiled and I decided not to mention the mishap to Mary. Soon she was comfortably settled into bed and sound asleep.

The next morning, I casually mentioned to Mary what had happened. 'That can't be right', she protested, 'I never do that kind of thing!'

'Well', I replied, 'I'll show you'. We went to the laundry and I carefully unwrapped the towel to expose its contents. Mary laughed 'That's not poo, that's my short stockings. I took them off under the bed clothes during the night. See how they roll themselves into a neat bundle'. I joined in the laughter. A case of mistaken identity.

Counselling Corner

WHY PEOPLE DON'T SEEK COUNSELLING



Carers are sometimes confused about the various titles and roles of the professional groups in the helping industry, such as the difference between a psychiatrist and a psychologist. There are some important differences between psychologists and psychiatrists.

A psychiatrist is a qualified medical doctor who has obtained additional qualifications to become a specialist in the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness and emotional problems. Psychiatrists (along with General Practitioners) are legally allowed to prescribe medications and they typically see patients with more severe or hard to manage mental illnesses. Some psychiatrists have undergone extra training in therapy and offer similar services to a psychologist.

"Psychologist" is a widely defined term which describes anyone who has obtained a four year Psychology degree or higher post-graduate qualification, such as Masters Degree in Psychology, or a Doctorate. While there are many different kinds of psychologists (including such titles as forensic psychologist, community psychologist, educational psychologist and social psychologist) those qualified to provide psychological services to clients are usually called Clinical Psychologists or Counselling Psychologists.

These professionals study the way people feel, think, act and interact. They aim to reduce distress and to enhance and promote emotional wellbeing. They help people who are

having difficulty controlling their emotions, thinking and behaviour. This includes people with mental health problems such as anxiety and depression, serious and enduring mental illness, addictive behaviours and childhood behaviour disorders. They use non-medication based therapies to help clients achieve their goals and to function in a healthier, more effective manner.

Psychologists often use a therapeutic approach called Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT). CBT explores the relationship between a person's thoughts, feelings and behaviours. CBT is widely used in the western world and can be very effective for treating mild to moderate levels of depression and anxiety.

In Australia, it is illegal for someone to call themselves a Psychologist unless they are registered by the State/Territory Government's Psychologist Registration Board. Although Psychologists usually do not have a medical degree and therefore are not allowed to prescribe medication, most have a good understanding of the role of medications and are willing to work collaboratively with Psychiatrists or General Practitioners.

Many psychiatrists refer clients to a psychologist, particularly since the Medicare arrangements for psychologists came into place in November 2006. Under those arrangements, a client may be referred by a psychiatrist (or a General Practitioner) to a Medicare-registered psychologist for up to 12 one-hour sessions,

and the client is able to claim a rebate from Medicare. More details of this can be found on the Australian Psychological Society (APS) website at: http://www.psychology.org.au/medicare/fact_sheet. The APS website also has a referral service to help find a Psychologist in Canberra. Go to www.psychology.org.au then click on "Find a Psychologist" on the right hand side of the screen and follow the prompts.

If you think you could benefit from counselling support in your caring role, please call us on 1800 242 636 for an appointment.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE A COUNSELLOR BUT NEED ONE THAT CAN SEE YOU OUTSIDE THE 9 -5 WORKING HOURS?

AFTER-HOURS CONSELLING IS AVAILABLE BETWEEN 5PM AND 7PM WEDNESDAYS AND FROM 11.30AM TO 4PM ON SATURDAYS

TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT CALL THE CARER ADVISORY SERVICE ON:

1800 242 636

If you have any particular questions or topics you would like covered in this column "Counselling Corner", please send it to Carers ACT or e-mail us at carers@carersact.asn.au

Comments from the Carers ACT Choir members

Here's what the Carers ACT Choir means to its members:

"I forget about my troubles when I am here"

"It's good for my mental wellbeing"

"There's no stress here, that's why I come"

"It gives me respite, I don't think about my circumstances when I am singing"

"I've only been coming for three weeks and already I sing like a bird"

"I come because it's fun"

"I come for the company"

"I cried today when I sang, I don't know why but I just felt good and sad at the same time"

If you would like to join the Carers Choir call Ann on 6296 9918.

It's a wonderful life by Jacqueline Jenkins

One thing I still find difficult to come to terms with is the fact that I have been caring for my frail-aged mother since I was thirty-seven. I just did not expect to be doing that at such a relatively young age. As a young woman, when I looked into the years ahead, imagining them, it never crossed my mind that I would have such a responsibility so soon. I was already looking after my husband, young children and my home while studying at university and working part time.

I have been Mum's primary Carer for six years now and it is something I want to do, but that does not necessarily make it any easier. Before her needs increased, she was helping me! I had started a university degree as a means of changing careers. A couple of afternoons a week, she would pick our two children up from school and mind them for a few hours until I got back from work. I don't think I ever would have commenced studying again if she had needed so much help and support at that time. Taking on tertiary study in addition to home and work was always going to be a challenge. Had I foreseen the tremendous pressure that I would endure for more than five years, intensified by my role as a Carer, I wonder if I would have embarked upon it.

Almost overnight her world and mine changed when she had a three week stint in hospital. Things were never the same after that and I was launched into the sometimes bewildering world of aged care. A second three week hospitalisation followed two years later. The stresses of these stays in hospital were magnified exponentially by the fact that they both started (as

the result of traumatic accidents) on days immediately before I had university exams. The first time had been harrowing enough and I could not believe that the nightmare was happening all over again.

