



Carers Victoria
supporting family carers

Just for carers

Interactive workshops
and
Education Programs
designed for carers

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Introduction

Our programs aim to improve the health and wellbeing for carers by providing information, knowledge and skills that will assist carers to include self care as part of their caring.

We believe that creating an effective balance between caring and one's own needs will enhance both the carer's quality of life and the wellbeing of the person for whom they care.

Our workshops and programs are offered free of charge to carers and carer support groups across Victoria.

The following programs have been divided into **single sessions** and **special programs**.

They can also be tailored to cater for the diverse needs of carers and caring situations.

About us – What Carers Victoria offers

In Carer's Words

"It was really interesting to know what you do for Young Carers."

"I'll be using the free library service that will post books out to me."

"I filled in the membership form on the spot."

Session Content

This session provides an overview of what programs and services are offered by Carers Victoria as the statewide peak body for carers. Find out more about what we do, our programs and services.

Duration: 1 hour

Impact of caring

In Carer's Words

"This is the first time someone has asked about me."

"I wish I had known about the 5 minute relaxers when I started caring."

"It was good to have my sister understand the impact caring is having on me."

Session Content

Caring has emotional and physical impacts that often go unrecognised by family, friends and others. We will address the differing impacts associated with caring and explore what stops us from looking after ourselves on a daily basis.

Duration: 2 hours



Supporting your ageing parents – where to start?

In Carer's Words

"I knew mum needed help, I now know where to begin - this gave me some ideas."

"I'm off to see if I can organise some services and help for dad."

"EACH, PAGS, ACAT, CAPC's HACC – now I understand what they mean and what they do."

Session Content

When you're taking on the care of ageing parents, do you know what services are available and how to get assistance?

We will discuss where to start, highlight what's out there and how to navigate the service system.

Duration: 2 hours

Suitable for: People with ageing parents

Caring for yourself

In Carer's Words

"I realise how important it is to make time for myself."

"Now I've got some ideas about how to look after myself."

"Now I realise my needs are equally as important."

Session Content

Do you take better care of the person you are caring for than yourself?

If the answer is yes, you are invited to this workshop where we will explore why your health and wellbeing are important. We will also discuss and share strategies to help you care for yourself.

Duration: 2 hours

Humour and caring

In Carer's Words

"I felt so much better after being with this group today."

"I really liked hearing other people's humorous stories."

"It was nice to share laughter rather than tears."

Session Content

"A day without laughter is a day wasted"
Charlie Chaplin

Humour is an important part of life. It's easy to forget the lighter side of life when you are caring for someone. We will share how humour can be an effective tool in assisting you in your caring role and how it can help you maintain health and well being

Duration: 2 hours

It's OK to be assertive

In Carer's Words

"I have some new strategies that I intend to use."

"This has given me the confidence to say 'no'."

"This was informative but now I want to do the 4 week course."

Sessions Content

Do you tend to say 'yes' to things just because you have difficulty saying 'no'?

We will share strategies and ways to increase your assertive skills to enable you to say 'no' without feeling guilty. We will also look at some ideas to assist you in your everyday interactions which may help avoid conflict situations.

Duration: 2 hours

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Getting your message across

In Carer's Words

"I can't wait to try some of these strategies with my doctor."

"The tips on active listening were really helpful – perhaps I wasn't listening as well as I thought I was."

"I will be more aware of body language in the future."

Session Content

We tend to use habitual communication styles and forget the other ways to get our message across. We will focus on re-examining basic communication principles and identify practical tips and strategies to help make communication with a variety of people be more effective.

Duration: 2 hours

Its not what you say but how you say it.

In Carer's Words

"Informative and fun."

"I'll think more about the way I say things now."

"I didn't realise the impact I sometimes have on others."

Session Content

Personality, moods, habits and expectations affect how well you communicate with others. Is the message you send the same as the one your listener receives? Knowing yourself and your communication style will help you to communicate more effectively with others.

Duration: 2 hours

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Having your say

In Carer's Words

"I'm sick of repeating myself... now I'll have some better skills to help me be clearer."

"The list of questions was a great idea."

"Now I know how to get my message across when there's a problem."

Session Content

Carers deal with a variety of health professionals, service providers and others. You may need some extra techniques to enable you to state your own needs in order to have them met appropriately. We discuss options to help influence others to provide the service required on behalf of the person you care for and or self.

Duration: 2 hours



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Reacting differently – responding to emotive and manipulative behaviours

In Carer's Words

"It gave me something to think about."

