



Understood, Connected and Supported
Carers ACT Annual Service Evaluation 2010-11
July 2011

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Carers ACT sincerely thanks all Carers who participated in the evaluation activities which enabled the production of this document.

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Carers ACT acknowledges that modern day Canberra has been built on the traditional lands of the Ngunnawal People. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present. Carers ACT celebrates the Ngunnawal People's living culture and valuable contribution to the ACT community.

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The importance of conducting an annual survey

This is the third consecutive year in which Carers ACT has conducted a client survey. The questions that we ask are designed to measure the organisation's performance against the program logic outcomes. These are that Carers feel understood, connected and supported when they contact the organisation and by the services provided by, or on behalf of Carers ACT. (The program logic map is at **Appendix A.**)

The survey answers are used to inform the development of each program's business plan. Used in conjunction with other information and service data the information can assist us to evaluate what we are doing well and importantly, identify those areas where we can make improvements to the services that we provide to Carers.

Survey methodology

Carers eligible to participate in the survey were those who had accessed any of the services provided by Carers ACT over the last 12 months.

The programs surveyed were:

- The Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres (CRCC), comprising Carelink, the Employed Carer Program, Respite Program and Respite links, the Severe and Profound Disability Program and the Mental Health Respite Program,
- General Carer services, made up of the Carer Advisory Service, the Mental Health Outreach Program, the Flexible Family Support Program, the Mature Carer Program, Fraser House, Deakin Cottage, Counselling, Dementia Education and Training and other HACC funded programs, and
- The Young Carers Program.

Three versions of the survey forms were used this year;

- one for clients who accessed services through the CCRC,
- one for those clients who accessed general Carers ACT services, and
- one for Carers who accessed the Young Carers Program.

The main difference between the form used for the Carers who accessed services firstly through CCRC and those who used General Services was the inclusion of a question asking Carers how satisfied they were with the workers who deliver the respite services.

The surveys were limited to a one page 'two minute tick the box' style in order to minimise any imposition on Carers' time.

Some minor changes were made to last year's survey questions to reduce any confusion and to provide better overall quality information. However, it was important that the changes were kept to a minimum so that a comparison could be made between these results and those of previous years.

The material that was sent to the Carer comprised a covering letter seeking voluntary participation, the survey and a reply-paid envelope. (See **Appendix B**)

It was anticipated that, despite our efforts to eliminate duplication, some Carers would receive more than one survey form if they had accessed more than one service type. They were therefore asked to complete only one form in order to prevent possible skewing of the data collected.

Table 1 (below) shows the number of clients who were sent a survey; the response rate; and the number of clients who completed a survey as a percentage of the total number of clients. A decision was taken to survey approximately 70% of the service recipients accessing the Commonwealth Carelink and Respite Centres because of cost required to post the survey to all of the recipients.

Table 1- Number of clients who participated in the client survey

Program	Total number of Carers receiving services in 2010-2011	Number of survey forms sent out¹	Number of surveys that were not able to be completed²	Number of completed surveys returned	Survey Response Rate	Percentage of total number of Carers who completed a survey
CRCC	1251	931 (74%)	25	213	24%	17%
Severe and Profound Disability	60	60 (100%)	0	15	25%	25%
Mental Health Respite	111	99 (89%)	0	27	27%	24%
Young Carers	83	82 (99%)	0	17	21%	21%
General Services	319	318 (100%)	7	77	25%	24%
<i>Total or Average</i>	1824	1490 (82%)	32	349	23%	19%

The survey response rate, which was between 21% and 27% this year, was lower than last year's (2009-2010); which was between 25% and 32%. This was, in turn, a lower response rate than in 2008-2009 which was between 32% and 38%.

There are a number of factors which may have contributed to the survey's reduced return rate. For example, this year we increased the timeframe available to complete

¹ The percentage values shown represent the number of surveys as a percentage of the total number of Carers who received service in that program

² Some surveys were returned un-completed. This may have been because of an incorrect mailing address. It is likely that there were other surveys that could not be completed but are not included in this figure as they were not returned to us.

the survey, believing that this might result in a higher response rate. This did not happen. In fact Carers ACT received the vast majority of responses within the first two weeks of the survey being sent out. Another factor may have been survey fatigue. Carers often report to us that they are inundated with requests from agencies seeking feedback, and do not have time to complete them all. We may need to think of alternative ways of collecting the information next year to try and achieve a higher response rate.

Results of the 2010–2011 Client Satisfaction Survey

The responses to the surveys sent to Carers accessing service through CRCC and through General Services have been collated and presented in a table format as shown below (Table 2).

Table 2 – Average Client Satisfaction 2010 – 2011³

Questions Asked	General Services ⁴	CCRC ⁵
Feeling Understood	89%	90%
Timely Response	89%	87%
Sufficient Information	86%	89%
Offered Alternatives	80%	77%
Support is Appropriate to my Needs	82%	83%
Recommend CACT to Others	92%	93%
Support has Reduced my Stress Levels	80%	78%
AVERAGE CLIENT SATISFACTION	85%	86%

³ The percentages were calculated by firstly allocating a number to the descriptive word ratings in the question responses, i.e. (always = 3, mostly = 2, sometimes = 1, never = 0). Then the numbers were totaled. That sum was divided by the number of Carers who responded for each question (not including those who responded not applicable) multiplied by the 'always' score (3). The overall satisfaction percentage was obtained by totaling the numbers for each question and dividing the sum by the number of responses (not including the not applicable responses) multiplied by 3.

⁴ General Services = Carer Advisory Service, Mental Health Outreach Program, Flexible Family Support Program, Mature Carer Program, Fraser House, Deakin Cottage, Counseling, Education and Training and HACC funded programs.

