

Employed Carers Program for Employers

Flexible Options to Support Employed Carers

Caring is an issue which faces everyone.

Changing demographics such as an ageing population, smaller families, transitional population and different family structures mean that there are presently 1 in 8 people who are currently carers.

This will increase over the next two decades.

Carers in the ACT

In the ACT there are over 43,000 Carers, many of them employed, who need to access support and a flexible response from employers to continue to work as their caring responsibilities progress and change.

The Business Case for Employed Carers

Businesses benefit when they succeed in recruiting and retaining the best people for the position. Many carers are forced to give up work because of the difficulties in combining their work and caring roles.

The peak age for caring is between the ages of 45 and 64 and many Carers will be experienced employees in senior positions. Losing them from the workforce means a loss of corporate knowledge and skills, in addition to recruiting and training to fill the gap that they leave.

Developing and promoting support for Carers in the workplace makes good business sense. In an increasingly competitive labour market, it is critical to business performance and service delivery to be an employer of choice.

In adopting flexible workplace practices for Employed Carers businesses also experience reduced absenteeism and increased productivity. For the Employed Carer these flexible practices result in lowered stress levels and an increase in morale and commitment to their job.

Carers ACT Employed Carers Program

Aim of the Program:

To support Employed Carers remain in the workforce while continuing to balance work and caring responsibilities. The Employed Carers Program aims to support Employed Carers who care for a loved one, who is frail aged 65+ years, or has early stage dementia, but who is able to stay at home during working hours.

The Employed Carers Program aims to provide support to enable Carers who are at home, to return to work either on a part-time or full-time basis.

The Employed Carer Program aims to provide supports to enable the Carer to continue or return to work by:

- Providing case support and access to appropriate services specific to the needs of the Carer and cared for person
- Arranging services for the cared for person such as home visits, phone calls, Meditrack devices and Meals on Wheels
- Providing support for the cared for person to attend appointments and provide companionship as required
- Access to day programs in aged care centres
- Referrals to other services as required
- Assistance and referrals to support Carers in attending training to return to work

Flexible Work Practices and Work Life Balance

Flexible working is the key to ensuring that employees with caring responsibilities can work and continue to be effective in the workplace. It can provide the mechanisms for all employees to balance work and life, but it is especially beneficial for those employees who are Carers.

Flexible Work Practices include:

- Flexible starting and finishing times or time in lieu arrangements
- Compressed working hours
- Annualised working hours
- Job sharing or part-time employment
- Working from home
- Flexible holidays to fit in with alternative care arrangements
- The opportunity to purchase leave

The Employed Carers Program will provide Employers with:

- Assistance in developing strategies for Employed Carers
- Presentations for departments and workplaces
- Presentations for managers and human resource departments

Contact details:

For more detailed information on the Employed Carers Program visit the website www.carersact.asn.au which has useful links to other information and fact sheets.

Or contact the Employed Carer Program Coordinators in 02 6296 9928