I felt as frustrated as George Bailey, a character played by Jimmy Stewart in the old movie 'It's a Wonderful Life'. Every time George finally went to fulfil one of his long-held dreams, someone's genuine need prevented him from actualising it. I wanted to be getting on with my studies. Instead, I found myself driving to Canberra Hospital twice a day for three weeks. This may sound callous to some but that is how I felt. At the same time, I also felt immense responsibility and compassion for my Mum. I felt like I was being torn in several directions.

I have now finished my degree (during which I suffered a nasty case of burnout) and have restructured my life to prioritise my family and my Mum's needs. I know that I cannot do everything at once. I learnt that the hard way. I do enjoy caring for my mum and facilitating her life, accompanying her to medical appointments, doing her shopping, cleaning, washing, buying her clothes and shoes, seeing to all her bills and taking her to concerts and movies. In many ways, however, it is like having a third child. I have come to accept that this is what I should be doing for the present time but, as George Bailey found, it is not always easy. I hope I am like George in another way – the actions of his life, in the small town of Bedford Falls, had a life-changing affect on those around him, even as he was longing to visit far flung places and go away to college.

Ode to Fairy Godmothers

The story books all told me
That the future would be happy
And a handsome prince would
find me
And sweep me off my feet.

And I'm sure all little boys though
The fairy tales they read taught
A princess should be long sought
True love found when they meet.

But I'd never given thought to
The ones behind the scenes who
Despite the good they do
They never get their due.

There's the dwarfs who aided
Snow White
Cinder's mice who slaved the
whole night
Countless unsung heroes who
right
The wrongs the bad guys do.

They wave their magic wands, or
Cast spells on lost or poor, but
They never hear the thanks for
Happy endings made to last.

So...

Next time you read a story
Where the ending would be gory
But instead it ends in glory
Look beyond the central cast.

Think about those quiet achievers
Mothers, nurses and the
teachers,
Who cast magic to relieve us
When goals seem too big or far

Take the time to say a thank you
To the heroes in your life who,
Are always there to help you
To strive to reach your star.

By L M McGreagor, 2006

Carers Calendar

November - December - January



Walking Group

Join us for some exercise, time out and good conversation!

10am Tuesday, 12 February

Meet in front of the main entrance to the Hyatt Hotel (Commonwealth Avenue, Canberra) for a walk around Lennox Garden. Coffee to follow at a nearby café.

10am Tuesday, 11 March

Meet in front of the Boathouse (Menindee Drive, Barton) for a walk around Grevillea Park, coffee to follow at a nearby café.

10am Tuesday, 8 April

Meet in the car park in front of Video Ezy (Emu Bank, Belconnen) for a walk around Lake Ginninderra. Coffee to follow at a nearby café.

For more information contact Lindy on 6296 9900 or lindyw@carersact.asn.au.



Craft Group

10am Thursday, 28 February

Bring your own unfinished craft and join us in a friendly atmosphere at the Training Room, Carers ACT Belconnen Office.

10am Thursday, 27 March

Bring your own unfinished craft and join us in a friendly atmosphere at the Training Room, Carers ACT Belconnen Office.



10am Thursday, 24 April

Bring your own unfinished craft and join us in a friendly atmosphere at the Training Room, Carers ACT Belconnen Office.

For more information contact Lindy on 6296 9900 or lindyw@carersact.asn.au.



Autumn Seasonal Lunch

12:30pm – 2:30pm Monday, 10 March.

Training Room, Carers ACT, Belconnen, Benjamin Way, Belconnen.

Bookings essential as lunch will be provided.

RSVP: By Wednesday, 5 March to Colleen on 6296 9923 or colleend@carersact.asn.au



Private Viewing at the NGA - Australian Surrealism

9.30 Saturday, 16th February

Meet in front of the main entrance of the National Gallery of Australia Parkes.

Bookings essential for complimentary tickets.

Please contact Lindy by Monday 11th February on 6296 9900 or email lindyw@carersact.asn.au



Art Appreciation Group

10am Tuesday, 19th February

Meet outside the main entrance of the NGA for a tour of the new building developments.

10am Tuesday, 18th March

Meet outside the main entrance of the NGA for a tour of Turner to Monet.



10am Tuesday, 15th April

Meet outside the main entrance of the NGA - tour to be advised.

For more information contact Lindy on 6296 9900 or lindyw@carersact.asn.au.

Support Groups Diary



Bereaved Carers Social Group

10.30am - 12.00noon
Wed 27 Feb Oaks Brasserie,
Weston Park
Wed 26 Mar TBA
Wed 23 Apr TBA
Please contact Jill on 6296 9913

Inner North Carers Support Group

10am - 12noon
Function Room, Majura Community
Centre, Rosevear Place, Dickson
Fri 15 Feb Open discussion
Fri 21 Mar Open Discussion
Fri 18 Apr Open discussion
Please contact Jill on 6296 9913

Northside Carers Support Group

10am - 12noon at Belconnen
Community Centre, Room 2, Swanson
Court, Belconnen
Wed 6 Feb Open discussion
Wed 5 Mar Open discussion
Wed 2 April Open discussion
Please contact Jill on 6296 9913