"I can't change my situation but I can change how I react to it."

"It's good to know that bad behaviours are just bad behaviours. They're not always about the illness."

Session Content

Trying to meet unrealistic expectations and demands may leave you feeling overwhelmed. This may affect your health and wellbeing.

We will explore effective strategies to help you respond differently and gain a better sense of control over how situations affect you.

Duration: Can be delivered as 1x 2 hours condensed session or a 4 hour day program

Respite Without Tears

In Carer's Words

"I don't feel so guilty about taking a break now."

"I never realised there were so many forms of respite."

"Now that I know about activity groups, I'll find one that he can enjoy."

Session Content

Respite can take a variety of forms. Discussing the emotional and practical considerations when deciding to use respite can help you to feel better about taking a break.

We will look at the benefits of respite for both you and the person you care for.

Duration: 2 hours

Surviving Carer Stress – Understanding how stress affects you

In Carer's Words

"I didn't realise my headaches were caused by my stress."

"This made me stop and think about all those things that are causing me stress."

"I like the idea of the stress ladder."

Session Content

Stress is a part of everyday life. The stress associated with caring may have a cumulative effect which impacts on you physically and emotionally. We will explore stress and look at how to recognise possible indicators, the affect it can have on you and strategies to help reduce the impact on you.

Duration: 2 hours

Surviving Carer Stress – Lasting the distance

In Carer's Words

"Sharing our experiences was very helpful to me."

"I picked up a couple of techniques to try that I hadn't thought of before."

"I really enjoyed the pillow thumping!"

Session Content

Building resilience and hardiness enables you to last the distance when caring. We will explore and demonstrate different strategies and relaxation techniques to assist in strengthening your ability to care in the long term.

Duration: 2 hours

Continuing Bonds

In Carer's Words

"It was good to talk about the losses in my relationship."

"It was challenging but it gave me a new perspective on my situation."

"Even though my partner doesn't recognise me anymore, our relationship is still important. It was good to talk about it."

Session Content

Changes to relationships naturally occur over time but can be compounded when the other person is no longer able to actively participate in the relationship due to personality change, emotional withdrawal, cognitive decline or death.

This session explains how the continuing bonds theory may help to create an opportunity to identify both the gaps and the strengths.

We will share effective self-care strategies to sustain you throughout your caring role and beyond.

Duration: 2 hours

Caring till the end – unmasking palliative care

In Carer's Words

"Really helped me to face my fears."

"This gave me some insights and reduced my anxiety."

"It helped me to realise there are ways to support me and me partner."

Session Content

A sensitive look at what to expect as death approaches.

This session aims to help you make informed decisions about palliative care by including your own health and wellbeing as part of the overall process.

Duration: 2 hours

Change, loss and moving forward

In Carer's Words

"Now I understand what is happening."

"It gave me a lot to think about and helped me to see where I'm headed."

"It was a relief to know others feel like I do. I'm normal after all."

Session Content

Changes wanted and or unwanted are an inevitable part of caring.

This session provides a safe environment to talk about these changes and their impacts on us and have a conversation about what we can do to move forward.

Duration: 2 hours



SPECIAL PROGRAMS



Assertiveness Program

In Carer's Words

"Very useful activities – loved the interactive style."

"I've learned that being assertive doesn't mean being aggressive."

"Practicing the techniques felt strange at first but also empowering."

Session Content

This program is a four part program that explores – the culture of caring, self esteem, assertive behaviours and assertiveness techniques.

Duration: 4 x 2 hour sessions. The first 3 sessions are held weekly with a 4th session conducted a month later.

Suitable for: Carers who want to build their confidence and be able to state their needs assertively.

Carers in Transition

The following 3 programs have been designed to run in partnership with Carers Victoria's Carer Education and Counselling team and interested service providers prepared to auspice the program.

Carers in Transition – Planning for residential Care

Carers In Transition – Post Placement in an Aged Care Facility

Carers in Transition – Bereaved Carers

Carers interested in the following programs need to register their interest with their service provider.

Participants are strongly encouraged to attend all sessions in each program

For more information please contact carereducation@carersvic.org.au.



PROGRAM 1

Carers in Transition – Planning for Residential Care

In Carer's Words

"I have stopped feeling so guilty."

"The mix of information and support was fantastic."

"I actually have a clearer understanding of my limitations and a more realistic expectation of myself and the situation."

Session Content

Moving someone into residential care may be one of the most difficult decisions you may have to make.

