



## MHCA 2022 Election Platform

In the lead up to the Federal Election, MHCA is calling on all parties and independents to commit to funding a new national mental health carer peak body



**MentalHealthCarers**  
*Australia*

# The case for a mental health carer peak body

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## **A key productivity commission recommendation.**

While there are many areas of common interest, families and consumers of mental health services have different needs. The Productivity Commission recommended establishing new and dedicated peak bodies for mental health consumers and families. Families and carers cannot wait – all parties must commit now to implementing this recommendation.

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## **A ready to go model for peak bodies**

There is an extensive, existing consumer co-designed model that can easily be used now to establish the nationally funded and independent consumer and carer peaks. MHCA and the National Mental Health Consumer Alliance worked throughout 2021 to secure acceptance and trust across the consumer and carer movements for this existing inclusive model – it is ready to go now!

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## **A voice to enable better solutions for government and carers**

Families and carers of people experiencing mental health challenges need systemic representation now – there are too many reforms underway that are not including the voices of families and carers. Including their voice will enable better solutions for government and carers.

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## **Get advice federally that connects with existing state peaks**

Many states and territories have dedicated mental health carer peak bodies. It is long overdue to establish a national peak body to provide advice to the federal government on how to improve outcomes for families and carers – give us your commitment now to fund this critical reform.



## What do we know about unpaid mental health carers in Australia?

There are over 240,000 Australians who provide unpaid care to a friend or family member who is experiencing mental illness. Every Australian has a role to play in supporting the mental well-being of their families, friends and communities.

Over 54,000 of these carers are 'primary mental health carers' who provide the most unpaid assistance to a person they care for.

The value of the unpaid work done by mental health carers is worth \$14.3 billion to the economy annually.

Mental health carers face significant barriers to retaining paid work, with between 45-56% of working age primary mental health carers having reduced their hours or left employment due to their caring role.

Young mental health carers have reduced educational and employment opportunities, with only 71.4% of carers aged between 15-24 studying or in paid work, compared to 91.3% of their non-carer counterparts.



## About us

Mental Health Carers Australia (MHCA) is the only national advocacy group solely concerned with the well-being and promotion of mental health carers. It is a coalition of seven state and territory organisations and one national organisation, concerned with the needs of family and friends who support someone living with mental illness. Our members are: HelpingMinds (Western Australia), Mental Health Families and Friends Tasmania, Tandem (Victoria), Arafmi (New South Wales), Arafmi (Queensland), Mental Illness Fellowship Northern Territory and Mind Australia.

Mental Health Carers Australia advocates for systemic change to ensure the unpaid support that families and carers provide is recognised and that governments listens and responds to their needs.