⁵ CCRC = Carelink, Employed Carer Program, Respite Program, Respite Links, Mental Health Respite Program, Severe and Profound Disability Program

Satisfaction with Respite Workers	N/A	85%
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This table shows that those clients who had accessed the CRCC had an overall satisfaction level of eighty six percent (86%), while those accessing General Services had an overall satisfaction level of eighty five percent (85%).

The highest ratings were ninety two percent (92%) for General Services and ninety three percent (93%) for the CCRC. This response was given for the question asking whether the Carer completing the survey would recommend Carers ACT to another family Carer.

The lowest ratings of eighty percent (80%) for General Services and seventy seven percent (77%) for the CCRC were given in response to a question asking whether Carers were offered an alternative service if Carers ACT was unable to provide the service needed.

An important question about the degree to which the services provided by Carers ACT reduced the Carer’s stress levels scored eighty percent (80%) for General Services and seventy eight percent (78%) for CCRC.

Written comments received serve to reinforce the high satisfaction levels recorded.

“Your motto of understood, connected and supported applied strongly to my experience...”

“You have lowered my anxiety levels with the kindness and advice I have been given.”

In order to satisfy particular reporting requirements for individual programs that are part of the CCRC, another client satisfaction table has been created (see table 3 over the page). This table shows Carer satisfaction levels in relation to the Severe and Profound Disability and the Mental Health Respite Programs and the remainder of the CRCCC programs.

When looking at these figures it is important to keep in mind that the figures are based on only a small number of respondents; i.e. 15 in the case of the Severe and Profound Disability program and 27 in the case of Mental Health Respite program. Whilst the percentages of respondents for each of these two programs are similar to the percentage of respondents for the CCRC as a whole (see table 1), the small number reduces the accuracy of the satisfaction figures.

Table 3 – Average Client Satisfaction 2010-2011⁶

Questions Asked	CRCC (minus SPDP and MHRP)⁷	Severe and Profound Disability Program	Mental Health Respite Program
Feeling Understood	90%	78%	91%
Timely Response	88%	73%	91%
Sufficient Information	85%	67%	88%
Offered Alternatives	79%	47%	83%
Support is Appropriate to my Needs	85%	62%	84%
Recommend CACT to Others	94%	82%	90%
Support has Reduced my Stress Levels	80%	58%	73%
AVERAGE CLIENT SATISFACTION	86%	74%	86%
Satisfaction with Respite Workers	85%	N/A	N/A

Feeling understood

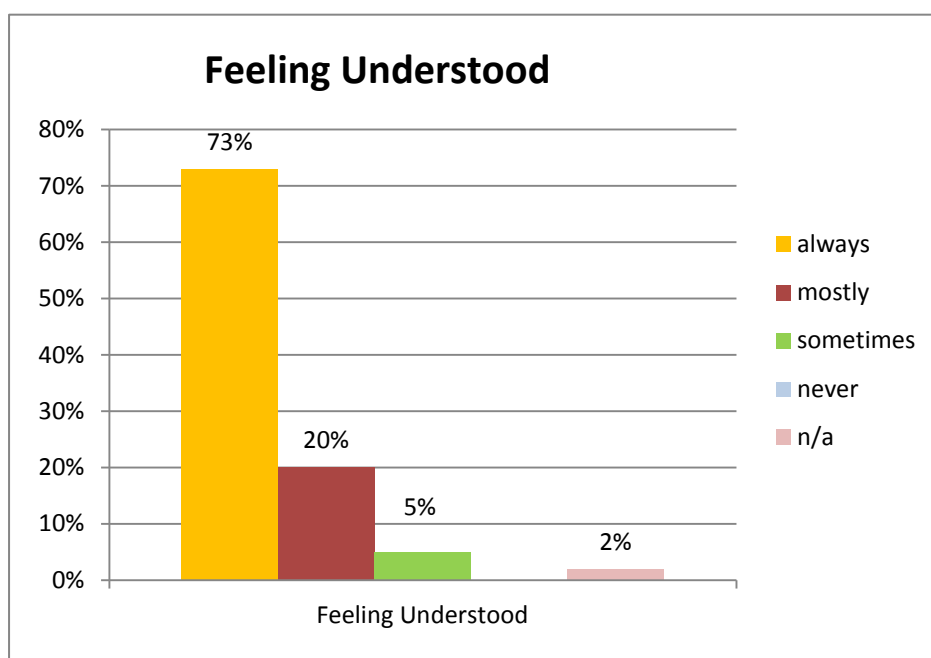
Listening to, and understanding each Carer is the essential first step to providing a high quality service. It is important that Carers ACT doesn't assume we know each individual's situation and needs.

"People who understand my position – I feel free to talk, whereas at any other time I would be very reluctant to talk for fear of being misunderstood..."

⁶ The percentages were calculated by firstly allocating a number to the descriptive word ratings in the question responses, i.e. (always = 3, mostly = 2, sometimes = 1, never = 0). Then the numbers were totaled. That sum was divided by the number of Carers who responded for each question (not including those who responded not applicable) multiplied by the 'always' score (3). The overall satisfaction percentage was obtained by totaling the numbers for each question and dividing the sum by the number of responses (not including the not applicable responses) multiplied by 3.

⁷CCRC= Carelink, Employed Carer Program, Respite Program, Respite Links

Ninety three percent (93%) of Carers accessing Carers ACT through the CCRC and General Services felt listened to, understood and respected either always or mostly. Importantly, no Carer said that they had never felt understood when seeking services from the organisation.

