

Media Release

The Hon James Merlino MP
Deputy Premier
Minister for Education
Minister for Mental Health
Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers



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CARING FOR VICTORIA'S SELFLESS UNPAID CARERS

Unpaid carers who selflessly support their loved ones will receive more support from the Victorian Government to help care for their own wellbeing.

The Government is delivering more than \$2.6 million to support carers to reconnect when it's safe to do so through activities like morning teas, bushwalks and virtual cooking classes – as well as information sessions and online forums to support carers from multicultural background to access the right supports.

Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers James Merlino announced the funding as part of Carers Week, which runs from October 10-16.

Across Victoria, more than 726,000 carers give their time and effort to look after a family member or friend who needs them, whether due to chronic disease, mental illness, disability or old age.

Fifty-six organisations will receive grants totalling \$1.75 million through the *Supporting Carers Locally Grants Program*. The grants will help carers access peer support, community support programs and other tailored resources supporting their physical and mental health, and help them connect with family, friends and other carers.

Additionally, five organisations will share in \$917,000 through the *Statewide Partnership Grants Program*, which will support partnerships between carer organisations and other community support organisations to deliver innovative projects that benefit carers across the state.

The five recipient organisations are Little Dreamers, Different Journeys, Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria, Financial Counselling Victoria and Tandem.

Autism support organisation Different Journeys will use the funding to expand their peer support dinners and provide individual peer support to help connect carers with education and employment opportunities – on top of popular activities like swim sessions, bowls nights and community games nights.

Respite is also available to carers through the Support for Carers program, which is accessible during lockdown. The full list of Supporting Carers Locally Grants Program recipients can be found at: vic.gov.au/grants-benefit-carers-and-support-their-wellbeing.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Disability, Ageing and Carers James Merlino

"Carers do such an incredible job caring for loved ones and it's critical they get the support and downtime they need to keep themselves well."

"Whether it's a morning tea, exercise or peer support services, these initiatives will make a real difference in the lives of our dedicated carers once we start to open up safely."

Quote attributable to Parliamentary Secretary for Carers and Volunteers Anthony Carbines

"These programs will provide carers the opportunity to reconnect both online and face-to-face after a challenging 18 months."

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