Southside Carers Support Group

10:30am - 12noon at Weston Creek
Community Centre, Parkinson St,
Weston
Tues 5 Feb Open discussion
Tues 4 Mar Open discussion
Tues 1 Apr Open discussion
Please contact Jill on 6296 9913

Tuggeranong Carers Support Group

1:30pm - 3pm at Tuggeranong
Community Centre, 245 Cowlshaw St,
Tuggeranong
Mon 11 Feb Open discussion
Mon 10 Mar Open discussion
Mon 14 Apr Open discussion
Please contact Jill on 6296 9913

Male Carers Support Group

11am - 12:30pm at Canberra
Southern Cross Yacht Club,
Lounge, Lotus Bay, Yarralumla
Tue 19 Feb Group meeting
Tue 18 Mar Group meeting
Tue 22 Apr Group meeting

Arabic Support Group

10pm - 12noon at Canberra Museum
and Gallery, North Building, Ground
Floor, 180 London Circuit, Civic
No meeting in February
Tues 11 Mar - Topic TBA
Tues 8 Apr - Topic TBA

Chinese Support Group

10am - 12noon at Theo Notaras
Multicultural Centre North Building,
London Circuit, Civic
No meeting in February
Wed 5 Mar - Topic TBA
Wed 2 Apr - Topic TBA

Croatian Support Group

12pm - 2pm at the Training Room,
Carers ACT, Belconnen
No meeting in February
Mon 10 Mar - Topic TBA
Mon 14 Apr - Topic TBA

Filipino Support Group

1pm - 3pm at the Canberra Museum
and Gallery, North Building, Ground
Floor, 180 London Circuit, Civic
No meeting in February
Sat 1 Mar - Topic TBA
Sat 5 Apr - Topic TBA

Greek Support Group

10am - 12pm at the Orpheus Room,
Hellenic Club, Matilda Street, Woden
No meeting in February
Thurs 13 Mar - Topic TBA
Thurs 10 Apr - Topic TBA

Hungarian Support Group

11am - 1pm at Polish Australian White
Eagle Club, 34 David St, Turner
No meeting in February
Wed 26 Mar - Topic TBA
Wed 23 Apr - Topic TBA

Indian Support Group

12noon - 2pm at Canberra Museum
and Gallery, North Building, Ground
Floor, 180 London Circuit, Civic
No meeting in February
Sat 8 Mar - Topic TBA
Sat 12 Apr - Topic TBA

Italian Support Group

10:30am - 12noon at Italo-Australian
Club, 78 Franklin St, Forrest
No meeting in February
Fri 7 Mar - Topic TBA
Fri 4 Apr - Topic TBA

Mon Support Group

12noon - 2pm at Theo Notaras
Multicultural Centre, North Building,
London Circuit, Civic
No meeting in February
Thurs 6 Mar - Topic TBA
Thurs 3 Apr - Topic TBA

Polish Support Group

11am - 1pm at Polish Australian White
Eagle Club, 34 David St, Turner
No meeting in February
Wed 26 Mar - Topic TBA
Wed 23 Apr - Topic TBA

Samoan Support Group

12noon - 2pm at Togan Community
Centre, Copland Drive, Spence
No meeting in February
Fri 28 Mar - Topic TBA
No meeting in April (ANZAC Day)

Spanish Support Group

12pm - 2pm at the Training Room,
Carers ACT, Belconnen
No meeting in February
Mon 10 Mar - Topic TBA
Mon 14 Apr - Topic TBA

Sudanese Support Group

12noon - 2pm at Canberra Museum
and Gallery, North Building, Ground
Floor, 180 London Circuit, Civic
No meeting in February
No meeting in March (Easter)
Sat 26 Apr - Topic TBA

Tamil Support Group

11am - 1pm at Tamil Aged Care Home,
11 Bromby St, Isaacs
No meeting in February
Sat 15 Mar - Topic TBA
Sat 19 Apr - Topic TBA

Tongan Support Group

12noon - 2pm at Togan Community
Centre, Copland Drive, Spence
No meeting in February
Fri 28 Mar - Topic TBA
No meeting in April (ANZAC Day)

Vietnamese Support Group

10am - 12noon
Theo Notaras Multicultural Centre
North Building, London Circuit, Civic
No meeting in February
Wed 12 Mar - Topic TBA
Wed 9 Apr - Topic TBA

Indigenous Carers Support Group

10am - 2pm Boomanulla Oval, Goyder
Street, Narrabundah
Please contact Roslyn Brown on 6296
9900 for details during the Feb - Apr
period.

Carers ACT Workshops

your wellbeing, understanding, coping skills

Keeping Families Connected

This five week program is for Carers of people with a mental illness and/or a substance dependence problem.

6.45pm – 9.30pm Wednesday evenings from 13th February to 12th March 2008.

The course provides information and explores issues connected with:

- Carer stress (including relaxation/mindfulness techniques);
- mental illness (including common therapeutic approaches);
- listening skills;
- assertively working with mental health professionals;
- suicide prevention;
- drug and alcohol use; and
- community support services.

Facilitators: Katina Ellis / Mal Gibson. To RSVP call Mal on 6296 9916

Legal Matters

A lawyer discusses Enduring Powers of Attorney and Wills. Find out where to go for help with a legal problem.

10am – 12.30pm Thursday, 21st February 2008

Tuggeranong Community Centre

Contact Jill Pierce on 6296 9913 or jillp@carersact.asn.au

Money Matters

Centrelink discusses your financial entitlements. CARE Financial counselling talks about debt and budget management.