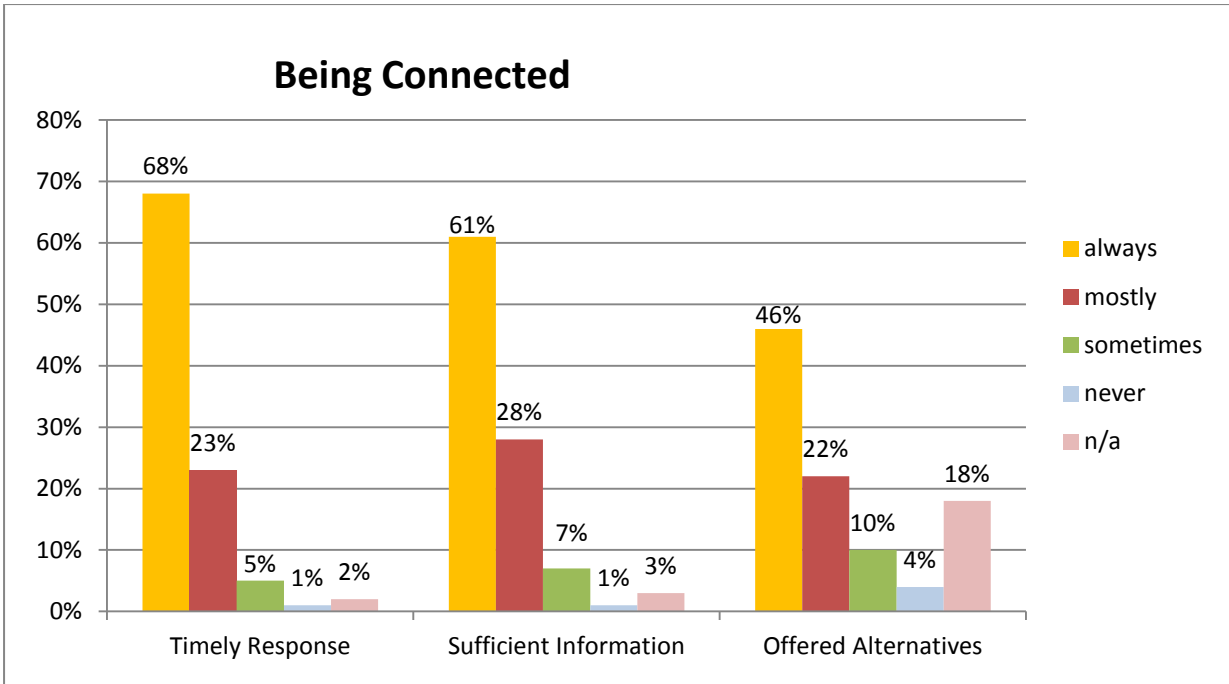


Being Connected

Once the needs of Carers have been understood by Carers ACT staff, the next step is to connect Carers to appropriate support. The degree to which Carers feel connected was assessed by measuring:

- The timeliness of Carers ACT's response to enquiries,
- How often enquiries were answered with sufficient information for the Carer, and
- How often alternative service options were offered if Carers ACT was unable to provide support to the Carer.

Carers' responses to these questions are shown in the graph below. Ninety one percent (91%) of Carers always, or mostly, experienced what they deemed to be a timely response to their queries. Eighty nine per cent (89%) of Carers felt that they were provided with sufficient and appropriate information, always or mostly.



“...always well informed. If they are unable to help they actively point us in the right direction.”

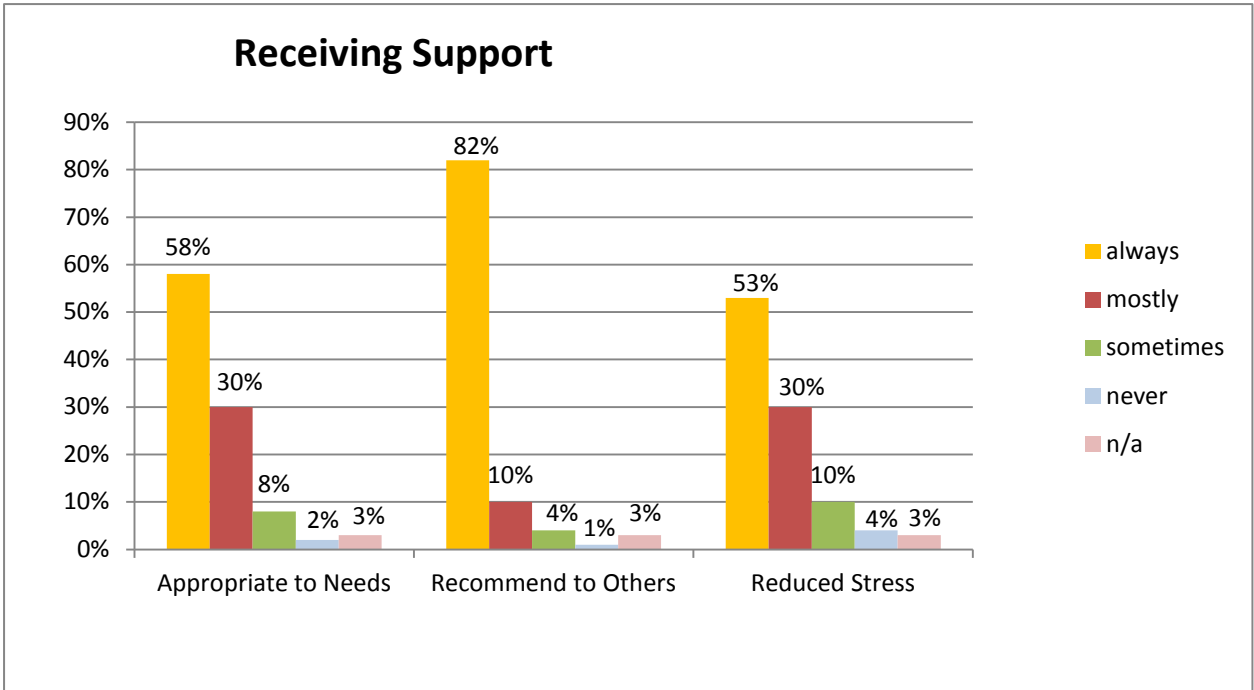
Sixty eight percent (68%) of respondents stated that they were always or mostly offered an alternative service if Carers ACT was unable to assist. (Note: This rating should not be used as a measure on its own, as there is also a high percentage (18%) for whom this question was not applicable.) The reason why a Carer might respond ‘not applicable’ is that they were being provided with the service they wanted; therefore no alternative was required. Importantly, however, 14% of respondents said that they were sometimes or never offered an alternative service. This may be due to system service gaps which are outside of Carers ACT’s control, but this cannot be confirmed without further study.

