

# Carer Service Charter





# Carer Service Charter

We acknowledge the traditional owners of the lands and waters upon which we work, live, and sustain ourselves. This land was never ceded, and we acknowledge that the Tasmanian Aboriginal people are its continuing custodians. We pay our respects to Elders past and present.

We acknowledge and support people of all genders, sexualities, cultural beliefs, and abilities and understand that carers in Tasmania, whilst sharing the common theme of caring for a family member or friend, are diverse individuals with varying beliefs, experiences, and identities. We value and respect the diversity of carers, their lived and living experiences, and recognise that carers are the experts in their own lives.

A carer is a person who provides unpaid care and support to a family member, or friend, with disability, mental ill health, a chronic or life-limiting condition, alcohol or other drug dependence, or who are frail or aged.

A carer may also be a kinship carer of a child under the age of 18. Carers are predominantly family members, but may also be friends, neighbours, or colleagues. Informal carers are not to be confused with paid support workers who are often called 'carers', with the difference being that support workers are fully employed and remunerated with all the benefits of employment. On the contrary, informal carers perform their caring duties without remuneration, other than minimal carer payments and allowances from the Australian Government.





# Carer Service Charter

Carers Tasmania and Care2Serve's purposes are:

- **Carers Tasmania**- build and sustain the capacity of carers to care for family or friends and to ensure that caring is a shared responsibility of family, community and governments through advocacy, policy and research
- **Carer2Serve**- Provide and connect carers with first choice services that build and sustain their capacity to care for family or friends within a broader system of support

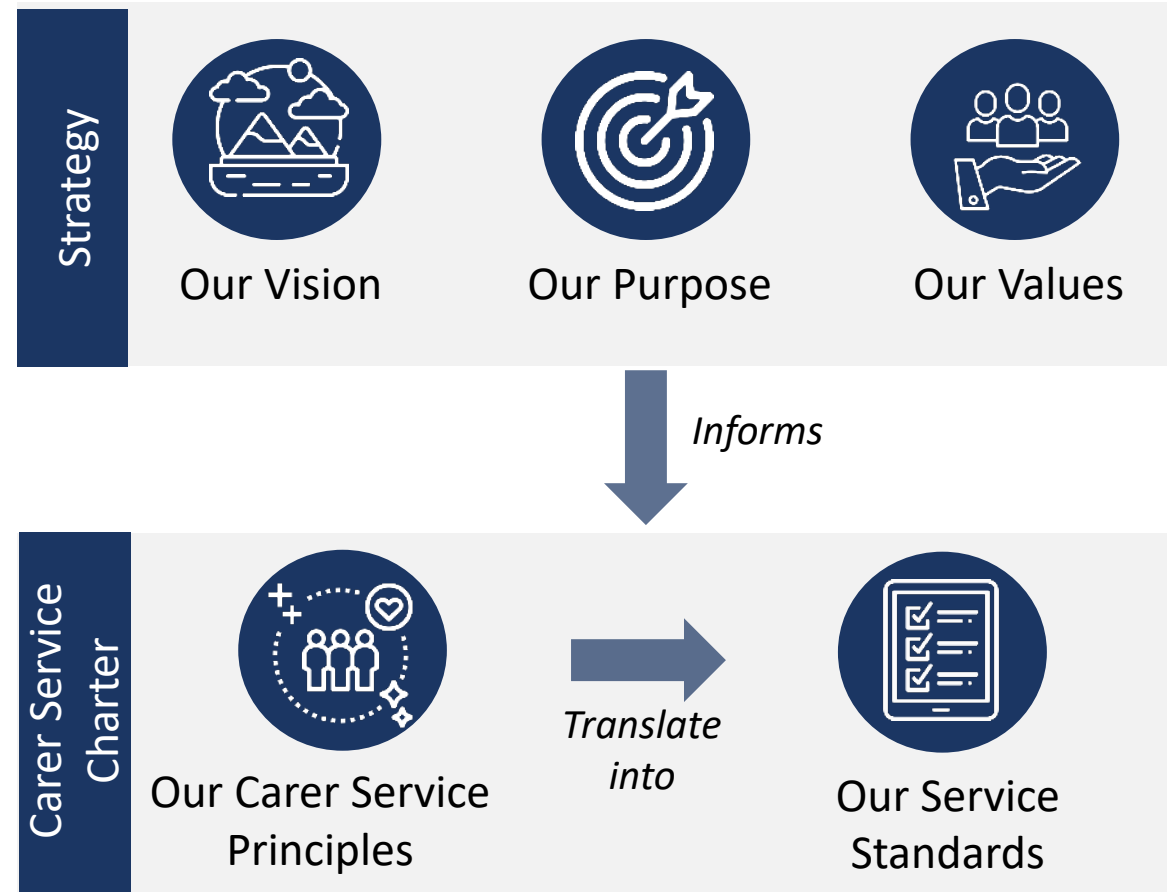
Its not enough just to say we want to deliver the best quality service and support...we need to make that a reality. That means, we need to define what we consider to be high quality service, why we should deliver it and what it looks like when carers experience it.