10am – 12.30pm Thursday, 28th February 2008

Tuggeranong Community Centre

Contact Jill Pierce on 6296 9913 on jillp@carersact.asn.au

Everyday Things Creative Writing with Lizz Murphy

Saturday, 23 February 2008

Carers are welcome to participate in friendly, informal half-day workshops, whether new or experienced writers of poetry or prose. Both workshops include writing exercises and discussion.

10am - 2.30pm - Writing the Everyday

Finding the extraordinary in the ordinary. Ideas are all around you – if you know where to look. Exercises to help you find seeds in everyday things and develop them into poems and stories.

1.30pm - 3pm - Quickies

No time for anything but a quickie? Explore short pithy formats. Exercises that are fast and fun.

Book into the morning or afternoon session, or book for the full day. Places limited - bookings are essential!

Phone Jill on 6296 9913 or email jillp@carersact.asn.au

Lunch will be provided.



Stress Management

A three week introductory course on stress management incorporating relaxation techniques, self care and getting a balance in our lives and the role our thinking plays in managing stress.

1pm – 3pm Thursdays from 20th March to 3rd April 2008

Carers ACT Belconnen, Churches Centre, Benjamin Way, Belconnen

Facilitator: Jill Pierce (6296 9913)

SafeTALK

SafeTALK is a newly designed short course that helps people learn how to provide practical help to persons with thoughts of suicide.

5.30pm - 8.30pm Wednesday, 9th April 2007

Carers ACT, Churches Centre, Benjamin Way, Belconnen. A light supper will be provided.

Places limited. Please register by calling Lindy on 6296 9900

Introduction to Yoga

This class will be a gentle introduction to yoga and relaxation run by Pam Bleakley (VitalYoga, Chifley). Pam is registered with the International Yoga Teachers Association.

4.30pm - 6.00pm Tuesday evenings from 29th April to 3rd June 2008.

Weston Creek Community Centre

Please bring your own mat. Register by ringing Jill on 6296 9913

Journaling workshops with Kathy Kituai

10.00am - 12.00am
Wednesdays from 13th
February – 19th March 2008

Corroboree Park Functions
Room, Patterson St, Ainslie

Kathy introduces ideas that will empower, offer joy, and provide ways to energise yourself; all needed when caring for others and oneself. Journals can be our best friends. Possibilities for publishing work will also be discussed.

To register ring Jill on
6296 9913 or email
jillp@carersact.asn.au

Money Matters

Care Inc Financial Counselling Service

Care Inc provides financial counselling and information on dealing with debt, to people on low to moderate incomes. It is a free service. Read on to find out how they might be able to help you.

What is financial Counselling?

Financial counselling is a combination of counselling, information about money matters, including options for dealing with debts, advocacy or negotiation where appropriate, and referral to other services. Care's service is confidential and they do not talk to other people about your situation without your permission.



Telephone information service:

You can telephone the duty information worker, who can give you information about your particular situation and/or make an appointment for you with the most suitable Care service. This service is available any weekday between 9am and 12noon on 6257 1788. You don't even have to give your name to the telephone worker if you do not want to.

After hours Information

Service: This is an evening service every Wednesday from 5.30pm to 7.30pm (you need to reach Care's office no later than 6.00pm). You can either go into the office to see a financial counsellor or you can

telephone. When you go into the office for the after hours service you may need to wait, people are seen in order of arrival. Interviews normally take from 20-30 minutes. You should take relevant accounts and letters to the interview. You can use the after hours service as often as needed.

Financial Counselling Information/Assessment

Appointments: These appointments are one-hour, one-off appointments which can provide you with information, financial counselling, referral to the financial counselling case work service, or referral to services outside Care.

Financial Counselling Case Work:

Depending on the nature of your financial circumstances, you may benefit from in-depth assistance. In the case work service you are allocated a financial counsellor. You and your counsellor work together on the financial issues, as well as recognising that there may be underlying issues in your life, such as loss and grief, abuse and ill health. The counsellor will work with you in a way that recognises these issues.

Consumer Law Centre: Free independent assistance for people experiencing difficulties with a range of consumer issues, particularly consumer credit, insurance, telecommunications and utilities.



ACT Housing Financial

Counselling Service: This service operates to assist ACT Housing tenants or applicants who are experiencing financial difficulty.

No Interest Loans Scheme: This scheme offers no interest loans for people on low incomes to purchase essential household goods.

You can contact Care if you:

- Are in debt and not sure what to do or how to negotiate with creditors
- Need information about financial matters like concessions, rebates, taxation, budgeting
- Want to look through your budget and see where your money is going
- Want to talk through the stresses of living on a low or restricted income
- Want information about your rights with, for example: contracts, harassment or financial hardship

Contact details:

Shop 16, 1st Floor, The Waldorf
2 Akuna Street Canberra City

Telephone: (02) 6257 1788

Email: adm@carefs.org

Web: www.carefcs.org

The Carers ACT Board of Directors Expands

The Annual General meeting, held in November, saw us present our Annual Report for another successful year and see our board of directors expand. Pamela Heyes (Secretary) resigned from the board, 6 members stayed on and we initiated 4 new members.