Receiving Support

Once Carers have been offered a service, Carers ACT needs to know if the support they receive is effective for them. We measured this by looking at:

- How often the support provided is appropriate to the Carer’s needs,
- How often the support received reduces the Carer’s level of stress, and
- If Carers see support as valuable enough to recommend it to others in a similar situation.

As illustrated in the graph below, eighty eight percent (88%) of Carers thought that the support services they had received were always, or mostly, appropriate to their needs. Slightly fewer (83%) Carers reported that the services always or mostly reduced the levels of stress that they experienced.

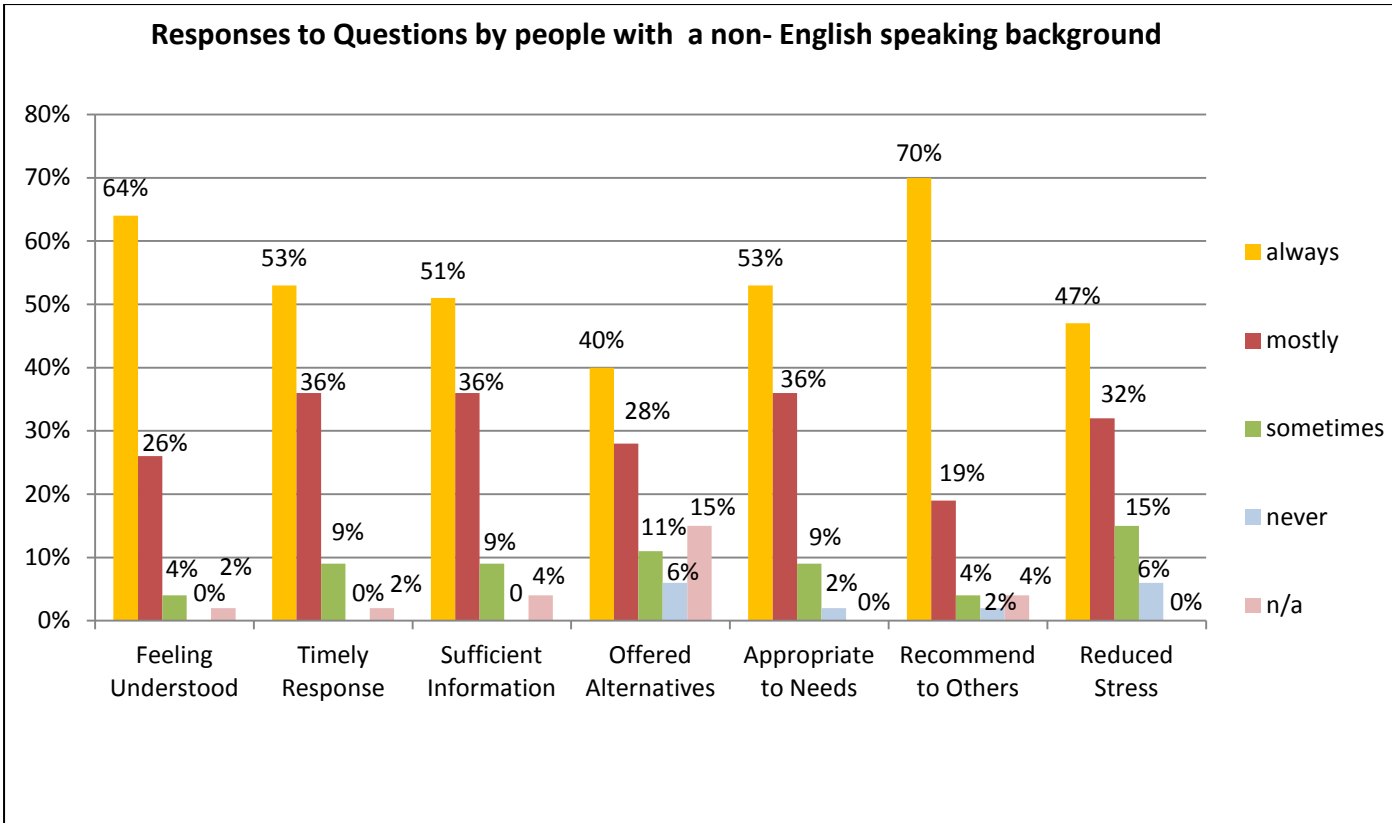


Eighty two percent (82%) of Carers answered that they would always recommend Carers ACT to another Carer. This shows that Carers believe that contacting Carers ACT is a worthwhile and positive experience.

"They help me and my Dad. If it was not for Carers ACT me and my Dad would not cope. Just stay the same please."

