

## Carer Gateway FAQs

Carer Gateway is an Australian Government initiative providing a mix of free in-person, phone, and online supports, services and advice, for family carers in Australia. These services have been specifically designed and tested by carers to help reduce stress and build resilience in the caring role.

In addition to a number of resources available through the national Carer Gateway website, dedicated in-person supports and services are being delivered throughout the states and territories through a network of Carer Gateway Service Providers. For Western Australia, Carers WA is leading the delivery of these in-person services, in partnership with our delivery partner, HelpingMinds.

### **Resources available through the national Carer Gateway website include:**

- Online skills courses
- Online peer support forum
- Online self-guided coaching
- A national phone counselling service

### **Services available to WA carers through Carers WA and delivery partners:**

- **Carer support planning** - capturing a holistic picture of a carer's individual circumstances and developing a tailored and personalised action plan of supports and services to alleviate areas of strain.
- **In-person peer support** - a free, facilitated, peer support program offering carers an opportunity to connect.
- **In-person and phone counselling** - available through Carers WA and HelpingMinds' team of qualified and accredited counsellors.
- **Carer Directed Support** - financial assistance providing access to practical supports to assist the carer in the caring role and ability to access or maintain employment or education.
- **Emergency Respite Care** - access to emergency respite is available for carers who are experiencing an urgent, unplanned and imminent event that temporarily restricts their ability to continue caring when no other services are available.

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### **Q: I am new to Carer Gateway or have a question regarding the services available, where do I start?**

A: Here are a few simple steps to follow to learn more about Carer Gateway:

1. Visit [www.carergateway.gov.au](http://www.carergateway.gov.au) to learn more about the online and in-person services and supports that may be available to you.
2. Read this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document for answers to the most common questions we receive from carers.
3. Call the national Carer Gateway phone line 1800 422 737 and press 1 to speak to your local Carer Gateway Service Provider (which is Carers WA for all Western Australian carers). You will be transferred through to Carers WA's Carer Gateway team.
4. Speak with our Carer Gateway team about your requirements or to arrange a Needs Assessment with our Carer Support Planners.

### **Q: Am I eligible to receive Carer Gateway services?**

A: Carer Gateway services are available to all carers who provide unpaid personal care

and support to another individual due to disability, a long-term medical condition (including terminal or chronic illness), mental health challenge, alcohol or other drug issue or frail age.

**Additionally, eligibility applies to carers who are:**

- Overseas visitors, permanent residents and others who are not Australian citizens – there are no citizenship, residency or specific visa requirements.
- Receiving free board/lodging in return for providing care (but are otherwise not paid or employed to care for a person), providing they meet the other eligibility requirements.
- Recipients of other government supports.
- In a situation where their caring role has ended in the last 6 months (this is an approximate timeframe and dependent on the individual circumstances).

### **Q: Who answers the Carer Gateway line?**

A: There is a dedicated Carer Gateway phone number (1800 422 737) available Monday – Friday, 8.00am – 5.00pm. If carers contact the Carer Gateway after operating hours, their phone call will be answered by an Australian based call centre. The after-hours service is

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available to facilitate requests for emergency and planned respite if required. Callers can also leave their name and details for follow-up. Carers WA will then contact the caller on the next business day.

### **Q: Will I have to repeat my details each time I contact the Carer Gateway number?**

A: Once you are registered, (registration will be taken the first time you contact Carer Gateway), your details will be kept on our secure information system that each Carer Support Planner will be using.

### **Q: Do I need to register for Carer Gateway if I am already registered with Carers WA?**

A: Carers who have completed a registration with Carers WA do not need to undergo a new registration with the Carer Support Planning team, however, carers will need to undertake the Carers Star™ assessment and planning process to access services and may also be asked for more information so staff can ensure their profile is up to date.

### **Q: I do not have time to spend more than thirty minutes on the phone. How will I give my information without a long conversation?**

A: We will work with what is convenient for you and have multiple short conversations with you when you are available. We will collate the details from each call and have it securely stored in our information database so you do not need to repeat yourself each time.

### **Q: Does the Carer Gateway provide for planned respite?**

A: Yes, Carer Gateway planning services take into account provision for planned respite through Carer Directed Packages. Respite for people with care needs can be organised through My Aged Care if the person is aged 65 or over (or aged 50 or over for Aboriginal people) or through NDIS if the person is eligible for an NDIS package.

### **Q: Are there specific companies used by Carer Gateway for respite?**

A: We recommend only well-established and local care providers depending on the circumstances.

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### **Q: Will you be finding the respite provider for carers and providing the details?**

A: Respite service provider information and other details will be provided based on the outcome of the carer support planning process. Carer Support Planners will work with carers to find a provider that will suit their individual needs.

### **Q: When are carers able to receive a Carer Directed Package?**

A: When the Carers Star™ planning process has been completed a carer directed package may be allocated if it is identified as a necessary support. A Carer Directed Package is not a guaranteed inclusion in a carer's action plan and will only be provided if it is identified as a necessary support.

### **Q: What if you are receiving a package from another program or service?**

A: Eligible carers have access to Carer Gateway services regardless of other available funding and supports. Our team of Carer Support Planners will work with you to understand your circumstances and situation, taking into account the supports and services you currently have in place and develop your individualised plan from there.

### **Q: If I already have some respite, but it is not enough, can I receive a Carer Directed Package?**

A: Your support planner will work with you to identify and allocate the supports you need according to your current situation.

### **Q: How much funding will I receive in my Carer Directed Package?**

A: If it is identified that a Carer Directed Package is a suitable support, the amount of funding provided will be determined through the carer support planning process and will differ person to person based on the results of the planning session.

### **Q: Are there limits on how often you can access a package?**

A: Yes, once per year based on the carer's Action Plan.

### **Q: If I register with Carer Gateway will I receive Centrelink carer payments?**

A: No, registering with Carer Gateway does not mean you will automatically receive financial help through Centrelink. A carer must register with Centrelink separately. Carer Gateway support planners do not have access to a carer's Centrelink record and

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cannot provide advice about an individual's payments. Information on financial assistance is available from the Carer Gateway website.

**If you have a question that has not been answered please let us know. Email [info@carerswa.asn.au](mailto:info@carerswa.asn.au) or call 1800 422 737.**

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