Original Members:

Brett Walker (President), LLB, BA, LLM 1st Class Honours, FTIA, Solicitor of the Supreme Court of NSW and the ACT and the High Court of Australia, is currently a Commercial Manager (Legal) with CSIRO. Brett has had 18 years experience as a commercial lawyer in both private practice and in-house counsel roles across a wide ranging legal commercial and banking sector. Brett was appointed President of Carers ACT at the 2006 AGM and he has been on the Board for the past two years.

Janet Moore (Vice President and Carers Australia Delegate), played a key role as a founding member of Carers ACT in 1991 and has overseen the development and growth of the Association, as well as wider recognition of Carers by governments and community. Janet is also a health professional specialising in gerontology with a background in nursing and community health. She is a past Carer of a relative with dementia for many years.

Bob Cotton (Treasurer), B.Ec, MA, FCPA, GAICD, is currently employed as a consultant and Visiting Fellow at Crawford School ANU. Bob has had extensive public sector leadership and management and also diplomacy in his extensive career. Bob is the current Treasurer and has been on the Board for three years, having joined in 2004.

Libby Smith (Secretary) has held senior positions in the Australian Public Service specialising in the human resource field. Libby has provided valuable advice to Carers ACT in introducing a new performance planning review process. She has also been a past Carer and brings personal insight and

understanding to caring. Libby has served on the board for three years.

Brian Joyce (Past President) Brian has served on the board for a number of years. Brian is a Director of Joint Strategies, a Canberra-based management consultancy with clients, including a number of key Australian Government Departments. As such he brings a wealth of high level management skills to the board and has provided invaluable advice to Carers ACT in a range of management and organisational issues during his term. Brian and his wife are Carers to their son.

Vaitylingam (Thamo) Tharalingam B.Sc, M.Eng, M.I.C.E. Chartered Civil Engineer, JP and currently a consultant to the ACT Government. He has a wealth of experience in the fields of Civil Engineering and Community Service. Thamo has been on the Board for five years, having joined in 2002 and has filled the role of Treasurer in the past. Thamo also plays a key leadership role in the Sri Lankan community in the ACT.

New members:

Tim Moore helps care for his sister who has a mental illness, however, most of his involvement with carers has been in advocating for and supporting young carers. Tim sits on a number of carer advisory panels and has developed carer services, including CYCLOPS ACT, St Nicholas Young Carers Program and the National Young Carers Program at Carers Australia. Tim is also a researcher at the Institute of Child Protection Studies, Vice President of the ACT Counsel of Social Services and a member of various community boards.

Valdis Luks has actively involved himself in community activities over many years including through Marist College, Sts. Peter and Paul Primary School as well as his local Church. While in the capacity as Managing Director of G.E. Shaw & Associates (ACT) Pty Ltd, Valdis has committed the company to supporting local community activities and charities including Carers ACT, Lifeline, ACT Scouts and the RSPCA.

Bruce Mackay heads 'Cutthrough' a specialised marketing and advertising consultancy and is one of Canberra's most experienced advertising executives. He commenced his career at Sydney agency, Hertz Walpole, one of Australia's most awarded and creative agencies at that time. At a young age, Bruce accepted an offer to start an advertising agency in Canberra for a Melbourne based agency. Through a series of mergers and acquisitions that entity has now evolved into Grey Worldwide Canberra.

Richard Bialkowski (M.Bus, B.Bus, FAICD, FCHSE, AFSAE) is the CEO of the ACT Division of General Practice. Since leaving the Army in 1994 Richard has held senior positions at chief executive level in community based, not-for-profit organisations in Canberra. In that time he has also gained extensive governance experience through board membership of a number of state and national level organisations. Richard has extensive experience in advocacy and stakeholder relations at both state and national levels with government and non-government agencies.

Conny Elhers cares for her son, who is nine years old and has a rare chromosome disorder. She also supports her older brother who lives with a mental health disorder and has survived a severe vehicle accident. She also cared for her mother for several years, until her passing. Conny also cared as a young carer for her father who had some undiagnosed mental health concerns, until his passing in 1996.

Before her son was born, Conny had a successful business career, including positions at the Department of Defence and working as a financial consultant at Westpac. Conny has sat on the FaBRIC Board of Directors and has been an active member on various local disability related forums and councils. Conny has also worked as a special teachers assistant, in helping develop children with special needs through their schooling.

ACT Budget Submission

What we have asked for...

ACT Caring for Carers Policy and Action Plan Review

Following an urgent request from Carers ACT in our September 2007 pre-budget submission for follow-up action on the 'Caring for Carers in the ACT: A Plan for Action 2004-07', the ACT government has commissioned Allen Consulting Group to conduct a review of the implementation of the Action Plan. The aim of the review is to assess the effectiveness of the Action Plan and consider the recommendations to implement the principles that underpin it.

Carers ACT will attend the focus groups in February. A written response to the discussion paper is also being prepared by Dee McGrath and Carers ACT Policy Advisor, Annemarie Ashton. It is vital that as many Carers as possible are involved in submitting their experiences of how the Policy and the Action Plan has affected (or not affected) their caring situation.

Carers are welcome to call Annemarie on (02) 6296 9900 to provide information.

If you have the desire to offer direct feedback or input to the consultants, contact Mr Cameron Crouch and Ms Sharon Kennard at carers@allenconsult.com.au or by telephone on (02) 6204 6500.

There is a need to ensure that future Carer program policies are relevant, and that Carers' needs are identified through an evidence-based approach and in consultation with the ACT Government.