We also need to do this in the context of the organisation's values- these underpin the way in which we go about achieving our purpose.

This Carer Service Charter sets that out.

It is composed of:

- A set of customer principles
- A set of standards, which reflect how carers will experience those principles when interacting with our services and supports.





# Carer principles

These principles have been written based on knowledge about:

- The challenges carers face and needs they have
- The drivers of trust and what will detract from meeting those needs
- Standard customer experience principles, but specifically how they relate to carers

Each principle is accompanied by a description and a rationale. It's important to know why these principles should be included and how they specifically relate to carer needs.

For each principle a number of statements have also been written about *how carers should expect these to be demonstrated*. While there's lots of ways for these principles be translated into action, it's about picking the ones which matter and provide you a good starting point on which to build.





# Carer service principles

## Principle

## Rationale

## What you can expect



### Carers first

We listen to what carers need & deliver results that matter most to them, as you are the expert in your life.

Carers often put their own needs last on their to-do list. When you're caring for someone, often a lot of attention is focussed on the person you care for. Carers often feel unheard and even invisible.

- We will listen to and seek to understand your needs.
- We may ask about the person you care for however, this is for us to get a good understanding of how we can help you.
- Our main goal is to help and support you.



### Safe and inclusive

We provide a safe space for carers, where they feel included, respected and recognised as experts in their own lives.

We acknowledge, value and respect people of all cultures, sexualities, beliefs, abilities, genders, and ages, and support their rights of access, equity and participation. We understand that carers in Tasmania, whilst sharing the common theme of caring for a family member or friend, have diverse lived and living experiences, and we fundamentally believe that carers are the experts in their own lives.

- We will ensure our policies, procedures and processes put carers at the centre and create a safe, inclusive culture where all carers can seek and receive quality support tailored to them
- We will work with our partners to ensure they have the highest quality standards and their services are inclusive and safe
- We will continuously review our culture, systems, process and supports to align to the needs of carers



# Carer service principles

## Principle

## Rationale

## What you can expect



### Honest and transparent

We act with integrity in everything we do

Being trustworthy and transparent is key if we are to achieve our purpose. Without it, organisations lose the trust of their customers and they don't come back. Being honest and transparent with carers and partners is critical. We will offer a safe, inclusive environment in which we build trust.

- If we have made a mistake, we will tell you
- We will keep you informed of progress
- We will answer your questions
- We'll be clear and transparent about what we can and cannot assist with



### We guide you

We know carers don't always know the right questions, but we can be the map.

So many carers tell us that navigating everything and knowing where to go and what for can be overwhelming. It's like carers need a map of where to go, what for, who to speak to....and even then it's not always right or constantly changing.

So we aim to support carers in this journey.

- We have deep expertise into our community, the different support systems (e.g. aged care, disability, etc) and how they work.
- So when you are speaking with us, we'll listen to you and suggest services and supports which may benefit you and possibly the person you are caring for.
- We will always remember you are the expert in your life.



### We know you

We get to know you so you don't have to tell us your story over again.

Carers spend a lot of time repeating their story, their information, the information about the person(s) they care for....over and over. It's something we hear often and has been well documented in research about carers.

- We strive to get to know you
- In some cases, we'll get details from organisations you've already spoken with to prevent you having to repeat information again (with your consent)
- Once we understand your story, we won't ask you to repeat it.
- We'll take the time to review your circumstances before we ask any more questions.



# Carer service principles

## Principle

## Rationale

## What you can expect



### We do what we say

When we make a commitment, we stand by it

Ensuring we do what we commit to is essential to being able to effectively support carers with whatever they need.

- We will be clear about what the next steps will be and a timeframe you should expect those to occur in
- In some instances, we can't complete an activity within the timeframe we had advised. This may be due to challenges organising available support or supports which are suitable. In these cases, we will communicate with you to let you know our progress.



### We make it easy

We strive to make it easy for carers to get access to the information and support they're seeking

Making services and information easy to access and use is a key factor in whether people will use them. We are seeking to support as many carers as possible, and also trying to reach carers earlier in their caring journey. If carers face too many hurdles or the effort to get support is too high, they won't get the support they need. And this won't enable us to fulfil our mission.

- We will explore new ways for carers to access our services information and support, more easily.
- We will work to streamline our processes to make it easier for you when dealing with us.
- In some cases, we may not be able to change aspects of our service without government oversight and approval. We are committed to working with the Department of Social Services to bring you the best possible experience and make your experience with us easy.