Carers from a non-English Speaking Background and Indigenous Carers

This year a higher number of Carers identified as being from non-English speaking backgrounds. Forty seven (47) Carers and an additional seven (7) Carers in the Young Carers program identified as having a non-English speaking background. The answers that these forty seven (47) Carers gave to the survey questions are presented in the table below.



The majority of people from non–English speaking backgrounds responded that they were ‘always’, or ‘mostly’, satisfied to each survey question.

“I found that everyone I spoke to were so kind and helpful and willing to give me plenty of time to listen to me and I also felt that I was important too and that my feelings and health mattered”

The pattern of responses from Carers who identified as being from a non-English speaking background is very similar to those of all Carers. Examples of this are that the highest ratings were for the ‘recommend to others’ questions on the survey and the ‘feeling understood’ question and the lowest ratings were for ‘offered alternatives’ and ‘reduced stress’

However for every question, the ratings given by people from non- English speaking backgrounds were perceptibly lower compared to those ratings given by the whole Carer group. For example, seventy three percent (73%) of the Carer group whole felt ‘always understood’ compared to sixty four percent (64%) of Carers from non-English speaking backgrounds.

This year two people identified as having an Indigenous cultural background. However, it is not possible to draw any conclusions about their experiences, given that it is such a small sample. Alternative information gathering techniques will be necessary to obtain feedback from Indigenous Carers about their level of satisfaction with the services of Carers ACT.

Counselling

In this survey ninety eight (98) Carers reported that they had received counselling in the past year. Their comments were exceptionally positive. Often the comments indicated that Counselling taught the Carer coping skills that resulted in them achieving a better quality of life.

"My counsellor was wonderful. Her advice and encouragement helped me understand what I was going through and how to work myself out of how I felt and basically get on with my life."

Young Carers

On average, young Carers who responded to this year's survey rated their program to be half way between 'pretty good' and 'awesome' in the scale shown below.

Awful  Not Bad  Okay  Pretty Good  Awesome 

Eighty six percent (86%) of young Carers were satisfied that they had received services that they thought were appropriate to their needs. Ten (10) out of the seventeen (17) young Carers responded, saying that the program fully met their needs. No young Carers reported that the program failed to meet any of their needs.

Fourteen (14) young Carers said that the program had helped them at school or at home. Tutoring was the most common way in which the program had helped.

The comments revealed that many young Carers felt understood in their program; both by the workers and by the other young Carers. The comments made by young Carers often highlighted the importance of connecting with others in similar situations to theirs. In some cases, this connection has allowed the young Carer to think and feel more positively about their own situation.

"It has helped me because I now see some good in my brother!"

Analysis of the Results

Comparison of satisfaction rates with previous years

This year, as in the two previous years, Carers ACT has exceeded the two goals directly related to client satisfaction which we set ourselves in the 2008-2011 Strategic Plan. These are that:

- “Eighty percent (80%) of Carers supported by Carers ACT are satisfied that support has led to improved outcomes in their caring situation” and
- “Eighty percent (80%) of Carers who use our services are satisfied that our response is appropriate and timely”.

The responses and comments from this year’s survey show that the majority of Carers have a very helpful and very pleasant experience working with Carers ACT. Most Carers describe our staff and organisation as understanding, compassionate and focused on meeting their needs.

However, there is a slight downward trend showing up in Carer satisfaction levels over the last three years. In 2008-2009 the satisfaction level for Carers accessing the General Services was 94.9% and for Carers accessing the CCRC, it was 98.7%. This fell to 89% for both groups in 2009–2010 and has dropped again to 85% and 86% respectively in 2010-2011. The Young Carers program has also recorded a drop in client satisfaction across these three years, from 93.9% to 86%. The vast majority of this drop was recorded in this year’s survey (from 93% to 86%) which corresponds to the time period in which the Coordinator was on extended leave.

There are many possible reasons which may contribute to Carers reporting that they are less satisfied with the service provided by Carers ACT. Analysis of the comments given in the survey illustrates some reasons:

- Carers have experienced some unmet need. These Carers’ situations may have been difficult and/or complex. Carers ACT may have had no suitable options available within the current service provision parameters
- Staff are not performing consistently
- Carers are not receiving sufficient information
- Carers have difficulty in accessing the available services
- The Carer comes from a non-English speaking background which the survey results suggest is a risk factor for a less satisfying experience with Carers ACT.

Unmet need

Some Carers commented that the support they received from Carers ACT was fantastic, but that they needed more of it.

"I would prefer to have help from Carers more often."

These comments most often referred to counselling and to the services at Fraser House.

"Residential respite is not available as frequently as we would like due to small, over stressed facility at Fraser House."

Most of the Carers who made similar comments to this registered a high level of satisfaction in their responses to the survey questions. They acknowledged that their need for additional services is an issue that is, to a large extent, beyond the control of Carers ACT.

"Personally speaking you cannot improve your services as you fulfill all your promises. We sadly, need high level care permanent accommodation for a brain injured man and that is beyond your capabilities."

However, some Carers recorded their frustration at not being able to find a service to meet their needs even though the cause of their dissatisfaction may have been due to funding constraints rather than the actions of Carers ACT.

"I think Carers is a waste of space. You all get paid wages and then you hand out a little bit here and there. You are one giant knitting club. People have very different needs. I don't need respite but I do need a change of scenery."

Staff

The personal and sometimes, emotional nature of the work of Carers ACT accentuates the need for the organisation to have happy staff members who are able to do their job consistently and to a high standard. In this survey we received many positive comments about Carers ACT staff. Some responses mentioned particular staff by name highlighting the importance of the unique relationship that develops between the Carer and staff member.

"...continue to support and nurture the staff that you have. They do a great job..."

"There has been continuity in staff for me and I have found this helpful."