The ACT Government Chief Minister's office invited Carers ACT to make a submission for input into the ACT 2008-2009 Budget pre-planning process. Our submission was made in September 2007, and focused on the value of the unpaid contribution Carers make to the Territory economy – an amazing \$524.6 million a year. So far, our request for a priority review of the *Caring for Carers Policy and Action Plan* has been granted and a consultant has been appointed. To be involved in this review, see details in the left-hand column on this page. We have also requested additional funding to enable our continued representation as a peak body for Carers in the ACT, as the demand for both systemic and individual advocacy work has been increasing in recent years. The ACT Government was asked to provide leadership on developing a transition assistance scheme for re-skilling Carers who wished to re-enter the workforce. Funding for the expansion of the Young Carers program was also identified as a high priority need. A copy of the submission may be found on the home page of the Carers ACT website at www.carersact.asn.au and your comments on the paper are very welcome.

New Bereaved Carers Policy

Carers ACT has developed a policy in regard to our ability to provide assistance for those who are no longer in a caring role. A summary of the policy can be found below. If you would like to discuss any aspects of this policy please contact either Lyn McDonald or Jill Pierce on 6296 9900

Summary of Bereaved Carers Policy

It is an unfortunate fact that resources for community-based organisations are limited and that the demand for services often outweighs our ability to provide them, meaning that it is necessary to provide services to those who are within our prescribed target group.

Therefore, Carers ACT must limit the support that we are able to offer to those people who have ceased their caring role. In doing this Carers ACT will continue to offer support for a limited period and will assist bereaved Carers to access other support and services which

meet their ongoing needs.

Carers who have ceased caring may access the following programs and services as required, post bereavement:

- **Counselling** - for up to 12 months.
- **Carer Support Groups** (which Carers are already attending) for up to 18 months.
- **Bereaved Carers Groups, Seasons for Growth and Social Activities** such as craft, walking and art appreciation groups - indefinitely
- **Bus Trips, Seasonal Lunches and Special Events** - for current carers. These may be accessed by bereaved carers only in special circumstances (e.g. referred by counsellor as has been unable to attend trips due to demands of former caring role, spaces unable to be filled by current carers, etc.)
- **Membership and events open to members** - indefinitely.



Donations to Carers ACT

Canberrans Tee-Off to Support Family Carers

Over the past few months we have received donations from organisations and people who want to be a part of supporting family Carers. Carers ACT, on behalf of the Carers who it will benefit, would like to thank to the following:

The Canberra Club

During December, Neil Patchett, General Manager of The Canberra Club, donated \$5,000 to Carers ACT. The funds were raised through a charity golf day and raffle. Ricky Lai from Bing Lee in Belconnen, a major sponsor of the fundraising, said he was looking forward to helping raise even more money for Carers ACT next year. These funds will go towards supporting Young Carers.



Left to right: Ricky Lai and Eugene Lambides (Bing Lee Belconnen), Colleen Donohoe and Ben Graham (Carers ACT), and David Ward (The Canberra Club)

Women's Golf NSW Inc.

The ACT participants in the Goodwill Plate, a special fundraising golf competition run by the Women's Golf NSW, donated \$520 to Carers ACT just before Christmas. These funds will be used to top up services that have tighter budgets.

Radford College

During November, Radford College donated \$3,000 to Carers ACT. The funds were raised through a 'Songs from the Silver Screen' sing along night organised by George Huitker (of Radford College). These funds will also go towards supporting Young Carers.

Community Living Options for Young People With Disabilities

Carers ACT would like to invite all Family Carers of people with disabilities to a forum to explore issues surrounding the community participation and living options for disabled adults and post-school adolescents in the ACT. Come and meet other people in the ACT community who have been discussing future accommodation options for young people with a disability in the ACT.

Future options to be explored include a Community Village concept, where young people could be appropriately supported in their living arrangements and have access to a range of "jobs" and meaningful activities to build their skills and give them a purpose for each day. This concept is built around a

commitment to real community involvement and integration opportunities, where activities and facilities can be shared by members of the general public and residents.



The forum will be held from 10am till 12pm on Tuesday 26th February 2008, at Carers ACT, Belconnen Churches Centre, Benjamin Way, Belconnen. Please register your attendance in advance by calling 6296 9900 before 22nd February for catering purposes. The forum is free of charge.

New Government, New Opportunities

With the new Federal Government now in office, Carers ACT has been carefully monitoring the progression of the Labor Party's election promises, as detailed in their pre-election Policy on Disability and Carers. Interim funding has already been granted to continue Commonwealth State and Territory Disability Agreement (CSDTA) services, until a new agreement has been fully negotiated. The Rudd Government will then work to a five-year plan for disability service reform based on the information given to the Senate Inquiry into CSDTA. The planned reform will focus on principles of lifelong planning, independence and early intervention. Older Carers will be made a key priority under the new CSTDA. The change will include better measurement and planning of services, and strategies to simplify access to services. A National Disability Strategy will be negotiated with the States and Territories to tackle the complex needs of people with disabilities and their Carers, with a view to implementing new or improved services that are focused on achieving real outcomes.

The establishment of the Office of Work and Family, within the Prime Minister's Department, will focus on the needs of people who are Carers and in paid employment. A principle aim of this Office is to examine the Federal legislation needed by Carers. Other policy promises included the establishment of a National Companion Card for Carers, and additional support to the 120,000 Australians who receive the Carer Payment. Carer Payment recipients will receive a quarterly utilities allowance of \$125, providing an annual amount of \$500. People receiving telephone allowance who also connect to the internet will also be eligible for an increased allowance – up from \$88 to \$132 a year.

