



## Queensland Carers Advisory Council Communique – December 2024

The Queensland Carers Advisory Council (the Council) met on 5 December 2024.

Fritha Radyk (Chief Executive Officer, Carers Queensland) chaired the meeting. Carer representatives Melissa Williams, Dr Nancy Spencer and Natalie Bird attended the meeting. Grandparent carer representative, Slawka Bell, also attended. Organisational representatives Robynne Cooper (Anglicare, Central Queensland) and Louise Faulkner (Wellways Carer Gateway) attended with Irene Clelland (Arafmi) an apology. The Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, Queensland Health and Office of the Public Guardian were represented. Department of Education was not represented at this meeting.

The Council were updated on Queensland Government key priorities for disability reform, including Queensland Disability Royal Commission and National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Review responses and Queensland Co-design and Stakeholder Engagement Strategy. Foundational supports, Australia's Disability Strategy and Commonwealth NDIS legislation reform were also discussed. A brief update on development of the National Carer Strategy was also provided.

Further discussion of this significant reform agenda focussed on identifying opportunities for the Council contribute to reforms as they relate to unpaid carers, including opportunities to advocate to both State and Commonwealth levels of government. This contribution forms a significant focus of work for the Council over its 2024-26 term.

Members were updated on projects that progress actions outlined in the Queensland Carers Action Plan 2024-26. These projects will be delivered with \$150,000 available in 2025-26.

The Council received updates on progress implementing actions following the Carer Business Discount Card Research Project and expansion of the 'Care is Everywhere' campaign website (hosted by Carers Queensland). The need for improvements to and expansion of the Carer Business Discount Card was noted and support for Carers Queensland to continue hosting the 'Care is Everywhere' website to maintain campaign momentum was noted.

The Honourable Amanda Camm, Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Child Safety and Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence joined the meeting.

The Minister recognised the Council's work and role as critical, noting the need to recognise the impact of disability reforms on carers. The Minister committed to call for a briefing on the need to review the *Carers (Recognition) Act (Qld) 2008*. The Minister invited Council to share their views on carer priorities, with Council advising:

- Delivery of actions in the Queensland Carers Action Plan 2024-26 including projects to map carer services, develop a young carers' engagement mechanism and examine carer-directed violence;
- Carers supports in Queensland receive less funding relative to other states;
- Carer wellbeing and supports, particularly respite;
- Financial stress experienced by carers; and
- Challenges navigating government service systems experienced by carers.

The Minister thanked the Council for their work and acknowledged their carer roles.