‘My representative was always sure to make herself available for me.’

Conversely we received some comments from Carers commenting on a less than satisfactory interaction with a staff member.

‘The person I spoke to sounded very busy and stressed and gave me a lecture on procedure.’

‘When booking respite breaks for my mother and self I don’t feel all that welcome – as if the person doing their job doesn’t really like their job – no alternatives are ever suggested and I feel I am in the way – all despite my being polite and pleasant and even apologetic.’

Information and internal and external referral pathways

We received many comments indicating that Carers were very satisfied with the quality and clarity of the information they received from Carers ACT.

‘Always well informed, if they are unable to help they accurately point us in the right direction.’

A smaller number of people commented that they felt they didn’t have all the information they needed when they first accessed the system. It was not clear whether these comments related to information provided by Carers ACT staff or other organisations they had contacted.

‘...a more clearly defined action plan for people who do not know how this system works.’

‘I didn’t know you provide respite. I’d like to know more.’

Some Carers expressed preferences for the way they receive information; for example information nights, information packs, newsletters or in a one to one conversation.

‘...Information nights. There are a lot of services available that I am not aware of and would like to know, being informed about excursions for both the carer and patient, group activities.’

‘I have rung for residential respite which has been good but would also be helpful to hear over the phone other ways the service can help out. Sometimes I don’t get time to read all of the literature available.’

"...allow Carers to search a database for the wealth of knowledge you may have....This would alleviate the feeling I have that I am not accessing services (yours or government) because of a lack of knowledge."

Accessibility

Last year's survey produced a significant number of responses about Carers ACT's relocation to Holt. This year there were still a number of comments about the difficulty of accessing the Holt site and an appreciation of there being a service available in Woden.

"Place a higher proportion of your services more centrally than Holt."

In addition to some Carers noting difficulties in accessing service at the Holt location, others noted that many of the services that they needed were inaccessible because they clashed with their work hours.

"More flexible to suit individual needs, I work fulltime so it is difficult to access some services."

Carers ACT had already moved to address this issue by opening on a Saturday morning for inquiries and counselling appointments, but have noted that only a small number of Carers had availed themselves of this opportunity in 2010-2011.

What Carers believe are our strengths

There are some consistent themes to responses about Carers ACT's strengths. They are:

Compassion

They listened! They always seem very friendly, caring and understanding, and we even manage to have a laugh or joke in sometimes bleak situations."

That Carers' needs are placed at the centre

"... support at the level I needed it. A holistic approach which is flexible and responsive to client needs, rather than dictated by government dictated policy."

Importance that Carers ACT places on and acknowledges the Carer as a person

"Celebration of Carers is good for my self esteem and morale. It breaks the isolation. I like the celebration of Carers is the newsletters and the walls of the centre"

"... a badge to wear..."

"You feel acknowledged and validated as a Carer."

Reliability

"I feel I have a reliable place I can count on as needed."

"...having this assurance was a huge relief to me and my family (including agency staff being punctual)."

Limitations of the results and recommendations for future methodology

Care must be taken when interpreting these survey results as there is always a margin of error involved in self-reporting surveys. Error is introduced at a number of different points in the survey process. For example the feedback we are receiving is only from nineteen percent (19%) of the total number of Carers who received a service from Carers ACT in the last twelve months.

Another place for error resides in the way the average client satisfaction figures are presented as percentages as a simple way of summarising our results for ourselves and our funding bodies.

The data we used to calculate the percentage is based on selections Carers make for each question of always, mostly, sometimes or never (or in the case of the young Carers program fully met, partly met and not met). This means that Carers can only

fine tune their answers in increments of 33%, yet we calculate our ratings to the nearest one percent.

To improve the accuracy of the report, particularly the average satisfaction figure for future reports Carers ACT could give Carers the chance to tell us how satisfied they are in a percentage value between 0 and 100, or we could increase the graduations to always, mostly, often, sometimes, rarely, never. Another option would be to pose the question directly 'are you satisfied?'