We will keep you up to date with what the new Rudd Government is doing for you.

Staff Profiles

Meet the new Mature Aged Carers Program Team

My name is Isabelle Egloffstein and I have recently joined the Mature Carers Program as a Coordinator at Carers ACT. I have a varied personal and professional background having been born in France, raised in Africa, married in Germany and now happily settled in Australia with my family. The greatest part of my Education and Professional Development has been influenced through travelling, living and working in various countries. This has enabled me to gain a profound understanding of various cultures and people. I graduated with a BA in Languages and Education from the University of New England while teaching 'Language Other Than English' (L.O.T.E.) to both children and adults in schools

and within the wider community.

In order to gain a thorough understanding of the Community Sector and the issues confronting families, I worked in Aged Care for several years and I enjoyed being able to support families and assisting them in their caring role. Completing the Diploma in Community Services Management also gave me a broad understanding of the services available to families in the ACT region.

As the new Mature Carers Program Coordinator at Carers ACT, my role is to provide flexible respite options to Carers 65 and older who are caring for a son or a daughter with a disability.



I am truly enjoying my work in aiding families in the community and look forward to what the future holds for both Carers ACT and all Carers.



My name is Kerrie McGuinness and I have recently been employed by Carers ACT at the Torrens Office as Mature Carers Program Coordinator. Staff have been wonderful in helping me settle in and have made me feel most welcome. I appreciate the dynamics of my new role in the

Mature Carers Program and the potential contribution to Carers I can make, with an interactive and holistic approach.

I was born and grew up in Sydney before relocating to Orange NSW with my family. During this time I managed a Dementia Specific Unit and coordinated a support group for families/Carers with Dementia. After some years living in the Central West, I relocated to Canberra where I worked for a large charitable organisation in the ACT, and was fortunate to work in a variety of roles for 10 years. My main occupation during this time was quality assurance, respite in aged care, men / women shelters, training coordinator and an OH&S auditor in compliance & legislation. This work involved a lot of travelling for me throughout NSW from drought areas such as Lake Cargelligo to the beautiful far South Coast; this gave me the

opportunity of meeting and working with many diverse and interesting groups of people whom I will always respect and cherish.

As a water lover and outdoor adventurer I make certain to escape, to the South Coast beaches and the Blue Mountains as often as possible. I also enjoy working as a volunteer in my spare time with Red Cross.

The Mature Aged Carers Program

The Mature Aged Carers Program assists Carers who are over 65 and caring for their adult son or daughter with a disability. To find out more about this program, call 6296 9900 or visit www.carersact.asn.au

Notice Board

What does it cost to raise a child with an intellectual disability?

Professor Einfield (University of Sydney) Professor Bruce Tonge (Monash University) and A/Professor Chris Doran (University of Queensland) are currently investigating the costs for families of raising a person with intellectual disability. This information will assist in future advocacy for government support. We need information from families to answer this important question.

If you would like to participate in this study, or would like further information, please contact my research assistant, Sian Horstead, via email shorstead@med.usyd.edu.au or by calling 02 9351 0884

House with disabled access To Let at Broulee

3 bedroom, fully furnished, fully equipped home, one street back from the beach and close to local shops. Bookings required for February and March. Wheelchair ramp is available at the side of the house. All new beds and linen. Nice, clean, cosy and comfortable - no smokers please. Phone Val Hibberson on 6281 6914 or 02 4471 6886

Seasons for Growth - Understanding Change and Loss - for Young Carers

Are you the parent of a child aged between 7 and 10? Does your child take on some of the caring responsibilities for a family member? If so, you may be interested in your child attending the Seasons for Growth Grief and Loss peer support program. Carers ACT is offering a nine week program for young carers in the age group 7-10 years.

4pm - 5:30pm Tuesday afternoons during Term 1 of 2008.

Belconnen Community Centre, Swanson Court, Belconnen

The program is a nationally accredited and evaluated and will be facilitated by Jill Pierce, a social worker and nationally accredited Companion with Seasons for Growth.

We are currently taking expressions of interest for this program. If you are interested in having your child attend please contact Natalie on 6296 9938 or email nataliet@carersact.asn.au.

Seasons for Growth - Understanding Change and Loss - for Adult Carers in early May

As you will not receive the next newsletter in time for the start of this workshop, here are the details:

10am — 12noon Thursday mornings from 1st May to 29th May 2008

Carers ACT - Churches Centre, Benjamin Way, Belconnen.

These sessions will be helpful for Carers who are experiencing loss and change in their lives. Seasons for Growth is a national organisation well known for its work with adults and children in assisting them to understand and manage their grief.

For more information and to register contact Jill Pierce on 6296 9913 or email jillp@carersact.asn.au (places limited).

Farewell from Michaela



Dear Carers,

I would like to take this opportunity to say Good Bye to you all, as its time for me to move on to another adventure. Over the last three years I have had the opportunity to meet many of you through Carers Gatherings, Bus Trips, Private Viewings at the NGA, Seasonal Lunches, Christmas Dinners, Carers Weeks, Open Days and Launches of new programs, Garden Getaways, Volunteer Sessions, Educational Sessions and Social Groups. I learnt a lot from you, and one of the main memories that will stay with me is the strength, energy, love and care that you give every day to your loved ones – it's admirable!