We will offer an opportunity to explore the decision making process, provide practical information and support and visit an aged care facility

Duration: 4 weekly sessions of 5 hours plus one follow up session of 3 hours 4 – 6 weeks later.

Suitable for: The program is appropriate for anyone reluctantly considering residential respite or placement in an aged care facility.

PROGRAM 2

Carers in Transition – Post Placement in an Aged Care Facility

In Carer's Words

"Now I feel I have some valuable ways to handle feelings of guilt and this has been very helpful to my husband also. Thank you so much."

"Reassured, supported, valued."

Session Content

When the person you've been caring for moves into an aged care facility your caring role changes. We acknowledge these changes and explore your new caring role in supporting the person you care for in the aged care facility. We look at the changes this brings to your life and the possibilities for you – where to now?

Duration: 2 full days. Held over 2 consecutive weeks

Suitable for: For any carer who has recently placed someone they care for in an aged care facility.



PROGRAM 3

Carers in Transition – Bereaved Carers

In Carer's Words

"This course helped me to think differently."

"I realised how important it is to talk to someone who knows."

"So helpful being with other people in the same situation."

Session content

Adjusting to your new circumstances and life following the death of the person you have cared for may be challenging. We will discuss some of the changes and the losses and explore possibilities for new directions.

Duration: 2 full days. Held over 2 consecutive weeks

Suitable for: For anyone who has recently been bereaved.



Using Computers and Internet – An introduction for Carers

In Carer's Words

"It (the course) helped us conquer cyberspace."

"It will help us improve the quality of our lives – now we can keep in touch with family and friends."

"The sessions were both fun and informative."

Session Content

Would you like to know how to use a computer? What about the Internet and email? Are you a bit scared of this technology? Come to this 'hands-on' course.

We start at the very beginning and by the end you will have the knowledge and skills to create basic documents, email your friends, understand the jargon and 'surf' the Internet.

Everything you learn is covered in easy-to-read manuals with lots of diagrams for you to use at home.

Duration: 10 x 2 hour sessions weekly held over a period of 3 - 4 months.

Introduction to facilitating a carer support group

In Carer's Words

"Enjoyable, fun, informative – full of interesting ideas."

"I really enjoyed the small group work with other facilitators."

"I really enjoyed looking at the stages groups go through and group dynamics."

Session Content

Are you a new facilitator or planning to set up/run a carer support group? Are you looking for ideas to facilitate a new group or invigorate an existing group?

We offer a comprehensive look at the skills required to run a successful carer support group including developing your group's terms of reference, planning your groups program and getting funding for activities

Duration: Full Day (10.00 – 3.00 pm)

Suitable for: Facilitators of Carers Support Groups.

Resolving group conflict

In Carer's Words

"Very useful activities."

"Thank you for giving me some tools to improve my group."

Session Content

Conflict may occur in groups from time to time. This session will enhance your skills in helping you better understand the conflict and give you strategies and resources to help resolve it effectively.

Duration: 2 hours

Suitable for: Facilitators of Carers Support Groups

MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

The friendship and support of a mentor can make a huge difference in the life of a young person. Carers Victoria's Young Carers Mentoring Project facilitates and supports mentoring relationships between volunteer mentors and young carers in need of support.

These workshops provide mentors with an understanding of their role as a mentor and introduce them to some of the skills required to mentor a young person.

Mentor training is only open to volunteers who have passed all stages of the mentoring project's recruitment process. This recruitment process includes interviews, police and working with children checks, referee checks and psychological testing. Several rounds of mentor recruitment will be run each year as vacancies arise.

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer mentor contact the Young Carers Mentoring Project worker on 9396 9582.



Mentor Training Program

In Carer's Words

"Very useful activities – loved the interactive style."

"I can't wait to start mentoring a young carer."

"After training I feel more confident responding to any situation."

Session Content

The mentor training program introduces mentors to their roles and responsibilities as mentors and prepares them to begin mentoring a young carer. Sessions include communication skills, understanding our values and cultural sensitivity. Also covered are the mentor programs policies and procedures.

Duration: Once accepted as mentors, volunteers are required to complete 2 x 5 hour mentor training workshops before being matched with a young carer.

Other workshops

Other workshops available on request are:

- Surviving The Maze
- Legal Information
- Financial Information
- Changing Relationships
 - Maintaining Intimacy
 - Dumping The Junk

Ph: 93969500 or

Freecall 1800 242 636

Email: carereducation@carersvictoria.org.au

Website: www.carersvictoria.org.au





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