



What is a carer?

Carers Australia state that ***'Carers are people who provide unpaid care and support to family members and friends who have a disability, mental illness, chronic condition, terminal illness, an alcohol or other drug issue or who are frail aged.'***¹

Carers play a vital role in helping people to recover and provide support on a day to day basis. In fact, without carers, many people could struggle to deal with daily tasks. In Australia there are more than 2.7 million unpaid carers.²

Carers come in many shapes and forms; they can be traditional like parents, or grandparents, husbands, wives or partners. In some cases they can be: children, grandchildren and/or even neighbours.

Caring for someone

For many carers', the 'role' of caring can sometimes be stressful and sometimes demanding, especially if you have other responsibilities such as; children, family or work.

¹ Carers Australia website (2019) <http://www.carersaustralia.com.au/about-carers/>

² Australian Bureau of Statistics (2015) Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.

What does being a Carer mean?

Carers help with a variety of tasks such as: dressing, showering or providing transport. Carers also provide emotional support. Being a carer means that you are willing to give of your time to assist someone else.

What if I am new to being a 'Carer'?

In the case of your loved one having an accident or injury; carers can often be thrown into the Carers role with little or no time to prepare. Similarly, you may be notified that your partner, spouse or parent is about to undergo life-changing surgery, such as an amputation and find yourself in a similar position. If you are feeling overwhelmed and unsure of where to begin and/or how you can best assist and support your loved one speak to the people around you.



Where can I find help?

As a Carer there are a number of ways that you can find support:

If your loved one is in hospital or rehabilitation, request a meeting with the social worker. The social worker will help you to navigate pathways moving forward.

You may wish to speak to a Peer Support Volunteer who has adapted to limb loss and understands the pathways forward. You may also wish to speak to the partner of a Peer Support Volunteer as they are able to share their own journey with you. Your local doctor can be a great resource when it comes to support. They will know of options to assist you and what supports are available to you in your local community.

Contact Carers Australia to find support in your state or territory on **02 6122 9900** or visit www.carersaustralia.com.au. They have a range of programs, services and supports available for you.

Carer Gateway is a national service offering emotional, practical and financial support for carers. Call **1800 422 737**.

Seven Tips for Carers

1. Do something for yourself that makes you happy.
2. Meet up with other carers in a social setting; other carers can be a great source of support.
3. Join a local carers support group.
4. See if there are local supports available to enable you to have a break. This may mean that someone else washes the floor or vacuums for you.
5. Allow yourself to have a bad day, it's okay.
6. Take some time-out every now and then.
7. Ask for and seek support when you need it.