# How you will experience these principles and standards

## When interacting with us

- During our business hours,
  - we'll aim to keep you waiting on hold for no more than 3 minutes.
  - when emailing us, we'll respond to your enquiry within 24 hours.
- If we can't resolve your call at the time, we'll offer you the option to book a time for us to call you back.
- If we can't get hold of you when calling, after 3 attempts, we'll send you an email or letter to let you know we've tried to get in touch and invite you to reach out when you're ready.
- If you need to contact us in an emergency, you will be able to reach one of our team 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

## Getting back to you

- If we have committed to arranging something for you, or need to call you back to provide you more information, we will do so within 4 hours.
- In some cases, we may not have been able to resolve the matter within 4 hours. If this is the case, we will still get in touch so you know we are still working on it.

## When we're understanding your needs

- We will listen to your story
- Understanding your needs can take a bit of time. We use a best practice framework known as the Carer Star to understand and record what you tell us.

## When you're engaging in our programs and activities

- We will identify and discuss supports that best fit your circumstances
- Try our best to find options in your local area
- Help you set goals to get maximum benefit from our supports
- When receiving respite or other services for you or the person you care for, we will:
  - Ensure that the organisation we work with has appropriate safeguards
  - Provides quality services that meet your needs

## Feedback

- Your feedback helps us improve how we serve you. All feedback is reviewed and considered.
- Our staff want to achieve the best possible outcome for you, so helping them understand the good is just as important as looking for improvement opportunities.
- We will actively ask your feedback on your experience with us and any of our partners who are providing support. This may be through a few quick questions on the phone, a short survey through the mail, an SMS question or a few questions online.
- You can also provide feedback at any time through our website or talking to us directly on 6144 3700

## How to make a complaint

- We know we don't always get things right. We value hearing complaints as they are an opportunity to improve.
- If you would like to make a complaint, you can do so by:
  - Email – [feedback@care2serve.com.au](mailto:feedback@care2serve.com.au) or [feedback@carerstasmania.org](mailto:feedback@carerstasmania.org)
  - Website – feedback tab at the top of the home page
  - Phone – 6144 3700
  - In-person – any of our offices in Launceston, Burnie or Moonah

## How we deal with complaints

- All complaints are reviewed and investigated. They are treated confidentially and with respect for your privacy.
- When you make a complaint, we will acknowledge its receipt within 1 day.
- We will make contact with you after receiving your complaint within 3 days of receiving it.
- We aim to resolve most complaints within 14 days. Where there are more complex circumstances, this may take longer. We will inform you if this is the case.
- We will let you know the outcome of our investigation into the complaint, including any steps we have taken or will take to remediate the issues.
- If you are not satisfied with our response to your complaint, you have the option to submit a complaint to the CEO for review





# How you'll experience these principles and standards

## Routine reviews

- We know things can change in your caring role, so we like to check-in on you from time to time.
- If you're travelling along well, we might reach out every year. If there is a lot happening, we will make a time to check in more regularly. We just want to do everything we can to support you.

## How we use your information

- We know your information and its privacy are of key concern. For this reason, we will only collect and use information for the following purposes:
  - Identify if there are services and supports that might help you or the person you are caring for
  - Coordinate support with other organisations with whom we work to provide supports we have agreed with you
  - Help our organisation to improve the service we deliver
  - Help identify new ways we can support carers and the people they care for
  - Contact you to keep you up to date with information which may be of use
  - Provide government with statistics about the amount of support we are providing carers in our region.
- We will obtain your consent to take, hold, and manage your information for these purposes.
- Our privacy and consent policy is published on our website or you can request a copy to be sent out at any time
- Information supplied to government has been de-identified. That means that anyone looking at the information supplied would not be able to tell who you are.
- We will never disclose your information to another organisation who is not directly involved in supporting you or the person you care for without telling you.

## Keeping in touch

- We know you won't always have time to talk on the phone, so we try and in keep in touch in a number of ways, such as
  - Quarterly newsletter for any carers without an email address
  - Monthly e-news for carers with an email address
  - Emails or letters on specific issues that you will be interested in sharing your thoughts about
  - Specialised e-news bulletins for different carer groups
- You can unsubscribe at any time by clicking the link at the bottom of each newsletter
- You can also keep up-to-date through our social media, as we regularly share lots of great information or seek your feedback on issues)
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
  - Instagram

## About these standards

- If you have feedback or would like to know more about these standards and how we're seeking to achieve them, please contact us:
  - Phone – 6144 3700
  - Email – [info@care2serve.com.au](mailto:info@care2serve.com.au) or [info@carerstasmania.org](mailto:info@carerstasmania.org)
  - Web – [www.care2serve.com.au](http://www.care2serve.com.au) or [www.carerstas.org](http://www.carerstas.org)