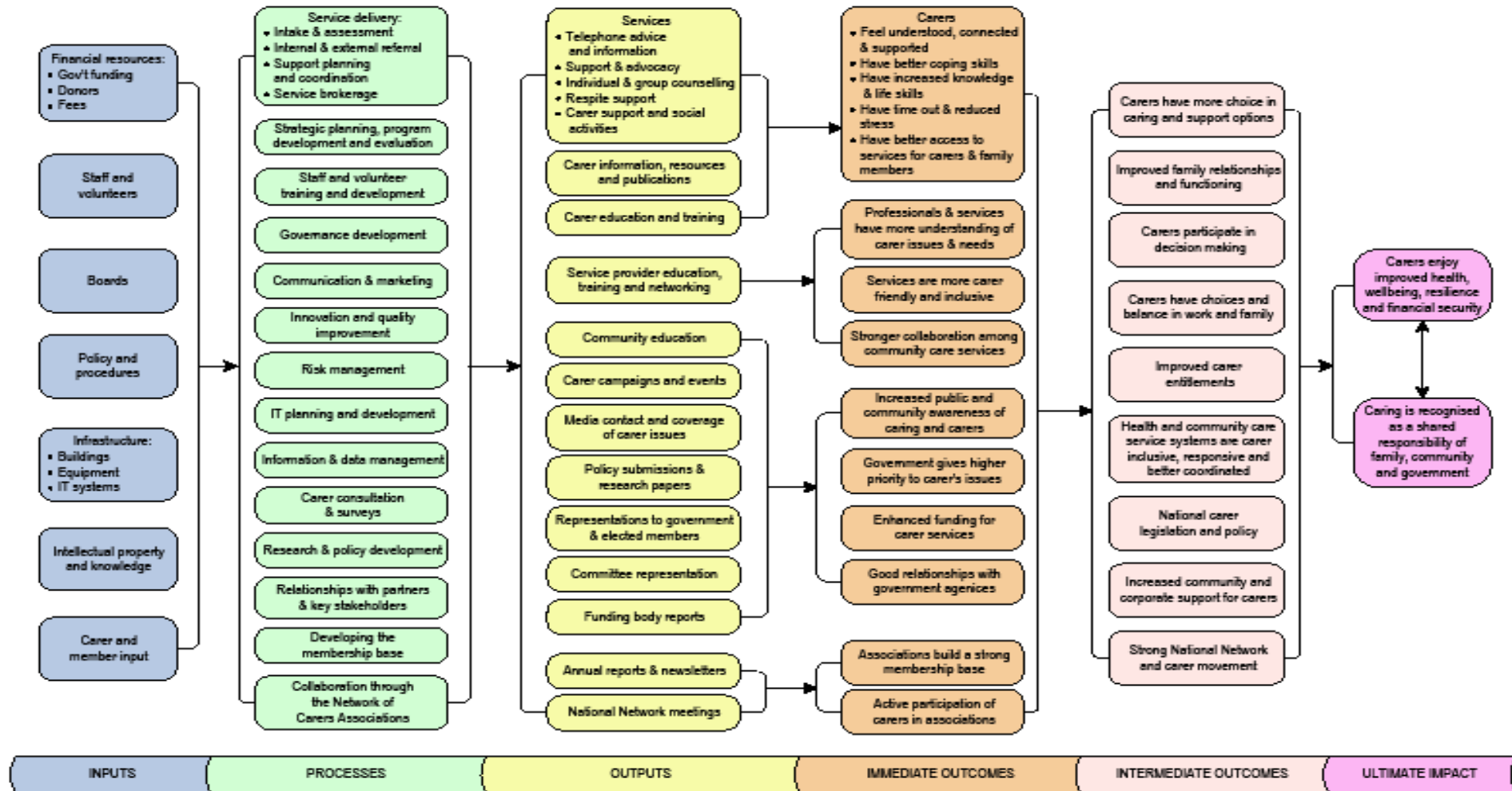
The downward trend of the survey response rate has potential to be a significant issue for the survey next year. If the survey response rate keeps dropping, eventually the results will hold no value as a representation of our services. Some alternatives we could consider to help in obtaining an understanding of client satisfaction might be:

- offering a randomly selected prize for Carers who return the survey
- conducting focus groups, o
- changing the look of the survey
- giving options of a phone or web response
- one on one interview possibilities
- follow up on service delivery versus satisfaction levels
- utilising events such as seasonal lunches, Carers gatherings etc.

List of Appendices

Appendix A	Program Logic Framework
Appendix B	Service Surveys
Appendix C	Cover Letter for Surveys

Network of Carers Associations Program Logic Map



Appendix B

Understood, Connected and Supported

Carers ACT Annual Service Evaluation 2011

What do we do well and how we can improve to better support you in your caring role?



Please tick the Carers ACT or ACT Respite and Carelink service that you usually access:

Information Counselling Respite Residential Respite Other Services

_____ (please name)

Please select the response that most closely represents your overall experience with Carers ACT and/or the ACT Respite and Carelink Centre:

Feeling Understood

When I contact Carers ACT, staff members listen and I **feel understood** and respected.

Always Mostly Sometimes Never

Getting Connected

When I contact Carers ACT I receive a **timely response** to my questions.

Always Mostly Sometimes Never

When I contact Carers ACT I am provided with **sufficient information** that is appropriate to my needs.

Always Mostly Sometimes Never

If Carers ACT is unable to provide the service I want, I am **offered alternatives** to assist me.

Always Mostly Sometimes Never

Receiving Support

The services provided by Carers ACT are **appropriate to my needs**.

Always Mostly Sometimes Never

I would recommend Carers ACT to **another family Carer**.

Always Mostly Sometimes Never

The services provided by Carers ACT help **reduce my level of stress**.

Always Mostly Sometimes Never

If Carers ACT organised respite services through **another agency**, I was satisfied with the quality of the services provided.

Always Mostly Sometimes Never

Please let us know about your cultural and linguistic background:

Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Non-English speaking English speaking

What were the best things about the services you received from Carers ACT?

Have you any suggestions about how we can improve our services to you?

_____ *Thank you for your time in completing this survey. Your comments are much appreciated.*

Understood, Connected and Supported

Carers ACT Annual Service Evaluation 2011

What do we do well and how we can improve to better support you in your caring role?



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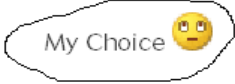
What were the best things about the services you received from Carers ACT?

Have you any suggestions about how we can improve our services to you?

Thank you for your time in completing this survey. Your comments are much appreciated.

Young Carers Program

Please circle one response for each question



How do you rate the Young Carers program?

Awful 😡 Not Bad 😞 Okay 😐 Pretty Good 😊 Awesome 😄

Has it helped you at school or at home?

No 😞 Yes 😊

If you circled yes, how has the program helped you at home or school?

Do the Young Carers workers listen when you talk to them?

No 😞 Yes 😊 My Mum or Dad mostly talks to them 😞

Do you come from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background?

No 😊 Yes 😊

Do you speak languages other than English at home?

No 😊 Yes 😊

Did the services you received meet your needs?