It has been my great pleasure and honour to organise events for you and be part of a team who deliver you well needed breaks.

All the best and take care (also of yourself),

Michaela Andelova

Reveiwing a few little books

1 Day Readers

The Pig of Happiness

by Edward Monkton

Edward takes a look at an old subject (happiness) and relates it to the animal world. It is about 28 pages long and an easy read for your next bus journey, before you go to sleep, or instead of reading the newspaper. The book was donated by a Carer – thank you.

The Meaning of Life

by Bradley T. Greive

We know this Author from his *Blue Day Book* writings and the next book *The Book for People Who Do Too Much*. A hilarious and uplifting way to find the answer to the meaning of life. The Author puts forward the questions and provides the answers. A good read.

The book for People Who Do Too Much

by Bradley T.Greive

The pictures are priceless and, for me, Bradley Greive has done it again. A book for those who burn the candle at both ends, and then don't have enough left to appreciate all life has to offer. A timely reminder to slow down, recapture your best self and enjoy the company of those most precious to you.

Reviewed by Val Hones.

Each of these books are available through the Carers ACT library - a free service for members.

At Carers ACT, we value contributions from Carers in a range of ways – including volunteering. While we realise that your time is limited, we do rely on your valuable time as Volunteers to help us do our work. Volunteering assists us in many different ways and at no time replaces paid staff. As a Volunteer for Carers ACT your experience, words, skills, talent, energy, and enthusiasm will all be valued. Importantly, our Volunteers help staff to place Carers and families at the centre of all that we do and ensure that your needs are being met.

People may be involved in varying volunteering opportunities at different levels and for many reasons including:

- Making new friends, meeting other Carers and having fun;
- A sense of fulfilment;
- Contributing something to the community;
- Learning new skills;
- Building self confidence;
- Enhancing your CV and job prospects;
- Being social and taking a 'different' sort of break.

Current opportunities to volunteer at Carers ACT include:

• **Carer Reference Group**

The experiences and ideas of Carers are important for improving awareness of key issues or needs, and developing suitable support options. Carers ACT has a central role in ensuring governments hear the voices of Carers, through representation, policy and advocacy. The Carer Reference Group has been developed for gathering additional information when required, as it is too costly and time consuming to research every issue across all of our members, every time. The Carer Reference Group assists the Policy Officer by answering questions or providing information on their experiences. This information may be gathered by email, telephone or through discussion groups.

• **Business Plan Focus Group**

Approximately 10 Carers are required to discuss their experiences of our services and their needs, for input into our business plan. To have input into the Carers ACT Business Plan for 2008/09, join us from 10am-12.30pm on Thursday 17th April 2008.

• **Other Focus Groups**

Specialised focus groups are often formed throughout the year – your caring experience makes a valuable contribution to the actions that are taken as a result of these groups.

• **Mail Outs, Newsletter folding, Resource Distribution**

No special skills needed but a chance to get together with other Carers and help with getting our Newsletter out and 'spreading the word' at various times throughout the year.

• **Staff Selection Panels**

We require a Carer representative on staff selection panels.

• **Other**

Many other opportunities arise which require input from Carers.

So if you have a few hours to spare and you would like to get involved as a volunteer, or know more about volunteering for Carers ACT, we encourage you to **contact Judy at Carers ACT on 9296 9926**. You will be sent a Volunteer application form. As a Volunteer you will also be required to undergo a National Police Check (paid for by Carers ACT).



Would you or someone you know like to become a member of Carers ACT?

Membership is **FREE** and benefits include: Delivery of our quarterly Newsletter to your home, special invitations to Carers ACT events, and a buy-one-get-one-free arrangement for Carers at Hoyts Cinema's. By being a member of Carers ACT you also enable us to represent a stronger Carers voice to Government and the community. To become a member, simply fill out and return the **MEMBERSHIP FORM** below to: Carers ACT, Ground Floor, Churches Centre, Benjamin Way, Belconnen ACT 2617

Title First name Surname
Address Postcode
Phone Mobile Email
Gender: Male Female Date of Birth Country of Birth
Are you Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander? Yes No Are you a family Carer? Yes No

If you are a family Carer, please provide the details of the person you are caring for & answer other questions below:

Title First name Surname
Gender: Male Female Date of Birth Country of Birth
Condition of Care Recipient: Disability Chronic illness Frail aged Mental illness Other
Option: Specify Condition _____ Is he/she Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander? Yes No
How long have you been caring?
What is your relationship to your cared for person?

By signing this form you are agreeing to allow us to store your information in our confidential database, provide this information (without your name and address) to our funding bodies for statistical and planning purposes, and send you relevant information, including a copy our quarterly Newsletter (4 per year) and invitations to workshops and special member events. Signed: _____ Date: ___/___/_____

DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED I wish to donate: \$10 \$20 \$50 Other _____
 I have enclosed a cheque/money order for my donation payable to "Carers ACT" OR
Please charge to my credit card (min \$10): Bankcard Visa MasterCard Other _____
Card number: _____ Expiry: ___/___
Name on Credit Card: _____ Signed: _____ Date ___/___/_____



An Australian Government Initiative



IF UNDELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO:
Carers ACT Inc.
Ground Floor, Churches Centre,
Benjamin Way, BELCONNEN ACT 2617