Not met 😡 Partly met 😞 Fully met 😊

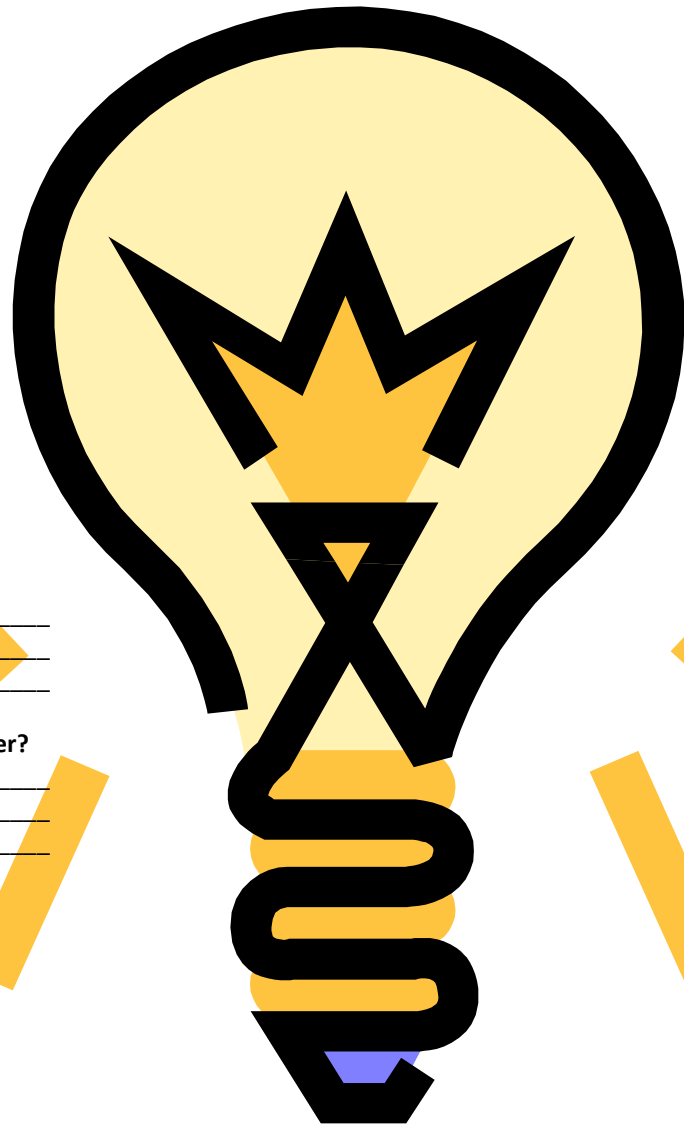
What do you like about the Young Carers program?

Is there anything you don't like about it or is there stuff we could do better?

Thanks for telling us what you think!

Appendix C

May 2011



Dear Carer

Carers ACT's core role is to provide meaningful support to family Carers. We are mindful that as a Carer you are very busy, but we also need to know whether our supports and services help you in your caring role. Your evaluation of our work and your suggestions about how we can do our job better will greatly assist us to improve our services. However, if you are unable to complete this anonymous survey, please do not be unduly concerned as we respect that this may be difficult in some circumstances.

Your name has been selected as our records show that you have accessed our services in the past 12 months. If your caring circumstances have since changed, please accept our apologies for any distress caused by receiving this letter and disregard it. If you have received more than one of our services you may be sent more than one survey so please just complete one survey.

It's very encouraging to receive positive feedback. It enables us to provide evidence to funding bodies so that we can continue to be funded for the services that work. In 2010 the majority of Carers said that they felt supported when contacting Carers ACT and that the services provided by Carers ACT helped to reduce their stress levels.

We also listen carefully when negative feedback is provided. It is negative feedback which lets us know where we need to improve. For example, in last year's survey, some Carers expressed frustration because they felt they were receiving inconsistent information when they spoke to different staff in the organisation. One way we have addressed this is by instigating more regular staff training to bring new staff up to speed faster. Easy access to services was also highlighted as an issue, and as a result we provide services out of our premises in Holt and also at the Smith Family building in Woden.

If you are able to spare about 10 minutes, the survey can be found on the other side of this letter. It comprises some multiple choice questions and room for comments on any issues that matter to you. A reply paid envelope has been enclosed to help you return your completed survey by **14th June 2011**.

The findings of the survey will be reported to our Australian and ACT Government funding bodies at the end of July. We will also make the report publically available on our website: www.carersact.asn.au in August.

On behalf of all the staff at Carers ACT, thank you for your time and your feedback.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dee McGrath", written over a light blue rectangular background.

Dee McGrath
CEO

May 2011

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Dee McGrath
CEO

May 2011

Dear Parent or Guardian of a Young Carer

Carers ACT is conducting a survey to see if our supports and services are helping to support Young Carers in their caring role. Your name has been selected as our records show that you have accessed the Young Carer Program in the past 12 months. However, if your caring circumstances have changed in the past year, please accept our apologies and disregard this letter if it is inappropriate to your needs.


The Young Carer survey is on the reverse side of this letter. It has been designed to be suitable for completion by children and young people, as they are the person in receipt of our services. **We would like your permission and support to assist the Young Carer to complete and return the survey.** Please note that participation in the survey is completely voluntary and confidential.

We do understand that in many circumstances a Young Carer may have received a service from us without direct contact with our staff, or that other circumstances may make it inappropriate for them to complete the survey on their own. If this is the case, and you would still like to participate, please complete the form in consideration of how our program has (or has not) helped them to be supported in their caring role, and tick the box marked *"Parent/Guardian Completed"* at the top right corner of the survey.

The findings of the survey will be reported to our Australian and ACT Government funding bodies at the end of July, and we will also make the report publically available on our website at www.carersact.asn.au in August.

On behalf of all the staff at Carers ACT, we thank you for your time and your feedback.

Yours sincerely

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Dee McGrath
CEO